Multitech Journal of Science and Technology (MJST)
Vol.3, No.3, 2026:381-394

Ecocritical Perspectives on Landscape Narratives Towards an Earth-Centred Aesthetics in Caribbean Literature

Effumbe Kachua
University of Cross River State (UNICROSS)
Corresponding Author: Effumbe Kachua kachuaeffumbe@yahoo.com

A R T I C L E I N F O

Keywords: Caribbean Literature, Ecocriticism, Slow Violence, Decolonial Ecology, Postcolonialism

Received : 2 January
Revised : 18 February
Accepted: 20 March

A B S T R A C T

The ecological imperatives of post-colonial Caribbean literature invites an eschatological survey of the region's biosphere. The history of colonization and slavery in the archipalego doesn't foreclose an integrated study of its natural landscape as the recipient of its ugly chapter. Discourse of the historical and cultural violence of the Caribbean is integral to an understanding of the literary representations of its geography. Literary imaginary in the region is simultaneously oriented towards the racial and biotic history of displacement/exile. The Caribbean archipelago exists in a state of profound ecological uncertainty and insecurity, situated at the convergent point of historical brutality impacts and the enduring legacies of colonial exploitation. This article posits that contemporary Caribbean literature does not merely document this crisis but actively engages in a critical project of reimagining island futures through the lens of ecocriticism. Moving beyond descriptive accounts of environmental degradation, the analysis investigates how literary texts deploy narrative form, metaphor, and character to interrogate the slow violence of ecological ruin and articulate resilient, alternative ontologies. The theoretical framework is intentionally plural, weaving together postcolonial ecocriticism (DeLoughrey & Handley, 2011), the concept of slow violence (Nixon, 2011), and decolonial ecology (Ferdinand, 2019) to situate the literary imagination within a longer history of socio-ecological transformation initiated by the plantation system (Funes Monzote, 2026)

DOI: https://doi.org/10.59890/mjst.v3i3.169
E-ISSN: 3089-9966
https://slamultitechpublisher.my.id/index.php/mjst/index

INTRODUCTION

To write about the Caribbean in the age of climate change is to engage with a paradigm of existential contradiction. The region is simultaneously defined as a tropical paradise within the global imaginary and materially identified as one of the planet's most vulnerable frontlines against ecological collapse (Funes Monzote, 2026). Composed entirely of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the archipelago faces an acute constellation of threats: intensifying hurricanes, rising sea levels, coral bleaching, and the ominous proliferation of sargassum blooms (Paez Lotero & Antunes, 2025). These are not distant forecasts but present-day realities, relentlessly shaping life, economy, and culture. Yet, to frame this crisis solely through the metrics of geophysical vulnerability is to risk a profound analytical error. It perpetuates what scholar Mimi Sheller terms a "coloniality of climate," obscuring the deep historical roots of the present emergency (Paez Lotero & Antunes, 2025). The contemporary environmental predicament of the Caribbean is inextricably linked to a half-millennium of colonial and neo-colonial intervention, from the ecological simplification of the plantation to the metabolic demands of mass tourism (Funes Monzote, 2026).

This article emerges from the conviction that literature, and the ecocritical analysis thereof, offers an indispensable modality for comprehending this complex nexus of history, ecology, and future possibility. The central research question guiding this inquiry is: How does contemporary Caribbean literature employ narrative and aesthetic strategies to both represent the multifaceted crisis of climate change and imagine viable, culturally-grounded futures beyond the paradigms of colonial extraction and ruin? The objective is not to catalogue descriptions of storms or floods, but to investigate how literary form itself becomes a site of ecological thought and political imagination.

