GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

Tel: (284) 468-2730 | website: gov.vg

12 November 2025

Ministry of Environment Advances Regulatory and Institutional Initiatives

Premier and Minister of Finance, Honourable Dr. Natalio Wheatley has said the protection of the environment is essential for sustainable development and for securing the well-being of future generations in the Virgin Islands.

Premier Wheatley emphasised this priority during the special seating for the 2026 Budget Address hosted under the theme, “Pillars of Progress: BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE NATION”.

Premier Wheatley stated, “Other initiatives spareheaded by the Ministry of Environmnet include, drafting the Biosecurity Policy, developing an Integrated Environmental Information Management System with a central EIA data repository and Environmental Registry, designating new coastal reserves, and re-establishing coral nurseries through private partnerships. The Climate Change Trust Fund Board is now formed, and the Trust Fund will be launched soon”.

The Premier also highlighted that the Territory has taken steps to to advance hazard reduction and climate adaptation. He said, “As a small island state vulnerable to climate risks, the Virgin Islands has advanced hazard reduction and climate adaptation. Key actions include strengthening emergency communications and implementing nature-based projects like the Sargassum Programme and Long Bay Beach restoration. These integrated efforts support sustainable growth and ensure the Virgin Islands is prepared for future challenges”.

In 2025, the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change made significant progress on regulatory and institutional initiatives. Key achievements include the finalisation of the Environment and Climate Change Policy.

The Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change envisions sound stewardship of the natural resources, and a viable land and marine economic system by implementing a strong legal and policy framework that encourages sustainable best management practices.

The Ministry of Finance prepares the annual Recurrent Budget Estimates outlining the Territory's projected revenue and expenditure for the year. The Budget Estimates incorporate the Budget Address, prepared and delivered by the Minister of Finance; as well as the Economic and Fiscal Outlook for the year.

The fiscal year for the Government of the Virgin Islands runs from January 1 to December The estimates include the sums approved by the Legislature in the annual Appropriation Act to cover government charges and expenses.

The total budget for 2026 is $550.59 million the largest in the Virgin Islands' history. This includes $446,016,400 in projected revenues, $54.9 million from existing loans, and $49.7 million from fund balances. The budget supports economic recovery, stronger public services, and improved intrasture while maintaining fiscal discipline and transparency.

For Additional Information Contact:

Berta Mckelly Adams
Information Officer
Department of Infrmation and Public Relations
Telephone: 468-2730
Email: bmckelly@gov.vg