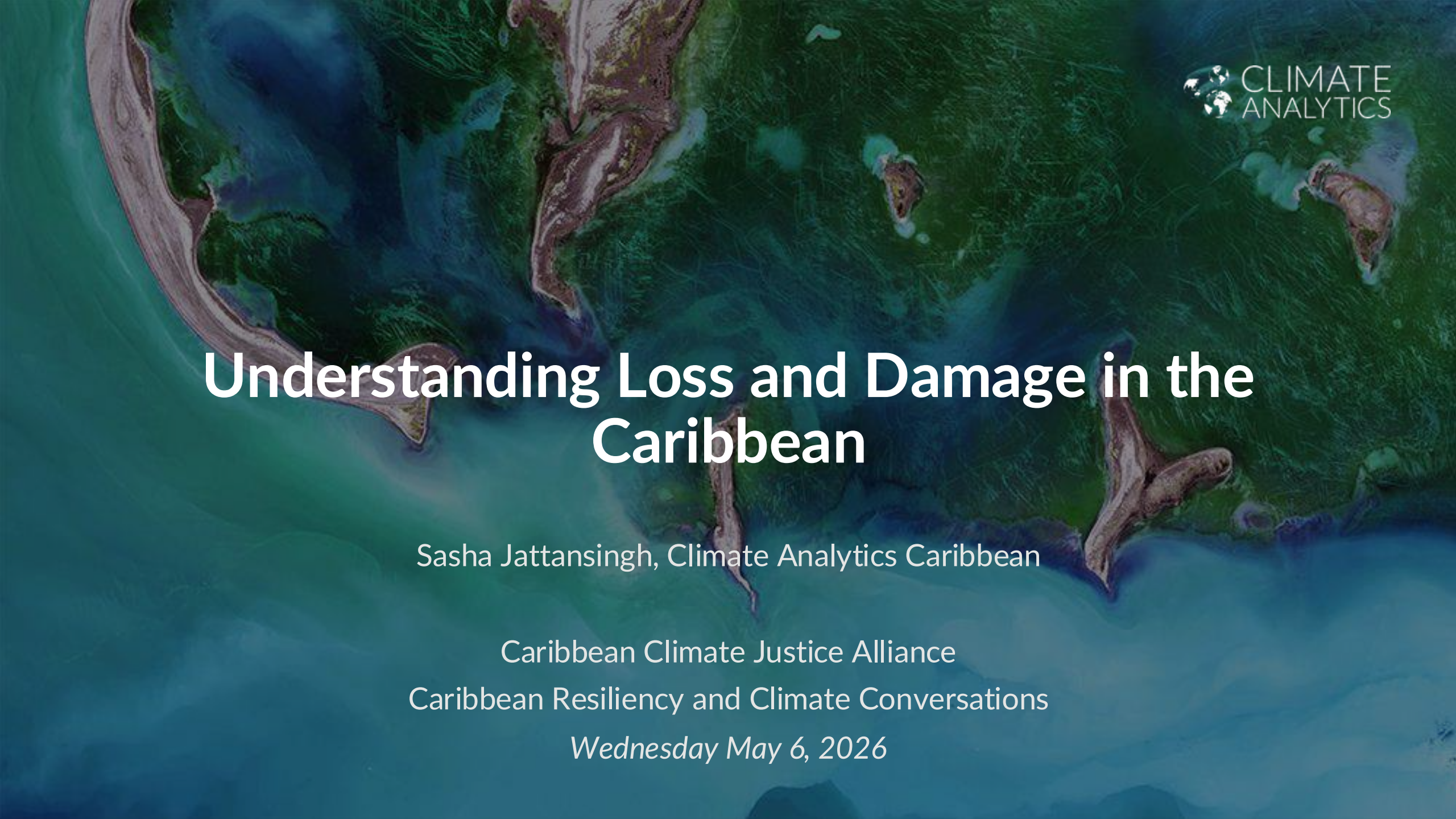


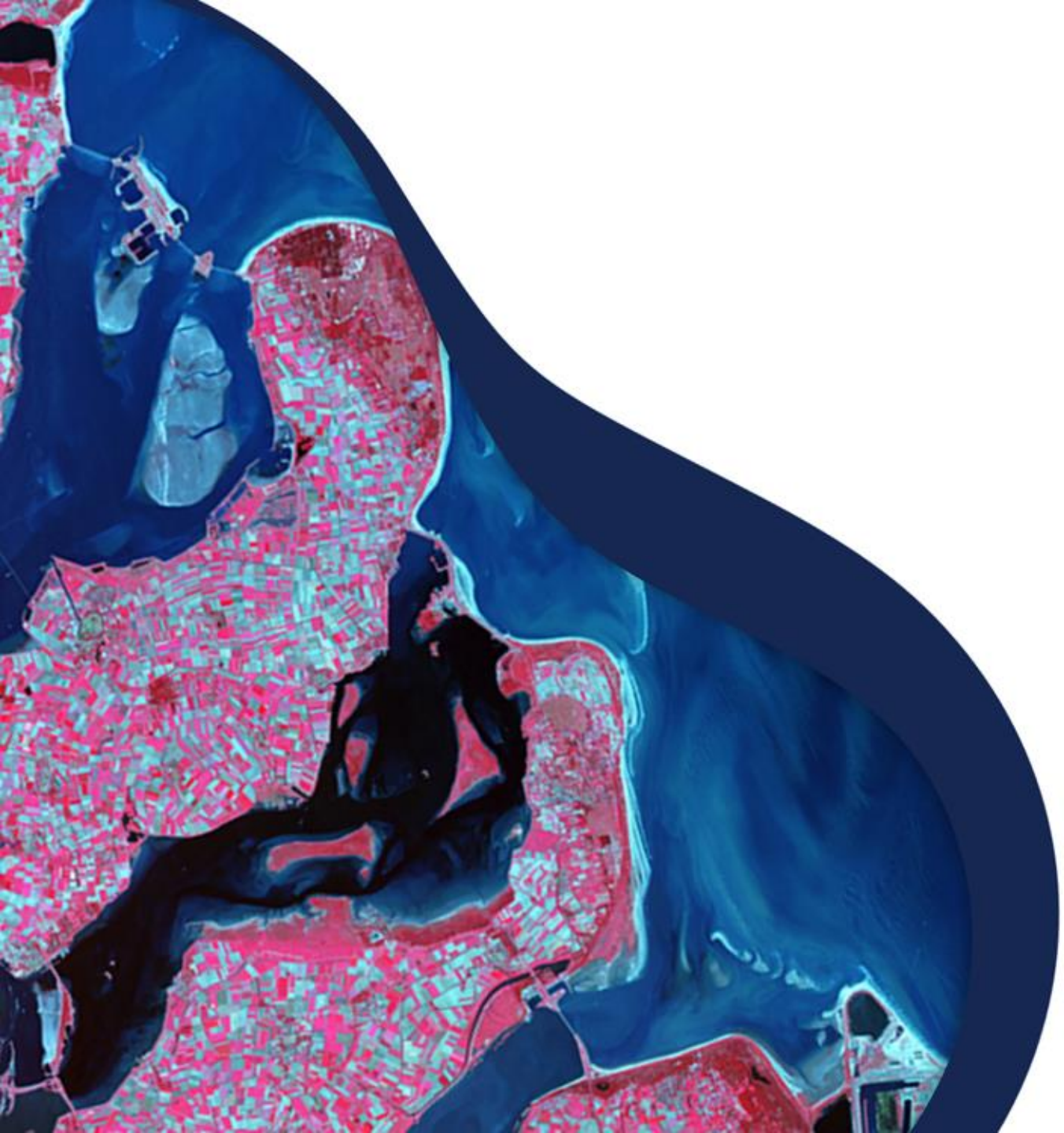
Understanding Loss and Damage in the Caribbean

