



# THE MONTHLY EXPLORER



## UNDP Barbados & EC visit from Linda Maguire, UNDP Deputy Regional Director for RBLAC



### WHAT WE'RE READING

This month included many international breakthroughs in multilateralism and global involvement in the Blue Economy. This began with the launch on March 1st of the first ever World Seagrass Day, focusing on conservation of seagrass meadows or "blue forests" as suppliers of food and shelter to thousands of fish species, turtles and other marine animals. In addition to being a means of first defense against floods and storms, these meadows also improve water quality. Due to these and other benefits, and the reality of seagrass disappearing at a whopping rate (a football field worth of seagrass disappears every 30 minutes), World Seagrass Day was established through a resolution adopted in May 2022.

Additionally, on March 5th, the Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction reached an agreement, the "High Seas Treaty." This historic agreement, which builds on talks that began in 2004, aims to protect marine biodiversity in international waters.



### TOOLS WE'RE EXPLORING

Following mounting global interest in ChatGPT and open AI tools, the Lab has been exploring this subject. This includes our testing of ChatGPT for definitions of the Blue Economy. To explore this space further, as well as gather new sources of information and data, the Lab launched its Blue-Green Data Burst series with an anonymous Twitter-based poll on the role of ChatGPT and AI in the Future of Work as it relates to the Blue and Green Economies.

### WHAT WE'RE INSPIRED BY

This month, the theme for UN World Oceans Day (WOD) 2023 was announced under the banner of "Planet Ocean: The Tides are Changing." This will gather decision makers, scientists, civil society and more to put the ocean first in recognition of humanity's dependence on the ocean. Numerous sub-themes have been announced, including on the ocean x climate interface and creativity as a catalyst for global understanding, both of which have and will continue to underpin activities from our Lab.

We were also inspired by a visit to our MCO from Linda Maguire, UNDP Deputy Regional Director for RBLAC, who highlighted the Blue Economy as a core offer from our office.



### QUESTIONS WE'RE ASKING

Last month, the Lab in India supported the UNDP and NITI Aayog 'LIFEathon', a hybrid hackathon with young people from across the world to contribute ideas and innovations to promote sustainable living and climate positive behavior. During the hackathon, the Lab in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean joined live and asked: what role can the environmentally conscious lifestyles of indigenous communities play in renewing our balance and relationship with nature, particularly as it relates to the mental and emotional wellness of people throughout the world in connection to the planet?

This is a question we continue to explore, including most recently during our Blue-Green Mission to Dominica this month where we visited the Kalinago Territory, home to the last remaining descendants of the pre-Columbian Carib Indians, dating back to about 3000 B.C. Through witnessing the Kalinago way of life, we seek to better understand the connection between climate and indigenous culture.

### WILD CARDS

How can the Creative Economy, or the Orange Economy, play a more central role as a source of economic diversification in Latin America and the Caribbean? What is the utility of art as it relates to community engagement, thought leadership, experimentation, solutions mapping and exploration? The Lab will be developing this space further moving ahead, drawing on the interconnections between creative expression and sustainability.

