



Media Contact:

Amber Blackman

Communications Officer

ablackman@barbadosmarinespatialplan.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Barbados Completes First-Ever Bathymetric Survey in Partnership with the Marine Institute of Ireland

Bridgetown, Barbados, 1 November 2025 - Barbados has successfully completed its first national bathymetric survey, marking a major milestone in strengthening the country's understanding and management of its marine environment. The survey was conducted in partnership with the Marine Institute of Ireland and represents a significant step forward in evidence-based ocean planning and sustainable development.

The survey was carried out in September aboard the Irish research vessel RV Celtic Explorer, which spent several weeks at sea mapping a portion of Barbados' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The mission brought together a team of scientists and a group of Barbadian volunteers, who worked collaboratively to collect high-resolution data of the seafloor, now accounting for 25% of the EEZ.

Bathymetric data provides detailed information on underwater terrain and is essential for a wide range of applications, including marine spatial planning, fisheries management, habitat protection, climate resilience, maritime safety, and disaster preparedness.

Dr. Leo Brewster, Director of the Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU), emphasized the national importance of the survey, noting that it represents a critical investment in Barbados' ocean future.

"For the first time, Barbados now has access to detailed seafloor data across a significant portion of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) that will improve how we plan, protect, and sustainably use our ocean space. This survey strengthens our ability to make informed decisions that balance development, conservation, and resilience for present and future generations," Dr. Brewster said.

The survey also provided valuable capacity-building opportunities for Barbadians who participated onboard, gaining hands-on experience in marine science and data collection.

Dr Brewster further highlighted the strong collaboration between the Irish and Barbadian teams and the value of the data collected.

"Mapping the seafloor around Barbados not only fills important data gaps but also supports safer navigation, better environmental management, and long-term planning. The involvement of local volunteers was especially meaningful and contributes to building lasting scientific capacity," he said.

The bathymetric survey directly supports Barbados' ongoing Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) process, providing critical data to guide how marine activities are organized across the country's ocean space.

- END-

About the Barbados Marine Spatial Plan

The Barbados Marine Spatial Plan ("BMSP") speaks to the evidence-based, participatory zoning of Barbados' marine space as well as the requisite administrative and legal arrangements to achieve long-term sustainable ocean management. It is administered by the Marine Spatial Planning Unit (MSP Unit), which is a division of the Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU) of the Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy as the MSP authority in Barbados. The BMSP is being developed in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and the University of the West Indies Cave Hill, and with the financial and technical support of the InterAmerican

Development Bank, to encourage sustainable national socio-economic development, promote cooperation and reduce conflicts between users.