Sasha Jattansingh, Climate Analytics Caribbean

Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance

Caribbean Resiliency and Climate Conversations

Wednesday May 6, 2026

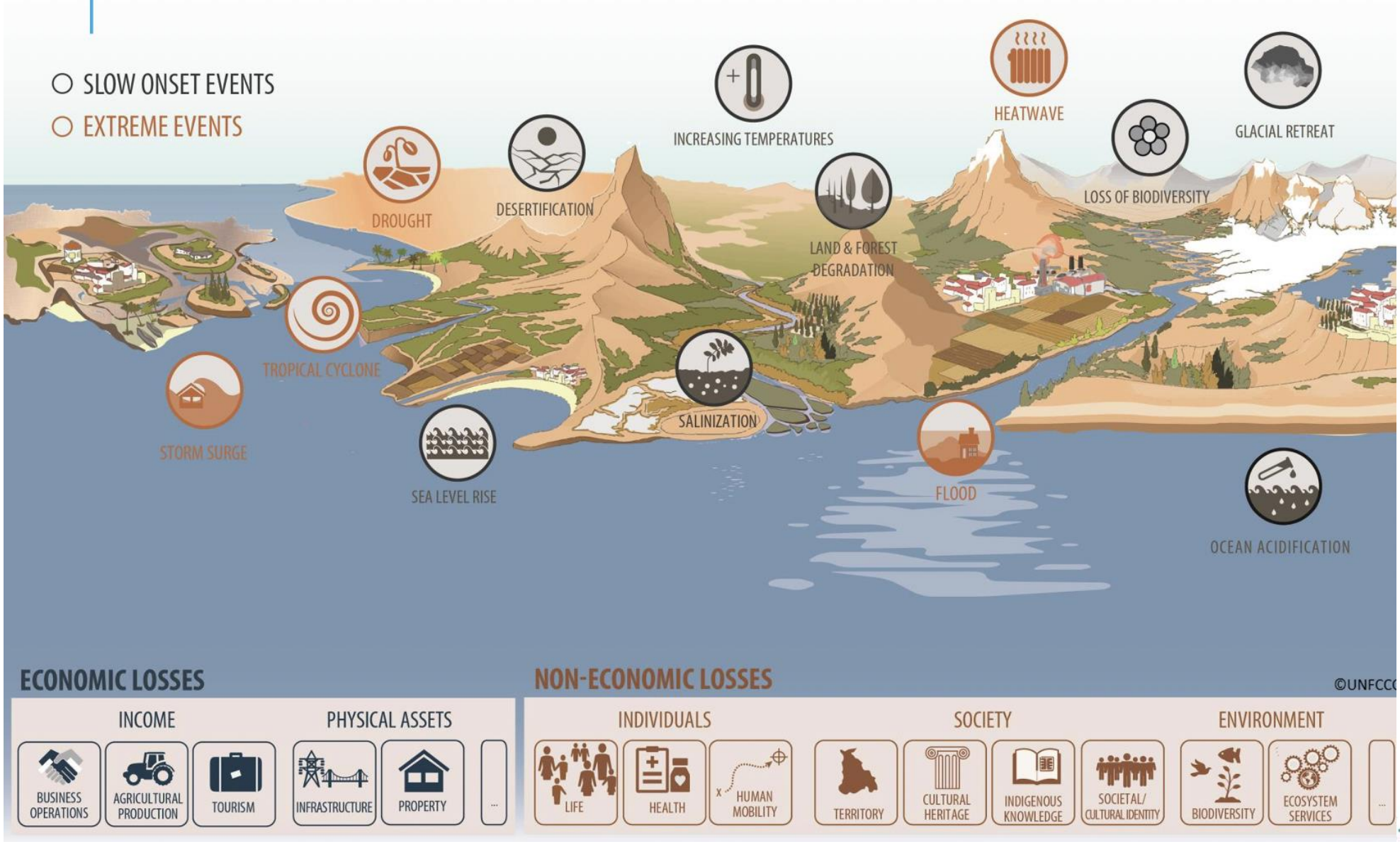


CLIMATE ANALYTICS

Unpacking Loss and Damage

Understanding Loss and Damage

CLIMATE ANALYTICS



(UNFCCC, 2018)

Limits to Adaptation

- Limits to adaptation are points where climate-related risks become intolerable, and adaptation responses can no longer prevent severe losses or damage.
- These limits, divided into:
  - **hard limits** (physical/biological impossibilities), and
  - **soft limits** (social, economic., or technological constraints)

History of L&D in the UNFCCC

CLIMATE ANALYTICS

COP 13 (2007)