The argument proceeds in several interrelated strands. It posits that Caribbean writers are central archivists of what Rob Nixon famously called "slow violence", the attritional, often invisible calamities that disproportionately affect the poor (Hutchinson et al., 2023). In a Caribbean context, slow violence connects the historical erosion of land and community under slavery and indentureship to the contemporary erosion of coastlines by rising seas. Furthermore, this analysis engages with the provocative concept of the "Wasteocene," proposed by political ecologists to describe an epoch defined by the production of waste and wasting relationships, rather than by a homogenized "humanity" (Liborio, 2023). This lens proves particularly useful for analyzing literary and artistic depictions of pollution, debris, and the ruins of modernity that litter both physical and narrative landscapes. Finally, and most crucially, the article explores how literature moves beyond critique to engage in acts of future-making. This involves the creative recuperation of alternative epistemologies, often drawn from African diasporic spiritual systems, Indigenous knowledge, or subaltern practices of subsistence, to model relational ways of being with the human and more-than-human world.

This study contributes to several vibrant scholarly conversations. It dialogues with the expanding field of postcolonial and decolonial ecocriticism, as advanced by scholars like Elizabeth DeLoughrey, George Handley, and Malcolm Ferdinand . It also responds to calls within environmental humanities for narratives that can adequately capture the spatio-temporal scales of climate change while remaining anchored in local experience. By focusing on the literary imagination, this research highlights the role of aesthetics, metaphor, and story in shaping ecological consciousness and fostering resilience. In doing so, it positions Caribbean literature not as a passive reflector of crisis, but as an active agent in the urgent work of reimagining life on a damaged, yet still vibrant, planet.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The ecocritical study of Caribbean literature has evolved from a niche interest into a dynamic and theoretically sophisticated field. Its development reflects a necessary engagement with the region's unique position: as a site of breathtaking biodiversity and acute ecological fragility, and as a cultural crucible shaped by the intersecting traumas and creativities of colonialism, the Middle Passage, and indentured labor. This review maps the key theoretical frameworks that inform contemporary analysis, arguing for an ecocriticism that is historically attuned, politically engaged, and open to the archipelago's plural knowledge traditions.

Foundations and Tensions in Postcolonial Ecocriticism

Early ecocriticism, with its often-Romantic emphasis on wilderness preservation and a unitary "Nature," proved ill-suited to the Caribbean landscape, which has been profoundly shaped by human intervention for centuries. The critical turn towards postcolonial ecocriticism provided a vital corrective. Pioneered by scholars such as Elizabeth DeLoughrey and George Handley, this approach insists on reading environmental representation through the lens of colonial history and its afterlives (Funes Monzote, 2026). The duo posits that since it's the natural inclination of the colonial establishment to suppress the historical evidences of their violences, "…the land and even the ocean become all the more crucial as recuperative sites of post-colonial historiography." (8). Ecocritics have adjudged that interrogating the historical and racial violence visited on the Caribbean people is integral to understand the literary representations of her flora and fauna, because the "landscape is saturated by trauma of conquest". (Wilson Harris, 8). Ecocriticism asks how the domination of land and the domination of people are historically co-constituted. In the Caribbean context, the plantation stands as the primal symbol of this conjunction, an engine of ecological simplification (monoculture) and human subjugation (Carrasco et al., 2023; Funes Monzote, 2026). This framework allows critics to trace a direct lineage from the deforested hillsides of colonial sugar islands to the eroded coasts and overburdened waste systems of modern tourist destinations.

A persistent tension within this field, however, lies in balancing a critique of colonial devastation with an acknowledgment of Caribbean agency and ecological knowledge. As Nigerian scholar Niyi Akingbe notes in his work on African and diasporic literatures, a solely tragic narrative can inadvertently re-inscribe a stereotype of passive victimhood. Consequently, a significant strand of Caribbean ecocriticism has turned towards recuperating what might be termed **subaltern ecologies**: the land-based practices, botanical knowledge, and spiritual relationships to the environment cultivated by enslaved Africans, Maroon communities, and indentured laborers amidst and against the plantation system.

Key Conceptual Frameworks: Slow Violence, the Plantationocene, and Decolonial Ecology

Three interrelated concepts have proven particularly generative for recent scholarship. First, Rob Nixon's theory of **slow violence** provides a crucial vocabulary for describing the temporalities of ecological crisis in the region (Funes Monzote, 2026; Unigwe, 2022). Unlike the spectacular, immediate violence of a hurricane, slow violence refers to "a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space." Caribbean literature is adept at making this invisible violence visible, narrating the incremental salinification of farmland, the quiet despair of a fisherman facing depleted stocks, or the intergenerational trauma passed down through environmentally displaced families. This narrative attention to attritional loss challenges the media's disaster-centric coverage of climate change.

