

## 「日本がカリブ海のサルガッサム対策に協力」

10月20日付当地 Nation 紙は、国際協力推進協会(A P I C)の「太平洋・カリブ記者招待計画」により訪日した同紙エバンソン記者の我が国の無償資金協力「カリブにおけるサルガッサム管理能力強化計画 (UNDP連携)」に関する記事を掲載しているところ、概要以下のとおり。

1 清水・外務省中南米局中米・カリブ課長は、同記者招待計画参加者にブリーフィングを行い、日本政府が、バルバドスを含むカリブ地域5か国を対象とし、供与額14.19億円の無償協力「カリブにおけるサルガッサム管理能力強化計画 (UNDP連携)」を実施していると述べた。

2 同課長は、同プロジェクトの目的は、サルガッサム管理能力強化のみでなく、同課題に対する地域協力を促進することであると言及した。またサルガッサムは、観光業のみでなく漁業にも影響を与える可能性があると指摘した。同課長は、アンティグア・バーブーダを訪れた際、美しいバーブーダの海岸にサルガッサムが押し寄せているのを目にしたという。同課長は、外務省は、本プロジェクトを通じて日本とカリコム加盟国との協力推進を図っており、この支援はそれぞれの国の所得にかかわらず行われると述べた。

3 サルガッサムはバルバドスの南海岸と東海岸の砂浜を覆い尽くし、沿岸漁業を営む漁師は船や生計への影響を訴え、住民は海岸で腐敗した海藻の悪臭に耐えられないと述べている。2015年、クライストチャーチ教区のロングビーチで、島の絶滅危惧種であるウミガメ(タイマイ)42匹がこの海藻に捕われて窒息死した。

# Japan aids Caribbean Sargassum fight

BARBADOS IS ONE of five Caribbean countries to benefit from US\$10 million granted by the Japanese government to help in the fight against the influx of Sargassum seaweed.

The project was highlighted by Chitaru Shimizu, director for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean Division of the Latin American and Caribbean Affairs Department of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

He was speaking on Monday in Tokyo to journalists from Barbados and Jamaica who have joined colleagues from the Pacific Islands for the Association for the Promotion of International Cooperation's 2022 Japan Journalism Fellowship.

The other islands which have benefited from the aid to manage the pelagic seaweed are Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St Christopher and Nevis, and St Vincent and the Grenadines.

"This is a project to supply and support the equipment in order to take Sargassum seaweed and also monitor the incoming Sargassum,"

Shimizu said. He added the project will also foster a "network of the information-sharing among those countries affected by Sargassum".

The aims are not only to tackle the seaweed itself, but also promote regional cooperation on the issue, he said.

Shimizu noted the seaweed, which has been blanketing the beaches of Barbados and neighbouring islands for about a decade, has the potential to affect "not only the tourism [industry] but the fisheries as well", both important industries in the affected countries.

"I have been to Antigua and Barbuda and I have seen the Sargassum weed coming over to the beach of beautiful Barbuda. It is such a great threat to those countries [which] depend on tourism because all tourists come to these Caribbean islands to enjoy the beach and then the beaches are full with this Sargassum," he added.

"And this is not just a small trend. It has been around ten years since the Sargassum weed has

been affecting this region, so we have provided the equipment to manage, to take away from the same beaches or to catch it in the sea."

Shimizu said the project was just one way Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs seeks to enhance cooperation with members of CARICOM, and that the aid was distributed to regional countries regardless of their income.

"We have made very significant efforts to strengthen ties with the region by sending our highest officials. We have very strong economic ties and deep ties with the region," he said.

The Sargassum seaweed has blanketed Barbados' South and East Coast beaches, with fishermen complaining about its impact on their boats and livelihoods, and residents saying its stench was unbearable as it rotted on the shore.

It was back in 2015 that 42 of the island's critically endangered Hawksbill sea turtles were trapped by, and later suffocated and died, in the seaweed at Long Beach, Christ Church.