



6th ecpa Ministerial Meeting

Dominican Republic | 20
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6th ECPA Ministerial Meeting | Thematic Side Event

Strengthening Energy Sector Resiliency

March 14th, 2024 | 3:00PM – 04:00PM | Santo Domingo 2 Room
Barceló Bávaro Convention Center, Punta Cana

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Description

Extreme weather risks are being exacerbated by climate change – putting critical lifeline infrastructure at risk. Latin America, as the world's most urbanized developing region with substantial portion of its population living in non-urban settlements, is particularly vulnerable to climate/weather events that affect critical infrastructure and disrupt the risk-exposed urban settlements. For example, the top ten countries with the highest climate risk index in the period 1999-2018 include Puerto Rico, Haiti, and Dominica. In terms of losses per unit GDP for the same period, six of the eastern Caribbean countries as well as Belize and Haiti are within the top 20 countries most impacted by weather-related events. Over the past few years, Argentina, Peru, and Colombia have been experiencing multiple floods that have impacted critical infrastructure. With the increasing effects of climate change, Argentina is expected to lose about 0.15% of its GDP due to flood-related events every year, which is equivalent to annual economic loss of USD 700 million.

The electricity sector is particularly vulnerable to climate/weather events: generation plant sites are prone to flooding, and electric networks are extremely vulnerable to high winds, which can lead to sustained power outages. In the Caribbean region, for instance, Grenada lost its entire electrical grid because of Hurricane Ivan in 2004. In September 2017, Hurricane Maria ripped through Dominica, damaging about 98% of the power transmission and distribution network. The resulting disruptions to essential services and productive sectors have far-reaching impacts on the economy. Therefore, addressing energy resilience is imperative to economic growth, sustainable development, public safety to the hazards of extreme weather events, and reducing poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Without timely action, the energy sectors in LAC remain highly vulnerable to future extreme weather events, which will only be exacerbated due to climate change.

The energy sector is particularly vulnerable to natural hazards, including extreme events like hurricanes and heat waves but also slow-onset events such as sea level rise and chronic droughts which can lead to sustained power outages. The resulting disruptions to essential services and productive sectors have far-reaching impacts on the economy. Therefore, addressing energy resilience is imperative to economic growth, sustainable development, public safety to the hazards of extreme weather events, and reducing poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Without timely action, the energy sectors in LAC remain highly vulnerable to future extreme weather events, which will only be exacerbated due to climate change.

Addressing these disruptions and developing policies that strengthen energy resilience requires a holistic and system-wide approach.

The proposed event will elevate the dialogue on building energy systems resilience in LAC underscoring the importance of (i) integrating resilience into power sector investment planning and national budget allocation, (ii) strengthening capacity of utilities on the operational side, emergency response and readiness of post disaster recovery, (iii) financial mechanisms as potential solutions to lower the fiscal burden of post-disaster recovery. This event will also highlight specific experience in region on enhancing resilience in the energy sector of Belize, Chile, Grenada, and the Dominican Republic.

Objective

Engage in a conversation about the vulnerability of the power system to natural hazards and climate change and make recommendations on a range of approaches and solutions for building a more resilient power sector.

Speakers

Mr. Ryan Cobb

Energy Director, Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics, & E-Governance (Belize)

Mr. Luis Felipe Ramos

Undersecretary of Energy, Ministry of Energy, (Chile)

Mr. Manuel López San Pablo

General Manager, Coordinating Organism of the National Interconnected Electric System (OC) - Dominican Republic

Hon Minister Kerryne James

Ministry of Climate Resilience, the Environment and Renewable Energy (Grenada)

Mr. Hector Baldivieso

Senior Energy Specialist, Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)

Miguel Navarro-Martin

Manager, Financial Products and Clients Solutions, Treasury, World Bank

Moderator

Neha Mukhi

Senior Energy and Climate Change Specialist, World Bank



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