

# HDF pushes clean energy

**THE CARIBBEAN can be a leader in the application of environmental social and governance (ESG) requirements for large scale energy projects.**

Barbadian Meshia Clarke, ESG lead for HDF Caribbean, made that clear recently as the French-based global player, HDF Energy invited its 140 team members from Barbados and around the world to a week of training and team building at its new site in Blanquefort, France.

The gathering came as HDF Energy launched the world's first multi-megawatt proton exchange membrane (PEM) fuel cell factory to solidify its position as a leader in hydrogen development.

Company officials said the "presents a significant opportunity for the advancement of the clean energy transition, particularly for regions like the Caribbean, where renewable energy continues to play a pivotal role in accelerating climate resilience and reducing dependence on fossil fuels, but where challenges of intermittency pose grid stability issues".

This is because HDF Energy's hydrogen fuel cell technology "provides a long-duration storage solution, effectively addressing intermittency challenges, facilitating rapid decarbonisation", they explained.

Clarke, who led the global training modules on ESG called the session "a fantastic opportunity to learn from our colleagues in France and across the globe".

"But equally important, it allowed us to highlight the Caribbean's capacity to lead in the application of ESG requirements for large scale energy projects; and how best to strategically satisfy and maintain these

standards throughout the project's lifecycle within HDF Energy's global pipeline of projects," she added.

HDF Caribbean representatives said this leadership is further exemplified by the Renewable Barbados (RSB) project having reached the critical stage of public disclosure with international financiers like IFC and IDB Invest.

## Financial closure

This large-scale green hydrogen power plant, which is expected to benefit from the supply of fuel cells produced in HDF Energy's factory in France, will provide green baseload electricity and will increase the resilience of the energy grid in Barbados, particularly during extreme rains, tropical storms, or hurricanes.

The project initiated by HDF Energy with Rubis Caribbean as majority shareholder is earmarked to soon reach financial closure.

Thus far, RSB has secured financing commitments from IDB Invest and IFC, contingent on successful completion of the due diligence process, and has received board approval from the Green Climate Fund for the provision of US\$41 million of concessional funding.

Barbadian Aidan Rogers, strategic adviser, HDF Caribbean said that during the training in France, he and other members of the Caribbean team "gained critical insights into the full value chain of green hydrogen energy production, and how these technologies can be effectively applied in the Caribbean context".

"As green hydrogen technology is emerging as one of the most versatile climate change mitigation tools, this knowledge transfer will enable us to drive the

region's green energy initiatives forward with a focus on innovation, sustainability, and resilience," he noted. (SC/PR)



FROM LEFT are Aidan Rogers, strategic advisor, HDF Caribbean, Denell Floris, business developer, HDF Caribbean, Thibault Menage, vice president United States and the Caribbean, HDF Energy, and Meshia Clarke, ESG, gender and project communications Lead, HDF Caribbean. (GPR)