

Caribbean Urban Forum 2017 – Belize City

THEME: Green Economy or Green Space

TITLE: Adapting to Climate Change: Potential Lessons for the Caribbean

PRESENTERS: Dr. Gary Davidson & Ms. Beate Bowron

Both presenters have extensive experience working with local officials and community representatives on policies and actions to adapt to the effects of climate change in Guyana, The Philippines and the Canadian Arctic.

ABSTRACT:

Climate change and global warming most profoundly affect communities living in arid, low-lying or coastal areas of the globe. While all countries need to vigorously pursue climate change mitigation, some countries and regions need to adapt to survive, grow and thrive.

This presentation outlines a community-based planning process for climate change adaptation developed and refined in work undertaken in Guyana and several regions of The Philippines.

Guyana's coastal areas, located between .5m and 1m below sea level, are severely affected by floods and an increase in extreme weather events. Rising sea levels will increase the risk of coastal flooding significantly. Located in the often referred to "ring-of-fire", The Philippines is ranked third in the 2011 World Risk Index. Approximately 60% of the land area and 75% of the population is exposed to multiple hazards. Drought, floods, landslides, wild fires and tsunamis are all present, but it is typhoons that cause the largest number of deaths and affect the largest number of people.

The presentation will include experiences from the agriculture and environment sectors in Guyana. It will also draw on local economic development examples, particularly tourism, from The Philippines. In order to achieve climate change adaptation policies that can be implemented at the local, regional or national level, the appropriate stakeholders need to be involved in their development. Likewise, planning for adaptation actions or infrastructure improvements at the community level must include community stakeholders to benefit from their extensive local knowledge.

The presentation will allow session participants to experience a community-based climate change adaptation planning process and learn from the examples used.