Consideration of means to address L&D launched

COP 16 (2010)

Work programme on L&D established

COP 17 (2011)

Relevant knowledge on L&D shared & synthesised

COP 18 (2012)

Role of the COP in addressing L&D agreed

COP 19 (2013)

Warsaw International Mechanism & its Executive Committee established

COP 20 (2014)

Workplan & the organization of the Executive Committee approved

COP 21 (2015)

Paris Agreement adopted

Established stand alone Article on Loss and Damage (Article 8)

COP 25 (2019)

Santiago Network on Loss and Damage established

COP 27 (2022)

Loss and Damage fund and funding arrangements established

COP 28 (2023)

Loss and Damage fund operationalized

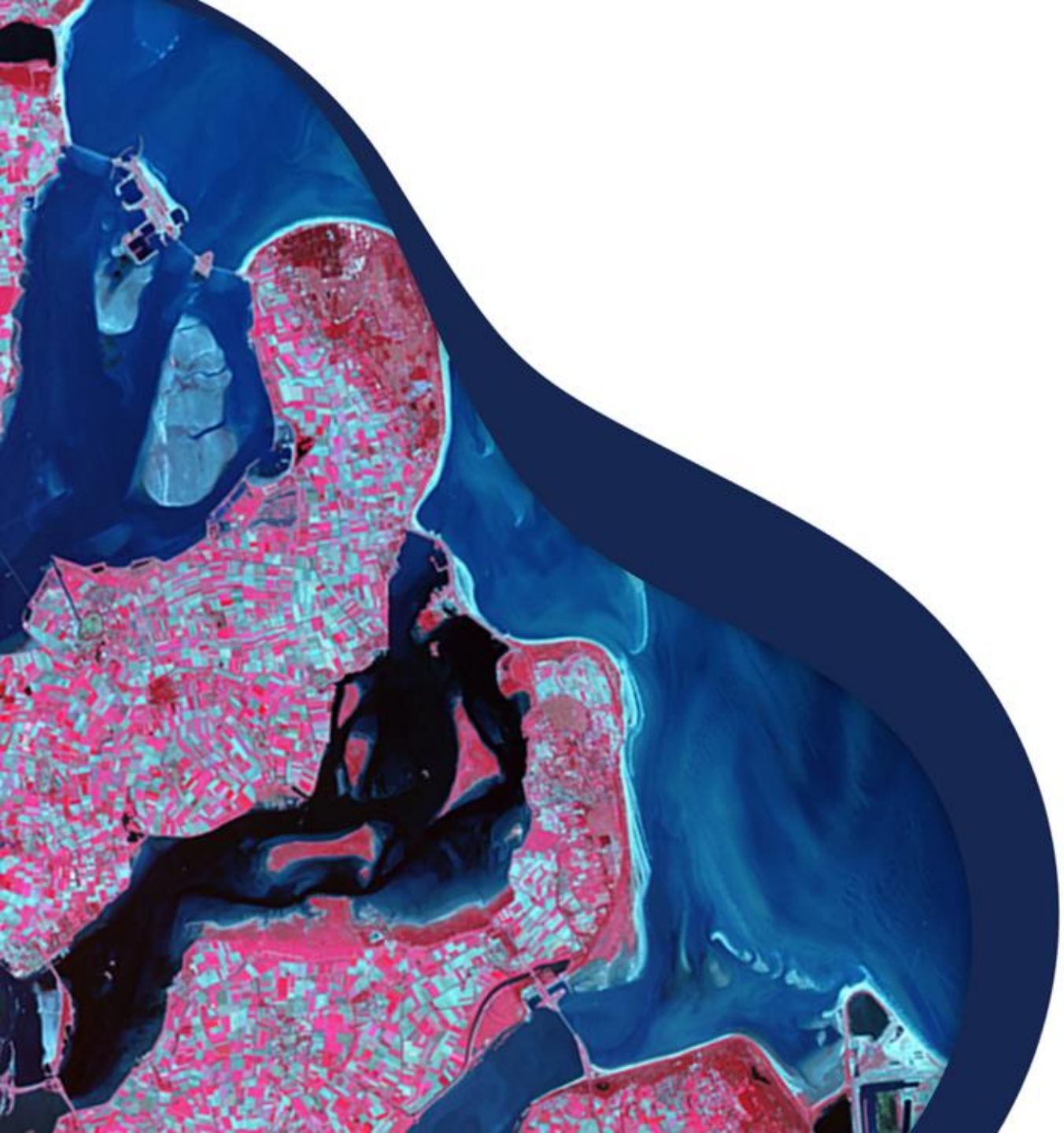
COP 29 (2024)

Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage fully operationalized

COP 30 (2025)

Barbados Implementation Modalities (BIM) launched

(Adapted from UNFCCC, 2018)



CLIMATE ANALYTICS

Defining L&D in the Caribbean Context

A Caribbean Working Definition of Loss and Damage

Predisposing Factors: Existing vulnerabilities	• Geographic and environmental (small size and dispersed populations, coastal concentration of population/infrastructure, remoteness from major markets and environmental damage and weakened ecosystems) • Economic (high debt and dependence on climate-sensitive sectors) • Socio-political and historical (high existing external debt, colonialism and its legacies, previous loss and damage (cumulative burden), safety and security issues and power asymmetries) • Livelihood and social inequities (income and livelihood insecurity, socio-economic disparities, gender-based inequalities, unequal access to resources and services, large informal/unbanked sector)
Precipitating Factors: Triggering climate events	• Increased extreme weather and slow-onset events • Compound/cascading events (climate/non-climate) • Climate-induced health hazards
Protective Factors: Existing capacities and measures	• Existing infrastructure and resilience measures (effective early warning systems, resilient infrastructure and nature-based solutions and community involvement, local governance, policy coherence) • Financial protection mechanisms (social safety nets and risk transfer mechanisms and regional cooperation and advocacy) • Community and adaptive capacity (community response and unity, Caribbean resilience/history of dealing with disasters and data monitoring and management systems

