

INTRODUCTION

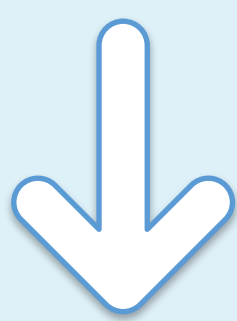
► Reefs in the Caribbean make up 9-10% of the total reefs on Earth and over 100 million people benefit from coral reefs with an additional 41 million that are highly dependent on reefs for their food or livelihood.

► The coral reef-associated Caribbean tourist sector is valued at \$9.5 billion annually, yet it is estimated that live coral abundance has dwindled to 14% from a previous 70% in the time frame of the 1970s to 2003

This study explores the semantic attention that the Caribbean Community regional organization (CARICOM) places on the coral reef crisis using quantitative content analysis of CARICOM documents.

METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS

To understand the focus and goals of CARICOM, the regional governing international organization for the Caribbean, quantitative content analysis was used. A published dictionary for ocean values (Lobo and Jacques 2017) was used to search for key words under several categories of issues in CARICOM annual reports across the most recent ten years. Content analysis assumes that attention to each category represents values and goals for the organization and that categories with less attention are less valued by the organization.



RESULTS

The QCA results are as shown in Table 1. Economic/Utilitarian were the most frequent in 1883/4396 and 42.83% of the total words searched. The important topics do not exceed 3% and are not less than .43%. Economic/Utilitarian, Government, and Social values take the vast majority of percentage shown at 82.82%.

	FREQUENCY	% SHOWN	% PROCESSED
ECONOMIC/UTILITARIAN	1883	42.83%	2.58%
GOVERN	1207	27.46%	1.65%
SOCIAL_VALUES	551	12.53%	0.75%
SCIENCE	235	5.35%	0.32%
SUSTAINABLE_DEVELOPMENT	132	3.00%	0.18%
PRINCIPLES_OF_SUSTAINABILITY	103	2.34%	0.14%
ENVIRONMENTAL/ECOLOGICAL	81	1.84%	0.11%
CLIMATE	65	1.48%	0.09%
EQUITY	36	0.82%	0.05%
FOOD	30	0.68%	0.04%
BIODIVERSITY	19	0.43%	0.03%
POVERTY	15	0.34%	0.02%
GENDER	14	0.32%	0.02%
IUU	12	0.27%	0.02%
POLLUTION	12	0.27%	0.02%
PROCESSES	1	0.02%	0.00%

Table 1

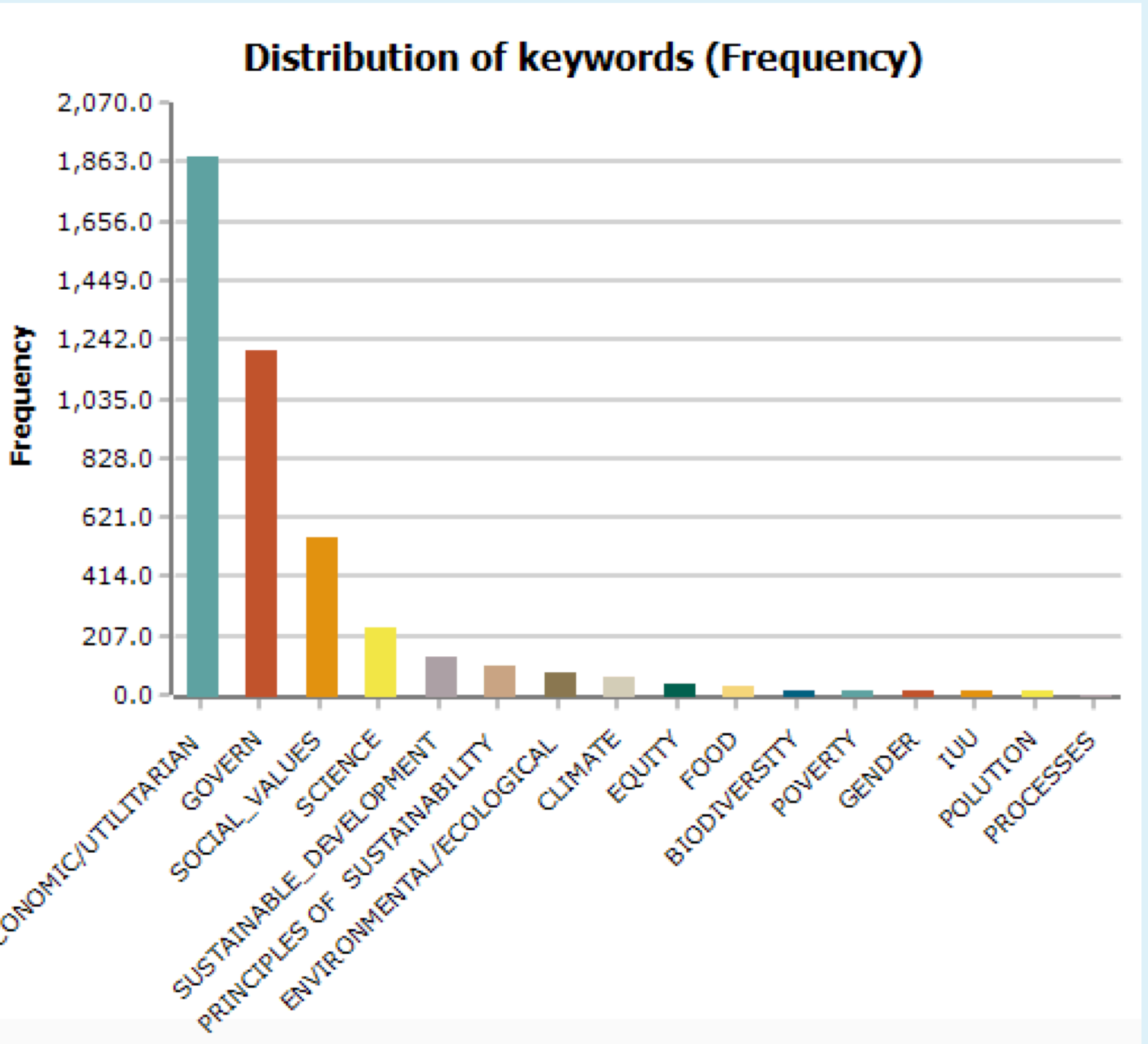


Table 2

Human analysis resulted in the findings that the topic of Sustainable Ocean Economy, the most specific topic, was only mentioned in 2019-2020. Marine Environmental Conservation was not referenced until 2017 when CARICOM hosted a conference on the oceans, but did not make any legal actions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the QCA, environmental issues are not prioritized by CARICOM. CARICOM's failure to even acknowledge Sustainable Ocean Economy and Marine Environmental Conservation before 2019 is shocking as so much of the economy is dependent on tourism (32% average)

From the QCA and human analysis, it is concluded that there is little urgency from the government which makes coral sustainability and preservation almost impossible. The lack of federal aid places much of the emphasis on conservation on individual states and communities who don't possess the same authority of the federal government. With an additional lack of fully protected coral reef areas, the coral reefs remain highly publicized yet still at high risk due to government ineffectiveness.

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