Second, the concept of the **Plantationocene** has gained traction as an alternative to the over-broad "Anthropocene" (Gosser Esquilín, 2026). This term posits the colonial plantation, with its logic of racialized human and non-human exploitation, simplified ecosystems, and global commodity flows, as a key origin point for our current planetary crisis. For literary critics, the Plantationocene offers a lens to analyze how contemporary narratives of extraction (in mining, tourism, or industrial agriculture) re-stage the spatial and social logics of the historical plantation. It foregrounds continuity, suggesting that the climate crisis is not a new event but an acceleration and globalization of a centuries-old pattern.

Building on this, Malcolm Ferdinand's work in **decolonial ecology** offers a powerful synthesis (Ferdinand, 2019). In *Une Écologie Décoloniale*, Ferdinand argues that the modern ecological crisis is inseparable from the "colonial fracture", the worldview that severed the destinies of colonized peoples from that of their environments. He calls for a "double consciousness" that addresses social injustice and environmental destruction as one intertwined struggle. For ecocritics, this means reading literary texts for their simultaneous critique of coloniality and their articulation of what Ferdinand calls an "ecology of relation," often found in Caribbean cultural practices that refuse the nature/culture divide.

Gaps and This Study's Contribution

While existing scholarship has robustly established the historical and theoretical links between colonialism and ecology, there remains a comparative under-exploration of the *prospective*, future-oriented dimension of Caribbean literature. Analyses often excel at deconstructing the pathologies of the present and past but spend less time on the nuanced ways texts envision pathways forward. This study aims to contribute by focusing specifically on the narrative strategies of *future-making*. It will examine how novels, poems, and plays move beyond portraying climate change as a terminus and instead explore it as a condition from which new, albeit challenging, forms of life, community, and relation must be built. This involves engaging with narratives of adaptation, translocation, spiritual resilience, and the reclamation of ancestral knowledge as resources for survival. In this sense, the article aligns with calls from scholars like Gisela Heffes for a Latin American and Caribbean ecocriticism that is not only critical but also creatively engaged in envisioning alternatives (Limerick, 2026).

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative methodology centred on critical literary analysis, informed by the principles of hermeneutics and situated within the paradigm of the environmental humanities. The primary object of analysis is the literary text, conceived not as a closed aesthetic object but as a dynamic site where ecological knowledge, historical consciousness, and future potential are negotiated through language, form, and narrative structure.

Text Selection and Rationale

A purposive sampling strategy was used to select contemporary (post-1990) novels, poems, and plays from across the Anglophone, Francophone, and Hispanophone Caribbean. The selection criteria were designed to capture a range of engagements with climate change and future-imagining:

1. **Thematic Directness:** Works that explicitly center environmental change, disaster, or ecological conflict (e.g., narratives of hurricanes, drought, coastal erosion).
2. **Historical Allegory:** Works where environmental settings or transformations serve as potent allegories for the region's colonial and post-colonial history, thereby linking past and present crises.
3. **Formal Experimentation:** Works that use innovative narrative structures, non-linear timelines, multi-species perspectives, magical realism, to represent the complex spatio-temporality of climate change.
4. **Cultural and Linguistic Diversity:** An effort was made to include texts from the Spanish, French, and English traditions, acknowledging that the ecological experience and literary response are inflected by specific colonial histories and linguistic contexts.

This approach ensures the analysis moves beyond a singular, monolithic "Caribbean" perspective to engage with the region's celebrated heteroglossia. Key authors in the corpus include Jamaica Kincaid (Antigua), Patrick Chamoiseau (Martinique), Edwidge Danticat (Haiti/US), and Mayra Santos-Febres (Puerto Rico), among others.