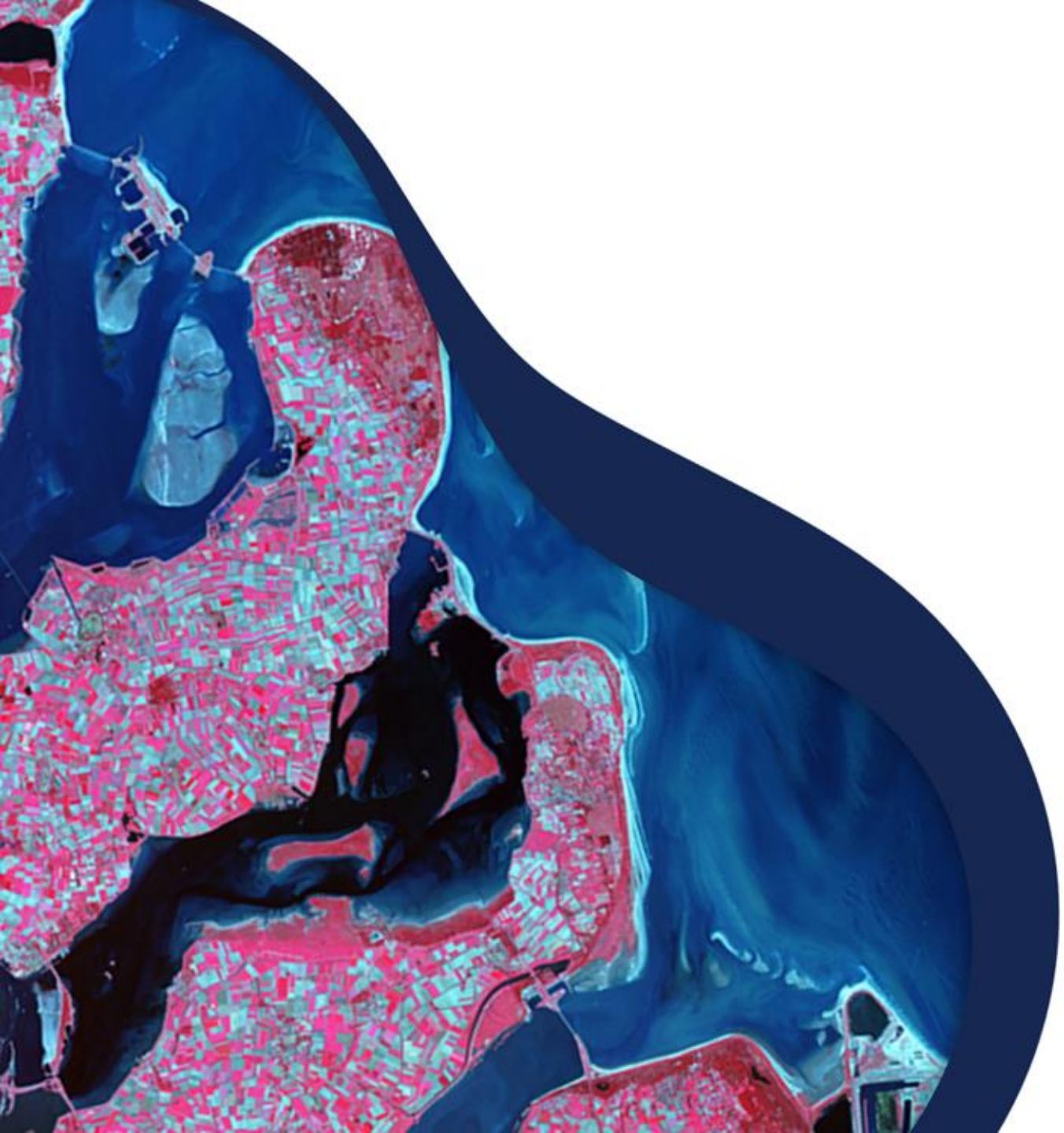
The Climate-Debt Trap

SIDS face severe, escalating Loss and Damage (L&D) from extreme and slow-onset events.

A single event can wipe out decades of development. Losses from Hurricane Maria were estimated at 226 of GDP (Government of Dominica 2017).

L&D forces massive borrowing for reconstruction, pushing high debt-to-GDP ratios (historically approximately 75%) into crisis. For the 10 most severe storms average debt levels are 18% higher three years after the disaster (Cavallo et al. 2025).

SIDS with minimal emissions bear the brunt, leading to climate-induced debt distress that halts development.



Draft Participatory Methodology and Toolkit for Assessing Loss and Damage in the Caribbean

Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE)

- **Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity** (AFSEE) is a fellowship programme for activists, policymakers, researchers, and practitioners who believe inequality can be defeated.
- We are building a catalytic values-led global community of people who are committed to using collective leadership to work towards social and economic justice for all.
- Based at the International Inequality Institute at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)
- Applications open in October and close in January every year.

Atlantic Fellows FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUITY | LSE International Inequalities Institute

CLIMATE ANALYTICS

Draft Participatory Methodology and Toolkit for Assessing Loss and Damage in Caribbean Communities

- **Purpose:** To **co**-develop a participatory toolkit and methodology for assessing loss and damage and inequalities with Caribbean communities.
- **Research Question:** How have existing inequalities affected the lived experiences of climate-induced loss and damage in Caribbean communities?
- **Objectives:**
  - To shift the loss and damage discourse from a technical/scientific and climate regime framing towards a participatory and multidimensional framing that centres on human rights, equity and justice, and
  - To define loss and damage in a Caribbean context by the people and communities who experience this.
  - To enable Caribbean communities to examine how existing inequalities have affected their lived experiences of loss and damage
  - To empower Caribbean communities in developing more just and equitable loss and damage solutions.
- **Research Methodology:** Participatory action research; Qualitative approach which includes desktop review, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, testing and refining with two Caribbean communities, validation sessions.

Toolkit Development Timeline

CLIMATE ANALYTICS

May – Aug. 2025

Qualitative Research – desktop review, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, testing with at least 1 community

14 Aug. 2025

Toolkit and research paper – August 14, 2025 (AFSEE submission deadline)

Oct. 2025

Community workshop to test toolkit with Trinidad community (Salybia)

Nov. 2025

Progress on toolkit shared at Caribbean L&D Dialogue

Jan. – Aug. 2026

Capacity building session, testing with communities

Oct. 2026

Toolkit updated, finalized and published

Conceptual Framework

- **Loss and Damage**
  - UNFCCC Framing of Loss and Damage
  - 3Ps Framework (from C-CIQ toolkit)
- **Multidimensional Inequality**
  - Multidimensional Inequality Framework (MIF) (McKnight et al., 2019) which provides a systematic, theoretically underpinned instrument for measuring and analyzing inequalities across seven dimensions
  - The MIF is theoretically underpinned by **Amartya Sen's capability approach** to conceptualizing and assessing well-being (Sen,1985;1987; 1993)

Toolkit Facilitation Approach

Participatory and inclusive approach for facilitation of toolkit exercises

Facilitator(s) is knowledgeable on loss and damage, inequalities and community engagement

Facilitator(s) will guide community members through the exercises and discussions

The exercises in the toolkit are envisioned to be carried out with community members at a 1 -day workshop

Social safeguards and and gender sensitive facilitation tools should be integrated into the workshop

