

**7th Annual Caribbean Urban Forum (CUF 2017),  
15th -19th May 2017 in Belize City, Belize**

**Title:** Green Building in Trinidad and Tobago – Constraints and Opportunities: An exploratory approach

**Sub-theme:** Green Space

By

**Samantha Chadee**

Assistant Professor in Environmental Studies  
The University of Trinidad and Tobago\*  
Address: Centre for Science and Technology  
The University of Trinidad and Tobago  
Lots #74-98 O'Meara Industrial Park,  
Arima  
Trinidad and Tobago

**Valerie Stoute**

Programme Professor in Environmental Studies  
University of Trinidad and Tobago\*  
Address: Centre for Science and Technology  
The University of Trinidad and Tobago  
Lots #74-98 O'Meara Industrial Park,  
Arima  
Trinidad and Tobago

**Abstract**

Increasing urbanization has to be met by innovative approaches to minimize concomitant challenges and improve the quality of urban ecosystem services. In response to this, there has been increasing growth in the 'greening' of several aspects of the construction industry, with the production of green buildings, made so through the employment of energy saving architectural facets or from the conversion of standard buildings via the creative use of foliage on wall surfaces or trees on roofs.. Green buildings, which can utilize efficiently both energy and land; conserve water; enhance air quality; and incorporate recycled and renewable products, may ultimately promote sustainable development and enhance the climate change adaptive capacity of urban areas.

This study explores the green building ethos in Trinidad and Tobago, via semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders in the area. Thematic analysis of these interviews extracted sentiments on the current state of the industry, the challenges involved in green building development, the character of the clients who prove to be early adopters, and the potential for growth. In addition, an attempt was made to mine social media posts to gauge local and global views of the general public for comparison.

Preliminary results reveal perceptions that adoption of green construction in Trinidad and Tobago has been slow, mainly because of inadequate human and financial resources; lack of understanding and appreciation by the general public of the role of green buildings in combatting climate change; and lack of support from Government.

**Key words:** Green building, urbanization, thematic analysis