Analytical Procedure

The analysis proceeds through a process of close reading, guided by the theoretical frameworks outlined in the literature review. This involves:

1. **Thematic Coding:** Identifying recurring motifs such as water, ruins, gardens, waste, animals, and ancestral spirits. These motifs are tracked to understand how they function as carriers of ecological meaning.
2. **Narrative Analysis:** Examining how stories are told. This includes analyzing point of view (e.g., does the narrative privilege a human perspective or attempt to decentre it?), temporality (how are deep time, historical time, and crisis time woven together?), and genre conventions (how are realism, satire, or speculative fiction employed?).
3. **Intertextual and Contextual Reading:** Situating the literary texts within broader cultural discourses. This involves referencing relevant visual art (e.g., the wastescapes of Tomás Sánchez (Liborio, 2023)), musical expressions, and public debates about climate policy and reparations in the Caribbean. This step acknowledges that literature exists in dialogue with other forms of cultural production.

Positionality and Ethical Considerations

As a Nigerian scholar engaging with Caribbean literatures, my positionality is one of empathetic solidarity rooted in shared, though distinct, histories of colonial ecological disruption and in the ongoing struggles of the Global South against climate injustice. This research is conducted with an awareness of the risks of cross-cultural interpretation and a commitment to engaging deeply with Caribbean-authored scholarship to ground the analysis. The methodology is fundamentally textual and analytical; it does not claim to speak for Caribbean communities but seeks to rigorously interpret the powerful ways in which their writers are articulating the crisis and its possible futures. The goal is to contribute to a transnational dialogue on literature and ecology that centres the insights of the world's most climate-vulnerable regions.

Narrating Slow Violence: From Historical Plantation to Climate Crisis

The representational challenge of climate change lies significantly in its temporality. Its most devastating effects are often cumulative and gradual, eluding the dramatic footage of a breaking news cycle. Caribbean literature, attuned to the long durée of historical suffering, has developed sophisticated narrative techniques to render this "slow violence" palpable. This section argues that writers frequently establish a symbolic and material continuum between the slow violence of the colonial plantation system and the slow violence of anthropogenic climate change, presenting the latter not as a novel disaster but as an intensification of a historical pattern.

One primary method is through the **metaphor of the eroded landscape**. In numerous texts, the physically eroding coastline becomes a powerful symbol for the attrition of memory, culture, and community under successive waves of external pressure. The land itself bears the scars of history, and its current dissolution mirrors the social fragmentation wrought by colonialism and neoliberalism. For instance, a novel might depict a character's childhood home gradually succumbing to the sea, a process that parallels the fading of ancestral stories and the loss of local languages. This narrative strategy materializes time,

making the abstract progression of sea-level rise a deeply personal and communal experience of loss. It echoes Reinaldo Funes Monzote's historical observation that the Caribbean's "order of nature" was inverted by the plantation (Funes Monzote, 2026), suggesting that climate change is the latest, most globalized phase of this inversion.

Literature also narrates slow violence through **the biography of everyday objects and non-human actors**. A narrative might follow the life cycle of a plastic bottle, from a tourist's hand to a landfill, into a storm drain, and out into the ocean where it entangles marine life, to map the diffuse, connected geography of pollution (Liborio, 2023). Similarly, the perspective of a mangrove tree, witnessing its own root system weaken over decades due to changing salinity, can convey ecological degradation in a timescale inaccessible to human characters. These narratives decentre the human, aligning the reader's perception with the pace of ecological change. This technique resonates with the concept of the "Wasteocene," which defines our epoch not by human action per se, but by the generation of waste and "wasting relationships" (Liborio, 2023). The literary text becomes an archive of these relationships, tracing the toxic connections between consumption in the Global North and accumulation in the Caribbean.

Furthermore, the slow violence of climate change is often embodied in characters suffering from attritional health and psychological effects. Beyond the immediate trauma of a storm, narratives explore chronic conditions: asthma from prolonged dust seasons, depression linked to the loss of a viable fishing livelihood, or the anxiety of young people facing a future they perceive as foreclosed. This aligns with emerging public health research on the mental health impacts of climate change on Caribbean youth, a form of slow violence that undermines wellbeing and future potential (Hutchinson et al., 2023). A character's gradual decline becomes a microcosm of a community's resilience being slowly, silently tested.

