



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CDB to connect island of Caye Caulker to Belize's national electricity grid, making gains in environment, energy security

June 4, 2019, PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad and Tobago / BRIDGETOWN, Barbados – The Board of Directors of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) approved yesterday a loan to connect the island of Caye Caulker, Belize, to the national power grid by submarine cable.

*“The submarine cable will provide cleaner, more secure, and reliable electricity to Caye Caulker,” said **Daniel Best, CDB Director of the Projects Department**.*

It is estimated that energy consumption in Caye Caulker, a renowned tourist destination north of Belize City with a population of around 1,700 people, will double by 2037. Diesel generators are currently producing all electricity in the island.

By connecting Caye Caulker to the national grid from neighbouring Ambergris Caye with a 10.4 km submarine cable, the island's energy consumption will effectively switch to 50% renewable energy. This will replace 730,000 gallons of imported diesel and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 4,000 tons yearly. The average costs of generated power used in the island will be more than halved from USD0.26 per Kwh to USD0.11 per Kwh. The connection by submarine cable is also operationally more reliable and more resilient to storm-surge and hurricane winds than the current diesel generators.

*“CDB’s loan will boost renewable energy usage, reduce drastically the cost of energy, and make gains for the environment in the island,” said **Best**.*

CDB provides a loan of about USD6.8 million, using 45% funds from the European Investment Bank and 55% own resources, to Belize Electricity Limited, which will contribute some USD1.8 million, about a fifth of the total project costs of about USD8.6 million.

As part of the project, the old diesel generator plant, located in an area renowned for eco-tourism, will be decommissioned and rehabilitated. This will reduce pollution and noise, while improving ambient environmental conditions in Caye Caulker.

###

Contact:

(in Port of Spain) Lothar Mikulla, mobile: (246) 826-3412, mikullal@caribank.org

About the Caribbean Development Bank

The Caribbean Development Bank is a regional financial institution established in 1970 for the purpose of contributing to the harmonious economic growth and development of its Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs). In addition to the 19 BMCs, CDB's membership includes four regional non-borrowing members – Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela and five non-regional, non-borrowing members; i.e., Canada, China, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom. CDB's total assets as at December 31, 2017 are USD3.02 billion (bn). These include USD1.64 bn of Ordinary Capital Resources and USD1.38 bn of Special Funds. The Bank is rated Aa1 Stable with Moody's, AA+ Stable with Standard and Poor's and AA+ Stable with Fitch. Read more at caribank.org.