Workshop should be a safe space for open but respectful discussion

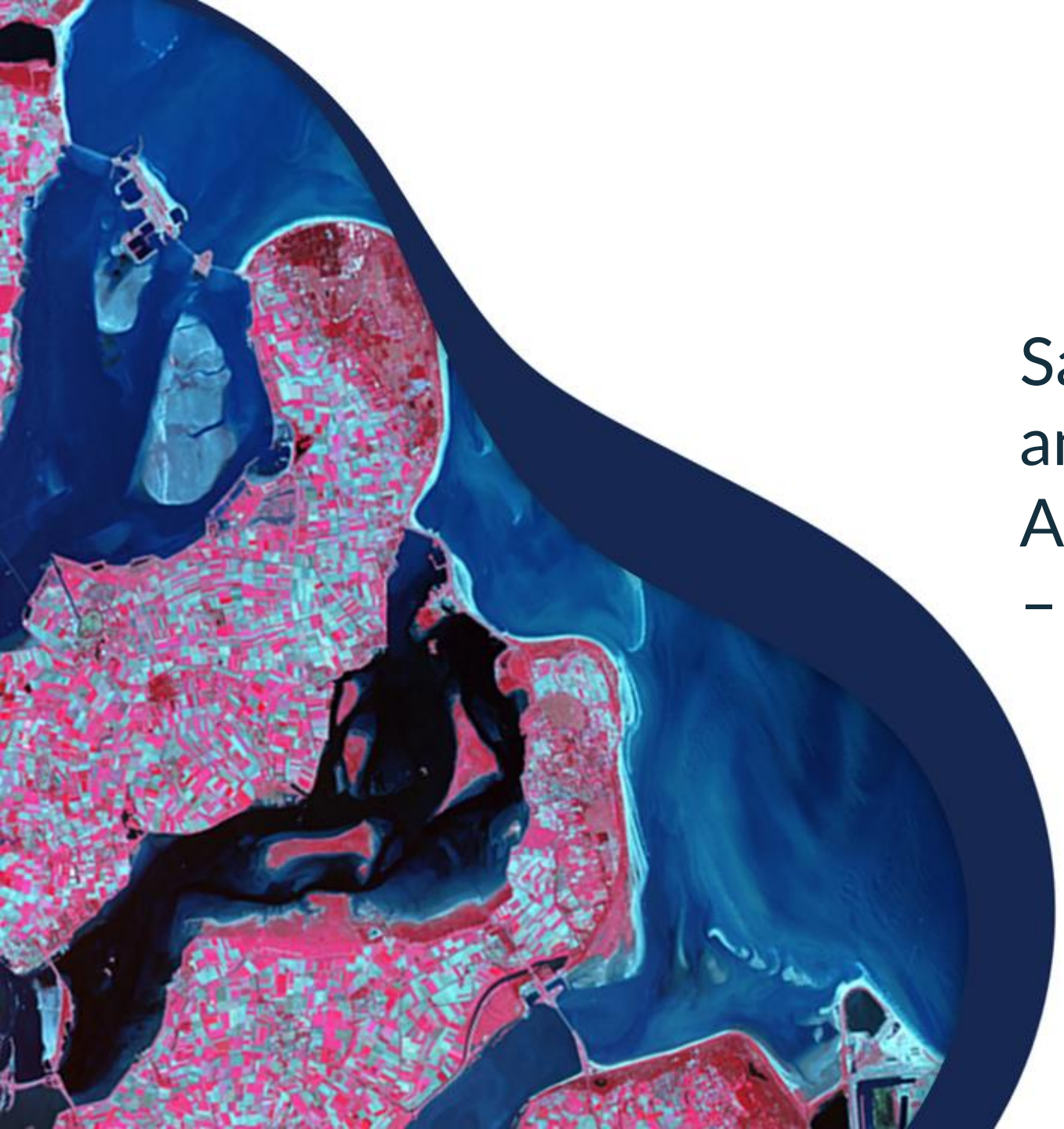
Toolkit Exercises

1. **Understanding Loss and Damage**
    - Community Perspectives of L&D – facilitated discussion using UNFCCC framing of L&D to determine a community definition of loss and damage
    - Hazard/Resource Map of Community – participatory mapping of key community resources and infrastructure; Community to identify which resources are at risk and severity of the risk

2. **Unpacking Existing Inequalities**
    - Multidimensional Inequality Radar– facilitated discussion to determine community perceptions of multidimensional inequalities along the seven dimensions using a radar/spider chart

3. **Resilience for the Future**
    - Values Mapping: Facilitated discussion with communities: What values and social elements make my community resilient? What should be protected? What existing measures, policies etc. help to reduce inequalities in my community?
    - Visioning Exercise – Facilitated discussion to determine vision for community on the future they want

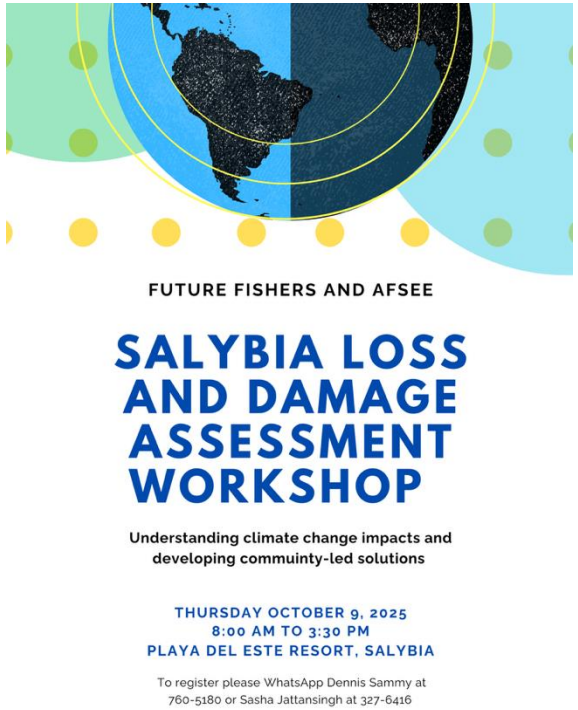
4. **Solutions to L&D**
    - Solutions Matrix – (Proposed loss and damage solution; Key actions; Stakeholders involved; Timeline; Resources needed; Expected outcomes) – Community members to develop and prioritise loss and damage solutions to benefit their communities.