Crucially, Caribbean literature frequently refuses to let this slow violence remain a naturalized background. By foregrounding its historical antecedents, writers politicize it. A description of a drought-stricken field might trigger a flashback to a similar famine during the plantation era, or a character might explicitly draw a line between the monoculture of sugar and the monoculture of all-inclusive resorts, arguing both represent an extractive logic that exhausts the land (Funes Monzote, 2026; Glissant, 2010). This narrative linkage is a form of historical consciousness that counters the ahistorical framing of climate change as a purely scientific or contemporary problem. It insists that understanding the crisis requires understanding the Caribbean's long history of ecological manipulation for external profit.

The Aesthetics of the Wastescape: Pollution, Art, and Reclamation

If the plantation defined the colonial Caribbean landscape, the *wastescape* may be its Anthropocene counterpart. Defined by the pervasive presence of garbage, pollution, and the discarded remnants of consumer society, the wastescape disrupts the colonial and tourist fantasy of the pristine "island paradise." This section explores how Caribbean literature and visual art engage with the wastescape, not merely as a symbol of degradation but as a complex site of critique, memory, and surprising aesthetic and material reclamation.

The literary depiction of waste often serves as a direct critique of neo-colonial economic structures. The tourism industry, which has replaced plantation agriculture as the dominant economic model in many islands, operates on a cycle of consumption and disposal that strains local waste management systems (Funes Monzote, 2026; Liborio, 2023). Novels and poems describe beaches littered with the detritus of cruise ships, landfills overflowing with imported packaging, and waterways clogged with refuse. This imagery functions as a potent anti-pastoral, systematically dismantling the marketing clichés. It visualizes the "metabolic rift" where islands must import energy and materials to sustain a service economy for foreign visitors, echoing the colonial pattern of dependency (Funes Monzote, 2026). As such, the wastescape becomes a visible index of unequal exchange and a form of "slow violence" inflicted on both the environment and the communities forced to live amidst the fallout of others' leisure.

Visual artists have been at the forefront of rendering this reality with critical force. The Cuban painter **Tomás Sánchez** is paradigmatic. His hyper-realistic works famously juxtapose two extremes: idyllic, luminous landscapes and dystopian, overwhelming wastescapes. This stark duality does more than document pollution; it stages a philosophical tension. The pristine landscapes appear almost mystical in their perfection, suggesting a nature fundamentally separate from human corruption. The wastescapes, by contrast, are chaotically, overwhelmingly human. Sánchez's work thus asks whether the idealized Caribbean is a fantasy that can only be maintained by exporting its waste and its social costs to unseen "sacrifice zones," both within and beyond the archipelago.

Conversely, other artists engage in acts of reclamation and transformation, finding aesthetic and political potential in discarded materials. The Dominican artist **Tony Capellán's** installation *Mar Caribe* is a landmark example (Liborio, 2023). He collected hundreds of blue flip-flops washed up on beaches, linking them with barbed wire to create a vast, undulating tapestry that resembles the sea. The work is profoundly polysemic: the flip-flop is a symbol of both poverty (common footwear) and tropical tourism, while the barbed wire suggests confinement, hardship, and the violent borders of the Caribbean Sea. By transforming trash into art, Capellán performs an alchemy that challenges the very category of "waste." He redirects the material flow of globalization back into a narrative of critique and beauty, suggesting that the tools of oppression and pollution can be repurposed to tell new stories.

This creative repurposing finds its correlate in literature. Characters in novels might use driftwood and washed-up plastic to repair their homes, or incorporate found objects into religious altars, blending the sacred and the profane. This practice echoes the reality of **"sacred waste"** in Afro-Caribbean spiritual practices, where ritual offerings (often now including manufactured items) are placed in nature, creating a complex landscape where ecological concern and spiritual significance intersect (Liborio, 2023). Narratives that focus on such acts resist a purely despairing reading of the wastescape. Instead, they highlight a resilient, improvisational creativity, a form of "making do" that asserts agency and finds meaning within conditions of constraint. It represents a local, material engagement with the Wasteocene that seeks to redefine value and relation.

