GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

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# Premier Wheatley Reveals Initiatives to Protect the Environment

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# Premier Wheatley Reveals Initiatives to Protect the Environment

Premier and Minister of Finance, Honourable Dr. Natalio D. Wheatley announced several Government initiatives as plans to protect the environment.

He made this statement during the the State of the Territory Address delivered on Tuesday, 9th of June under the theme “Keep moving forward:  Building a Sustainable Nation”.

During the address, Premier highlighted that the Government continues advancing practical measures to strengthen climate resilience, environmental management and sustainable development.

Premier said that , a sustainable nation depends on protecting the environment that sustain the people of the Virgin Islands.

He said, “My fellow Virgin Islanders, our beaches remain among our greatest national treasures. That is why the successful management model at Long Bay, Beef Island is now serving as a blueprint for future beach enhancement throughout the Territory. I am pleased to announce that Brandywine Bay will be developed using a similar model, improving environmental management, beautification and public enjoyment while preserving access for residents and visitors”.

Other outlined efforts to preserve the environment include the Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund, recently launched in the Canary Islands, positioning the Virgin Islands as a regional leader in climate resilience financing.

This Fund will help mobilise resources to address hurricanes, flooding, coastal erosion, climate change and the growing impacts of sargassum affecting communities, beaches and tourism.

Meanwhile The Virgin Islands Environment and Climate Change Policy is being developed to strengthened the national response to climate adaptation, conservation and resilience, while the Blue Economy Roadmap continues opening opportunities in sustainable marine industries and environmental innovation.

The Virgin Islands Government has also established a dedicated Sargassum Management Committee to improve preparedness and response efforts, while

continuing advocacy with fellow Overseas Territories for stronger international climate financing support.

Premier further stated that, “Protecting our environment means protecting our future. Protecting our communities. Protecting our natural beauty. And ensuring that future generations inherit a Virgin Islands that is cleaner, stronger and more resilient than the one we inherited. And together, we will keep moving forward to build a sustainable nation”.

During the State of the Territory, dozens of residents from both the private and public sector, students from various schools came out to witness the event, as Premier Wheatley delivered the address.

The State of the Territory address was established in 2004 and created as part of a broader communications strategy, to provide a dedicated forum, to which the Government could address the community directly. The address outlines the achievements, progress and developments of the Territory of the Virgin Islands.

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## Additional Documents or Media

- premier_wheatley_reveals_initiatives_to_protect_the_environment.pdf