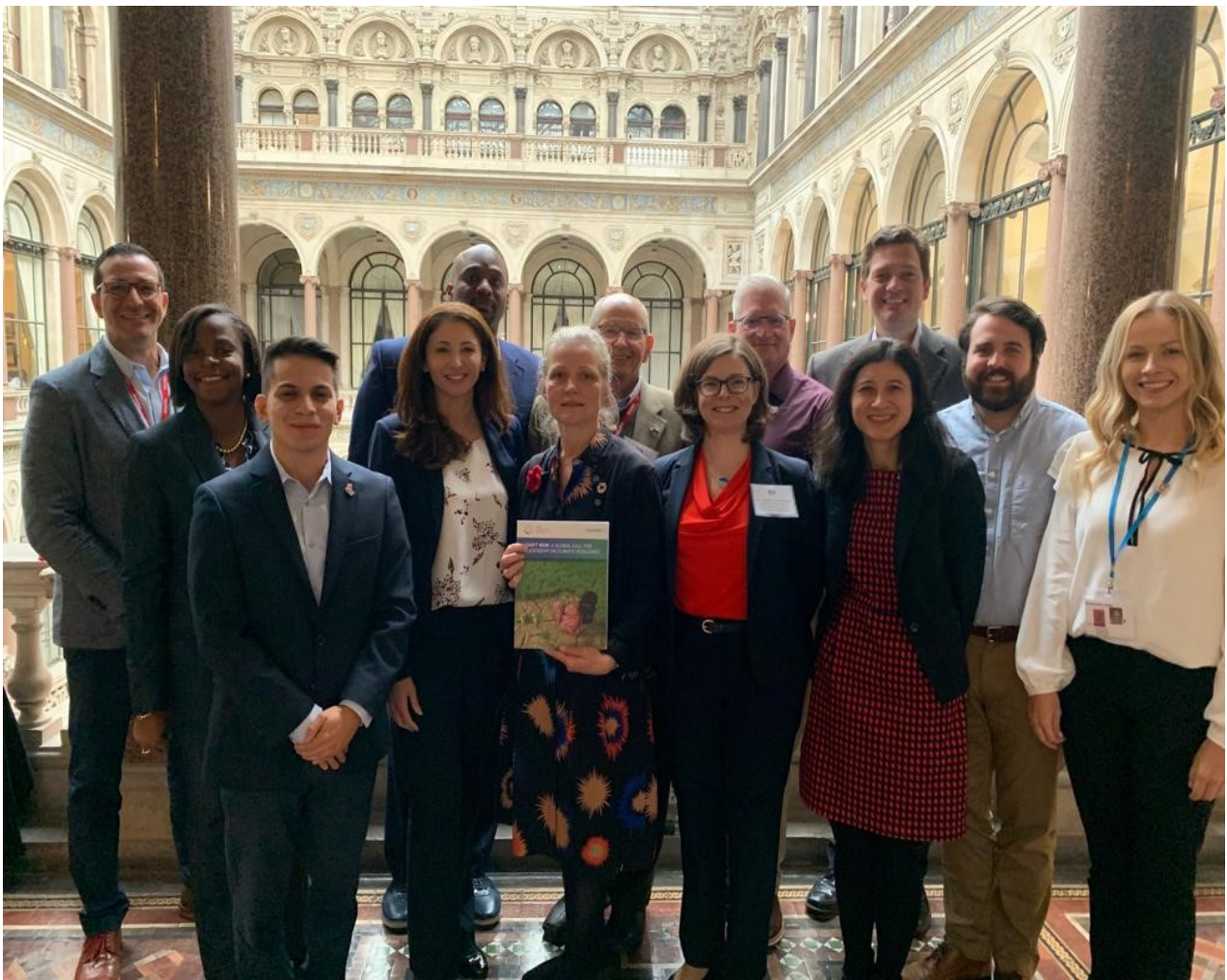


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Adrienne Williams Represents USVI in Resilience Mission to UK

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Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, director of the USVI Office of Disaster Recovery (O.D.R.), recently joined ambassadors from the United Kingdom, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, New Orleans, Alabama, Florida, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Atlanta on a five-day collaborative experience focused on reinforcing economic and cultural ties between the two countries, the O.D.R. has announced.

The British Consulate-General in Miami announced in June that it had selected Mrs. Williams-Octalien to represent the Virgin Islands in a US resilience mission to the United Kingdom.

According to the release, last week, the delegation toured the cities of London, Manchester, and Glasgow and participated in various panel discussions and informational workshops led by UK experts in resilience infrastructure, insurance, engineering, finance, analytics, energy efficiency, disaster recovery, and affordable housing.

The mission's goal was aimed at maintaining and developing relations between the UK and the US by bringing together representatives from each country to deliberate on how to build resilient communities and infrastructures, the release said. The attendees networked with key decision-makers from over 14 European countries, attended workshops on fostering innovations in resilience and listened to presentations from various partner agencies involved in disaster response.

"The forum provided an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas and best practices in disaster recovery," said Mrs. Williams-Octalien. "The UK has noteworthy experience in managing natural and man-made disasters and has developed a systemic approach to incorporating resilience in development of its infrastructure and in disaster response that the USVI can learn from."

She added, "Through various hazard mitigation efforts, the USVI continues to develop strategies and systems to address the increased threats from hurricanes, sea-level rise, droughts, and other hazards. The ability to share best practices not only nationally but globally is tremendous."

"As the need for strengthened resilience increases, states and agencies have a unique opportunity to accelerate development by building a competitive system that attracts foreign direct investment, job creation, innovation, and economic wealth," said Magda Lowisz, vice consul of prosperity, trade and economic policy for the British Consulate-General Miami.

The mission to the United Kingdom was fully funded by the British Consulate-General. The Consulate has identified additional funding and pledges to continue the collaborative initiatives between the two countries.