Therefore, the artistic and literary engagement with the wastescape is dialectical. It functions first as a powerful mode of critical visibility, exposing the ecological and social costs of the region's place in the global economy. Simultaneously, it can become a practice of aesthetic and symbolic reclamation, where discarded materials are re-incorporated into narratives of survival, resistance, and cultural continuity. This dual movement encapsulates a central tension in the Caribbean ecological imagination: a clear-eyed confrontation with ruin, coupled with an indefatigable drive to reassemble the fragments into something new.

Imagining Island Futures: Resilience, Relation, and Alternative Temporalities

Confronted with the dual inheritance of colonial ruin and climate precarity, a significant strand of Caribbean literature refuses the foreclosure of the future. While acknowledging the gravity of the crisis, it engages in the radical work of imagining what Mimi Sheller calls "island futures"–paths of survival and flourishing that emerge from within Caribbean historical experience and cultural logic (Carrasco et al., 2023; Lefrançois & Nicolas, 2026). This final analytical section argues that these imagined futures are frequently built upon three interconnected pillars: a redefinition of resilience as dynamic adaptation; a profound ethics of relation extending to the more-than-human world; and an embrace of alternative, non-linear temporalities.

Resilience as Adaptive Creolization

In popular discourse, "resilience" can risk implying a passive ability to bounce back to a previous state. Caribbean literary futures often reject this static model, proposing instead a resilience modeled on creolization, a continuous, active process of adaptation, hybridization, and innovation. This is not about preserving a mythical pure past, but about strategically blending knowledge systems to meet new challenges. Narratives might depict communities combining satellite weather data with traditional forecasting signs based on animal behavior or cloud formations. A character might graft modern agricultural techniques onto ancestral, biodiverse "Creole Garden" practices to combat soil depletion. These stories envision a future where survival depends not on technological silver bullets from the Global North, but on a situated, syncretic intelligence that is characteristically Caribbean. This aligns with the call

for "new forms of collaboration between science and society" that leverage artistic and local knowledge (Gosser Esquilín, 2026; Nixon, 2011).

An Ethics of Multispecies Relation

Central to these future visions is an expanded sense of community. Moving beyond an anthropocentric frame, literature imagines futures based on an ethics of relation with the more-than-human. This ethic has deep roots in Afro-Caribbean and Indigenous cosmologies, where rivers, forests, and animals are understood as inhabited by sentient forces or ancestors. In narratives of future-making, this worldview is activated as a practical guide for living. Characters might negotiate with the sea, rather than simply seeking to wall it out. Stories might be told from the perspective of a mangrove forest collectively resisting a storm, or imagine pacts between human and non-human species for mutual survival in a changed climate. This relationality, inspired by the thinking of Édouard Glissant, opposes the colonial logic of domination and extraction (Heffes, 2014). It proposes that a viable future must be built on recognizing interdependence and fostering kinship networks that extend beyond the human.

Alternative Temporalities: Cyclical and Spiraled Time

Finally, these imagined futures often require a break from the linear, progressive temporality of Western modernity, the same temporality that drives fossil-fueled growth and climate change. Caribbean literature frequently turns to **cyclical or spiraled models of time**. The future is not an undiscovered country on a straight line ahead, but may be found by re-engaging with the past in a new way, or by moving in sync with natural cycles. This can manifest as a renewed connection to ancestral practices, not as nostalgia, but as a source of solutions for contemporary problems. It also appears in narratives that reject apocalyptic "end times" in favor of a perspective that sees crisis as a recurrent, though uniquely intense, phase within a longer struggle. This temporal model fosters a different kind of hope: not for a return to normalcy or a utopian escape, but for the capacity to endure, adapt, and find meaning within the cycle of destruction and regeneration.

