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The Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund Launched with Global Audience at GSIS 2026

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The Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund (VICCTF) was officially launched on April 21st in Gran Canaria, Spain, at the Global Sustainable Islands Summit hosted by Island Innovation.

The launch event included a keynote address by the Deputy Premier and Minister of Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change, Honourable Julian Fraser RA, remarks by Climate Envoy Dr. Kedrick Pickering, and a presentation on the design and mechanics of the VICCTF by Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mr Chamberlain Emmanuel.

A model of the traditional Virgin Islands sloop, built by Mr. Samuel Davies, was used to symbolise the Trust Fund setting sail at the launch. The sloop was passed from the policy level, responsible for creating and supporting operationalisation of the Trust Fund, to the Trust Fund's governance and management level. The launch also featured the unveiling of the Trust Fund's logo and updated website.

In his remarks, the Deputy Premier highlighted the significance of the milestone, saying that "There are moments in the history of every country that define and shape its future; the launch of The Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund is one of those moments for The Virgin Islands. For years, a major finance gap has stood between The Virgin Islands devastated by Hurricane Irma and the vision for our climate-resilient future. The Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund is our answer to this divide."

The VICCTF was formally established by The Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund Act, 2015 to fund the Territory's adaptation to climate change and its transition to clean, renewable energy. Funding priorities are guided by the 2012 cross-sectoral Virgin Islands Climate Change Policy, which is currently being updated, and encompasses the energy, infrastructure, water, tourism, environment, agriculture, fisheries, health and financial services sectors.

At the launch, CEO Mr. Chamberlain Emmanuel described the Trust Fund's operations using the concept of a lever, where a small but concentrated effort can generate large flows of resources for major impact. Mr. Emmanuel further explained the importance of the international launch event, saying, "*This international launch of the Trust Fund at GSIS in Gran Canaria is a significant milestone, giving us the visibility and traction we need with global institutions, the private sector, impact investors and others who share our vision of creating the world's first climate-smart island chain, and who can help us scale and accelerate the financing and deployment of initiatives across The Virgin Islands.*"

The Trust Fund is designed to support a mix of actors to implement climate resiliency projects and programmes, including Government, non-governmental organisations, private sector, academia and registered associations. Mr. Edward Childs, Chairman of Trust Fund Board said that "*The Trust Fund is looking forward to a series of local engagements across The Virgin Islands following the international launch, noting that the success of the Fund rests with the people of The Virgin Islands, the ultimate beneficiaries of the Fund.*" The public can view the launch and learn more about the Trust Fund's mandate and operations at its website - www.vicctf.org.

Establishment of The Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund was supported by the Caribbean Community Climate Change Center (CCCCC) with development of its Operational Manual supported by the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission.

The Trust Fund has been endorsed by several other regional and international partners who also provided messages of support played at the launch, including the CARICOM Secretariat, United Nations Resident Coordinator Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE), Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF), Global Island Partnership (GLISPA), Development Bank for Resilient Prosperity ("The Nature Bank") and Island Innovation to name a few. The Governor, His Excellency Daniel Pruce, also provided a congratulatory message for the launch.

