

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY AND INDUSTRY

RENEWABLE ENERGY: A Caribbean Crossroad

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The Caribbean is poised for a renewable energy revolution, and Dr. Koon Koon from the University of the West Indies (Mona, Jamaica) is certain that the region has enormous potential. Weaving through a multitude of issues related to the Caribbean's energy landscape, the author guides the reader through the unique systems powering the CARICOM's energy demand.

Caribbean nations are challenged by crippling energy costs (roughly USD \$0.35/kWh) and import bills to fuel their growing economies. Although energy policy has been on the rise, some Caribbean states are not only lagging behind with fundamental changes, but significantly contribute to global carbon emissions (Trinidad and Tobago secured 3rd place for global CO₂ emissions per capita).

With changing climate regimes in the region, renewable energy systems are becoming the cornerstones for change, providing ample opportunity for wind, solar and hydro systems to proliferate. Yet the Caribbean faces many challenges. Economies of scale are not in the region's favour and major policy implementation is needed to open more doors for sustainable energy integration. There are leaders in the Caribbean however, and countries such as Jamaica, Belize and Suriname and ushering the region to the forefront of global change.

What's next?

Dr. Koon Koon suggests that the region needs to create major financial solutions to promote the development of innovative energy projects. Through collaborative organizations like the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREE), and the major academic institutions, the Caribbean can become a model region for the political, socioeconomic and cooperative changes needed to address modern energy issues.

REFERENCES