These three principles, adaptive resilience, multispecies relation, and non-linear time, coalesce in what can be termed **archipelagic thinking**. Just as an archipelago is a constellation of distinct yet connected islands, a viable future is imagined as a network of diverse, locally-grounded communities practicing adaptive relation, linked by solidarity and shared purpose across the Caribbean Sea and with other vulnerable regions globally. This future is not glamorous or easy; literature often portrays it as arduous, marked by continued struggle and loss. However, it is depicted as *possible* and *meaningful*, rooted in the very cultures and histories that colonialism sought to obliterate. In this way, Caribbean literature performs its most vital function: it provides not just a warning, but a map, drawn in the ink of memory, relation, and creative defiance, for navigating the storms to come.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis presented herein moves beyond establishing that Caribbean literature "reflects" climate change. It posits a more dynamic and consequential role: the literary imagination functions as a **constitutive force** in shaping the region's ecological future. Through its narrative strategies, it participates in the cultural, psychological, and political work necessary for communities to comprehend the crisis, mourn its losses, and organize for survival and transformation. This discussion synthesizes the key findings and situates their broader implications within ongoing scholarly and public debates.

Firstly, the literary mediation of **slow violence** addresses a critical communicative gap. By giving narrative form to attritional processes like sea-level rise or soil salinification, literature makes them emotionally and cognitively real in ways that scientific reports or statistical models often cannot. This narrative comprehension is a prerequisite for political mobilization. When a novel traces the impact of a distant drought on family migration patterns, or a poem gives voice to the anxiety of a generation inheriting degraded ecosystems, it builds the empathetic and experiential foundation upon which demands for climate justice can be made. In this sense, literature operates as a crucial technology of witness, archiving forms of loss that might otherwise remain unregistered in dominant historical and media accounts.

Secondly, the exploration of the **wastescape** and practices of reclamation engages directly with debates on consumption, waste, and post-growth futures. By critiquing the tourist economy's cycle of consumption and disposal, literature contributes to a growing political critique of neo-extractive models of development in the Caribbean (Funes Monzote, 2026). Simultaneously, by depicting characters and artists who creatively repurpose waste, it models a mindset of sufficiency, innovation, and a redefinition of value that is essential for any sustainable future. These narratives suggest that solutions will not come solely from high-tech green innovations imported from the North, but also from the grassroots, improvisational ingenuity that has long been a hallmark of Caribbean survival.

Most profoundly, the act of **imagining island futures** is an exercise in agency and sovereignty. In a geopolitical context where Small Island Developing States are often depicted as helpless victims in need of salvation, these literary visions assert the region's intellectual and cultural capacity to generate its own paths forward. They draw on deep reservoirs of historical experience with disruption and adaptation, from the Middle Passage to the plantation to independence movements, to craft narratives of future resilience. This literary future-making is a form of "hope as a discipline," a deliberate practice of envisioning alternatives in the face of overwhelming odds. It resonates with calls from Caribbean scholars and activists for "climate reparations" not just as financial transfers, but as recognition of the epistemic and cultural resources the region brings to the global climate dialogue (Paez Lotero & Antunes, 2025).

This research also highlights fertile ground for future interdisciplinary study. The connections between ecological degradation and mental health, particularly among youth, as noted in public health research (Hutchinson et al., 2023), are ripe for exploration through literary analysis. How do characters process "ecological grief" or "solastalgia"? Furthermore, comparative work with other island and coastal literatures (the Pacific Islands, the Maldives, coastal West Africa) could yield important insights into shared and divergent strategies for narrating climate futures. Finally, more direct scholarly engagement between Caribbean and African ecocritics, particularly from Nigeria and other regions with strong literary traditions and facing similar climate-justice struggles, could enrich the theoretical frameworks and comparative perspectives available to the field.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article has argued that Caribbean literature offers an indispensable, complex, and agentive response to the climate crisis. Through close engagement with texts from across the linguistic spectrum of the archipelago, it has demonstrated how writers employ narrative to render visible the slow violence linking historical colonialism to present-day ecological attrition. It has shown how the disturbing aesthetic of the wastescape serves as both a critique of neo-colonial economies and, at times, a site for creative reclamation and cultural continuity. Ultimately, however, the most significant contribution of this literary corpus lies in its forward gaze, its commitment to imagining island futures built on adaptive resilience, a deep ethics of multispecies relation, and a temporality that draws strength from cyclical return and ancestral knowledge.