CLIMATE ANALYTICS

Salybia Community Loss and Damage Assessment Workshop – October 9, 2025

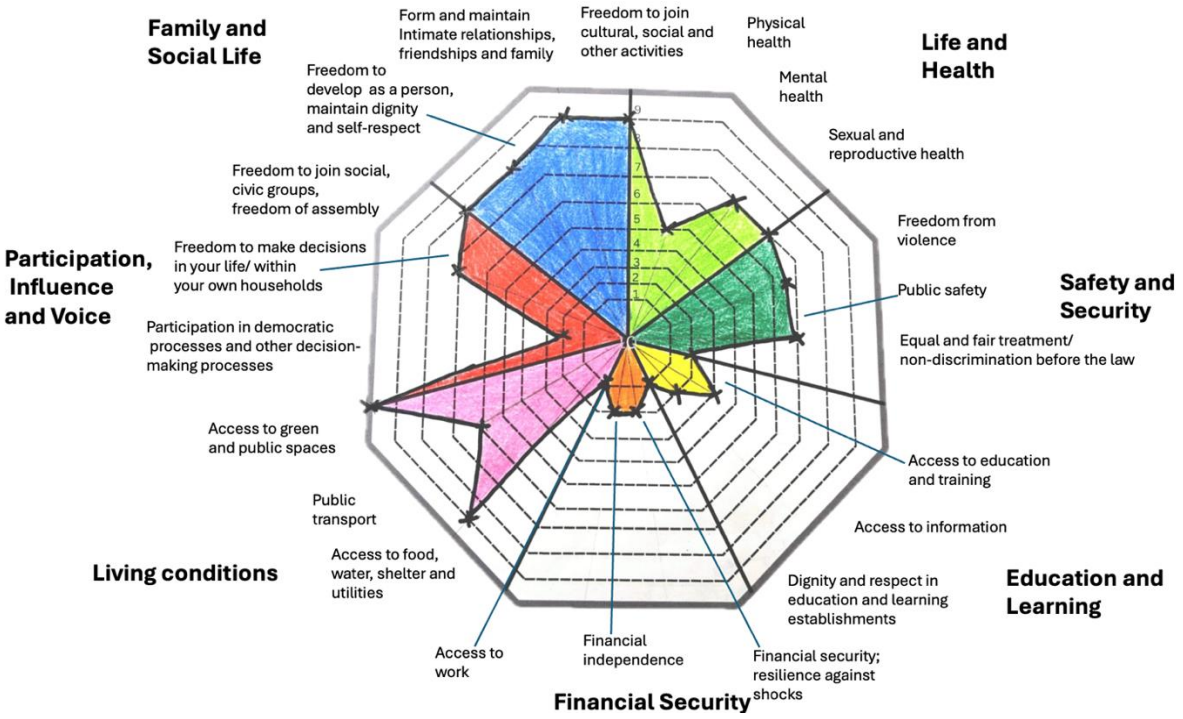
Salybia Community Loss and Damage Workshop