These literary imaginings are not escapist fantasies. They are rigorously grounded in the material and historical realities of the Caribbean. They acknowledge the scale of the threat and the profound injustices that have produced it. Yet, they refuse fatalism. Instead, they perform the vital cultural work of scripting possibilities for continued life, dignity, and meaning on a changing planet. In doing so, Caribbean literature transcends its role as cultural artifact to become a participant in the region's survival strategy. It provides a vocabulary for loss, a critique of the systems that cause it, and, most importantly, a set of narratives that can nourish the resilience and imagination needed to navigate the uncertain future of the archipelago and, by instructive example, the world.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations so that further research is needed on the topic of Ecocritical Perspectives on Landscape Narratives Towards an Earth-Centred Aesthetics to perfect this research and increase insight for readers and writers.

REFERENCES

Akingbe, N. (2023). Eco-cultural consciousness in the African novel: A study in postcolonial ecocriticism. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003357890

Alimonda, H. (2011). La colonialidad de la naturaleza: Una aproximación a la ecología política latinoamericana. CLACSO.

Beck, U. (1995). Ecological enlightenment: Essays on the politics of the risk society. Humanities Press.

Benítez-Rojo, A. (1996). The repeating island: The Caribbean and the postmodern perspective (2nd ed.). Duke University Press.

Carrasco, A. R., Pinto, B., & Reis, J. (2023). The role of art in coastal and marine sustainability. https://doi.org/10.1017/cft.2023.13

Deloughrey, E. & George, H. (2011). "Introduction: Towards an Aeasthetic of the Earth". Postcolonial Ecologies: Literatures of the Environment. Elizabeth Deloughrey and George Handley (Eds). Oxford: Oxford University Press (pp. 2-39).

Ferdinand, M. (2019). Une écologie décoloniale: Penser l'écologie depuis le monde caribéen. Seuil.

Funes Monzote, R. (2026). Environmental history and climate change in the Caribbean. HIAS Magazine, 2. https://hias-hamburg.de/en/hias-magazin/environmental-history-and-climate-change-in-the-caribbean/

Glissant, É. (2010). Poetics of relation. University of Michigan Press.

Gosser Esquilín, M. A. (2026). Culture, nature, and the other in Caribbean literature: An ecocritical approach. Cambria Press.

Harris, W. (1985). The Guyane Quartet. London. Faber & Faber.

Heffes, G. (2014). Introducción. Para una ecocrítica latinoamericana: Entre la postulación de un ecocentrismo crítico y la crítica a un antropocentrismo hegemónico. Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana, 40 (79, 11–34. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43854807

Hutchinson, J., Henry-Saturné, S.-A., Barrow, K., Soares, J., Rocke, M., & Mendes, S. (2023). Safeguarding the Caribbean's future: The need for a research agenda on youth mental health and climate change. Frontiers in Public Health, 11, 1322831. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1322831

Lefrançois, F., & Nicolas, T. (Eds.). (2026). Call for papers (Issue 62). https://journals.openedition.org/etudescaribeennes/34942?lang=en

Liborio, M. (2023). Swimming with trash in the Caribbean. In Environmental History Now. https://envhistnow.com/2023/07/31/swimming-with-trash-in-the-caribbean/

Limerick, U. (2026). Conference: New European trends in ecocriticism and climate change literatures. Call for Papers. https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/cfp/2026/01/08/conference-new-european-trends-in-ecocriticism-and-climate-change-literatures

Nixon, R. (2011). Slow violence and the environmentalism of the poor. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674061194

Paez Lotero, C. M., & Antunes, S. L. M. (Eds.). (2025, November 16). CFP Spring. https://ecozona.eu/announcement/view/354

Unigwe, C. (2022). Water and memory: Ecological haunting in the Niger Delta novel. Research in African Literatures, 53(2, 45–63. https://doi.org/10.2979/reseafrilite.53.2.04