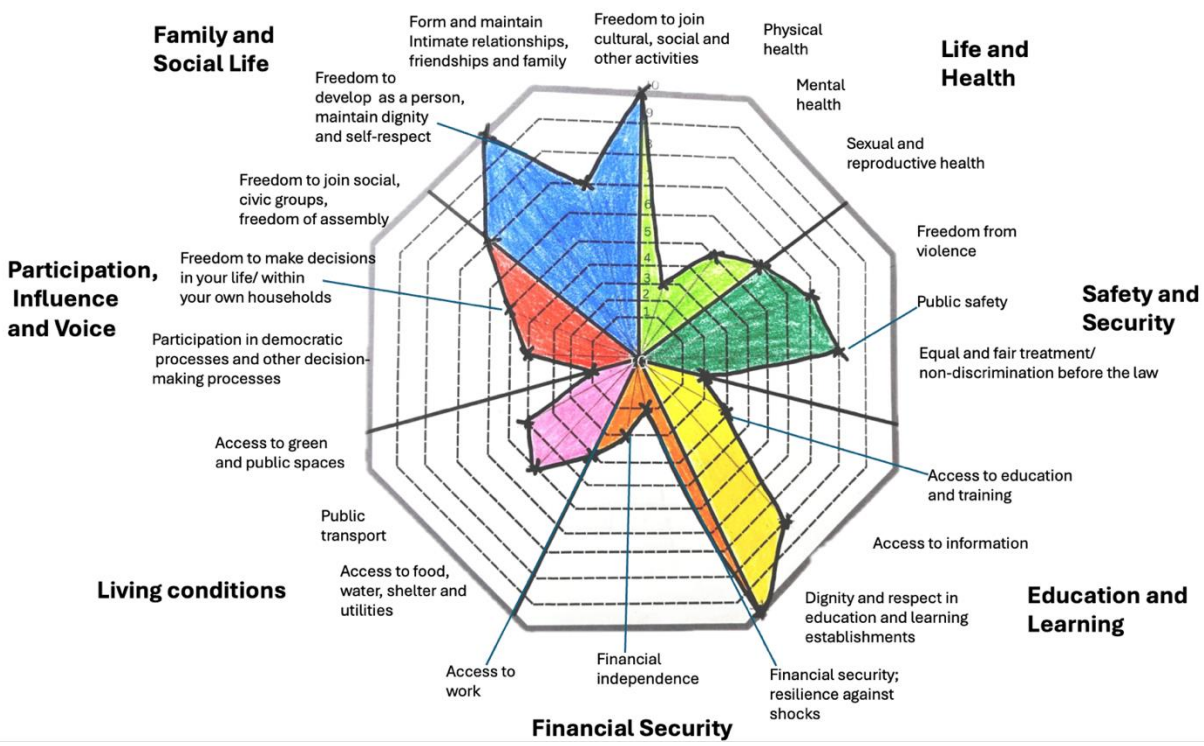
Community Definition of Loss and Damage

Type of Loss and Damage Experienced	Extreme Climate Events	Slow-Onset Events	Comments
	• Tropical storms (causing high winds and heavy rainfall) • Flooding • Heatwave • Landslides • Sargassum	• Coastal Erosion • Sea level rise • Hotter days and hotter nights • Warmer seas	• NE Trinidad usually affected by the outer bands of tropical storms and hurricanes • 2024 heatwave was unbearable despite Salybia being on the coast and breezy • 2010- 2011 Sargassum influx where there was 10 to 12 feet of seaweed in Salibay • Coastal erosion preventing access to fishing depot
Categorising Loss and Damage	**Economic Loss and Damage**	**Non-Economic Loss and Damage**	**Comments**
	• Fishing equipment damages e.g. boats, engines, traps • Loss of income (fishers and farmers) • Property damages • Loss of agricultural produce • No access to fishing depot and lifeguard tower at Salibay	• Loss of turtle habitats and nesting grounds • Health impacts (due to rotting sargassum etc.) • Increase in pests and disease (e.g. Giant African Snail, coconut beetle) • Higher stress levels and mental health concerns • Changes in fishing patterns • Changes in fruiting patterns • Access to beaches (for leisure/family activities) • Lower productivity due to heat (at school and work)	• Sargassum influx on coastlines affects turtle nesting grounds • Planting and harvest seasons have changed over the years • Hotter sea temperatures means that fish move into deeper (colder) waters so fishermen have to go further away from the coast • Hotter classrooms make it difficult for children to concentrate and pay attention • Coastal erosion has washed away the sand bar at Salibay which was a popular bathing spot for families • Fishing boats are docked in the river and not near the fishing depot

MIF Radar (October 2025)



MEN



WOMEN

Vision for the Future

CLIMATE ANALYTICS

A Climate Resilient Future for Salybia in 2030.

*In 2030, a climate resilient Salybia would be a village where there is **strong community organisation and unity** where the community can **advocate for and access government services** efficiently and easily to deal with climate impacts like coastal erosion, flooding and economic and non-economic loss and damage. There would be more **opportunities for income generation** here in Salybia, harnessing natural resources in the area and **supporting youth employment and livelihood opportunities** such as eco-tourism, value-added products e,g. kuchela, smoked fish etc and beach maintenance. There will be a **community centre or internet café** in Salybia to allow residents a **space and opportunities for improving education and learning** including life-long learning and upskilling within the community either through online learning or through in-person courses like first aid and disaster preparedness training to better prepare for and withstand loss and damage impacts. Salybia will **reinvigorate its good social capital and community cohesion** through monthly or quarterly community events such as village fairs, fishing competitions, parang and calypso competitions etc.*

Community Solutions for Climate Resilience

Proposed Solution	Key Activities	Who is involved?	Timeline	Resources Needed	Expected Outcome
Establish Salybia Community Organisation	-Organise community meeting -Establish temporary committee to set up organisation -Incorporate organisation -Develop community plan	-Community residents -Future Fishers (for advice) -Ministry of Community Development(?)	Immediate (6 months to 1 year)	-Meeting space -Capacity building on governance, financial management etc	Salybia community can advocate for loss and damage and climate justice issues through community organisations
Create livelihood opportunities	-Identify small business opportunities e.g. bakery, value added products -Undertake livelihoods assessment -Community organisation to create opportunities for community business	-Community organisation -Regional corporation - Member of Parliament -Ministry of Agriculture -NEDCO -Green Fund	Short-term (2 – 3 years)	-Finance/ capital -Meeting space -Specific training on small business management and livelihood development -Sponsors -Marketing/ advertising	Salybia has sustainable and climate-resilient livelihood opportunities for income generation and job creation for the community to benefit from
Establish a community centre with internet café	-Access to land (to build centre) -Building construction -Computers, equipment -Internet and utilities -Manager	Ministry of Rural Development Ministry of Community Development Sponsors (for equipment) Training providers (for upskilling and learning)	Long term (3 to 5 years)	-Land approvals -Equipment -Sponsorship	Salybia has a community space for community meetings and events, and for doing skills training and courses (online and in-person) which can support climate resilience

Next Steps for Toolkit

- Interested Caribbean CSOs, policymakers and researchers who would like to test the toolkit with communities – please email sasha.jattansingh@gmail.com
- CSO capacity building webinars on how to use the toolkit – June - July 2026
- Further testing of toolkit - June - August 2026
- Refine content and graphic design of toolkit - August - September 2026
- Finalise and launch toolkit - October 2026

Questions?

Thank you!

Sasha Jattansingh

Deputy Director and Senior Adaptation and Loss and Damage Expert

Climate Analytics Caribbean

Email: sasha.jattansingh@climateanalytics.org

Website: https://climateanalytics.org

CLIMATE
ANALYTICS
www.climateanalytics.org