



# Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States



"An Environmental Agenda for the Eastern Caribbean"

## FOREWORD

Article 24 of the Protocol of Eastern Caribbean Economic Union to the Revised Treaty of Basseterre (RTB) speaks explicitly to each Protocol Member State implementing the St. George's Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability in the OECS to minimize environmental vulnerability, improve environmental management and protect the region's natural (including historical and cultural) resource base for optimal social and economic benefits for Member States<sup>1</sup>.

In 1999, five years after the launch of the Barbados Plan of Action, the OECS Ministers of Environment instructed the Secretariat to design a broad environmental framework which was indigenous and which reflected the issues and challenges in environmental management and sustainable development faced by OECS Small Island Developing States (SIDS). This gave birth to the St. George's Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability in the OECS (SGD) in 2001. The SGD was an effort to respond to a rapidly evolving global policy environment in a manner that reflects the contexts and priorities of the small island states that comprise the OECS. Twenty years after its adoption, the SGD remains, in spirit and relevance, a regional instrument to create a bridge between national and global policy arenas.

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<sup>1</sup> Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States. (2001) *Revised Treaty of Basseterre Establishing the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Economic Union*. 43 pp. 38-39.

[http://foreign.gov.vc/foreign/images/stories/Foreign\\_Affairs/Article\\_pdf/revised-treaty-of-basseterre.pdf](http://foreign.gov.vc/foreign/images/stories/Foreign_Affairs/Article_pdf/revised-treaty-of-basseterre.pdf)

Built within the Declaration is the expectation that the Secretariat (OECS Commission) will:

- Coordinate the periodic and regular review of the goals, targets and indicators contained within the Declaration, and regional progress towards achieving them; and
- Establish processes and mechanisms for the revision and updating of the Declaration and its provisions to assure that it continues to provide timely, relevant and useful direction to Member States in their pursuit of sustainable development.

The first review of the SGD was completed in 2006, when results-based management had begun to influence the design of international agreements and policy frameworks. The revised version of the SDG responded to that trend by translating the principles and actions identified in the original version into goals, targets and indicators, and aligning these, wherever possible, to the targets and commitments that OECS Member States had made under the major multilateral environmental agreements. Since the last update of the SGD, OECS Member States have participated in and acceded to multiple major conferences, conventions and frameworks which have further defined the landscape for environmental management and overall sustainable development in the Eastern Caribbean.

Given that the commitments in the Revised SGD (2006) were to be met by 2010; and notwithstanding the Economic Union Protocol, the Commission undertook an internal review to ascertain

- a. Whether the (*spirit of the*) SGD is still relevant,
- b. Whether it should be (further) revised or (simply) replaced - especially given the stated commitment of the OECS Secretariat/Commission to “co-ordinate the periodic revision of the SGD 2040.
- c. Notwithstanding (a) or (b) above, whether the commitment to report on implementation of the SGD is still valid;

- d. With the response to (c) above, what is to be done, given the lapses in reporting?
- e. Mindful that more recent regional/international instruments also have reporting requirements, does the previously agreed SGD reporting framework/approach/instrument still have utility as “a one size fits all” reporting tool, as previously envisaged?

Pursuant to this assessment, the OECS Council of Ministers for Environmental Sustainability (COMES), in 2017, mandated the OECS Commission to activate the process and mechanism towards revision and updating of the SGD, in sync with current national and regional circumstances and priorities and international frameworks. This mandate was further reiterated by the 2018 and 2019 COMES meetings.

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## 2040 CONSENSUS

**COGNISANT** of the provisions of Article 24 of the Protocol to the Revised Treaty of Basseterre Establishing the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Economic Union, (the RTB), the signatories to the RTB, (hereinafter OECS Member States):

**PERSUADED** that the effective management of environmental resources at local, national, and regional levels is an essential component of sustainable social and economic development, including job creation and sustainable livelihoods, a stable society, a buoyant economy and sustaining viable natural systems on which all life depends;

**FIRMLY CONVINCED** that the well-being of humanity depends upon maintaining a healthy environment with all its ecological systems, a rich variety of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters and clean air, and that the peoples of the OECS Member States are entitled to a healthy, resilient and productive life in harmony with nature;

**GIVEN** that land and marine areas in small island states constitute a single environmental unit with close inter-relationship between the various ecological systems, and the impact of human intervention necessitates the adoption of an integrated approach to managing the use of the natural resources;

**RECOGNISING** that the goal of Island Systems Management (ISM) is to attain sustainable management and use of all-natural resources; to reduce vulnerability and build resilience of the entire island and its inhabitants to natural and anthropogenic hazards; and to maintain essential ecological processes, life support systems and biological diversity in the area extending from the ridge to the outer limits of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ);

**RECALLING** the commitments made at United Nations conferences and summits on sustainable development and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs);

**CONSCIOUS** of the decisions contained in the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA), the 2005 Mauritius Strategy of Implementation (MSI) and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, concluded at the 2014 Third United Nations Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (hereinafter referred to as “SIDS programme”) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals; and the Paris Accord<sup>2</sup>

**RECOGNIZING** the need to address the relevant priority areas of the SAMOA Pathway and Agenda 2030, and that work towards achieving the objectives of the SIDS Programme and the Sustainable Development Goals has been initiated at the national and sub-regional levels;

**MINDFUL** of the Principles affirmed in the Declaration of Santa Cruz de la Sierra and Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Americas, the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the

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<sup>2</sup> In addition to these decisions, Member States have participated in and acceded to multiple major conferences, conventions and frameworks which have further defined the landscape for environmental management and overall sustainable development, including (*inter alia*):

- 2012: United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20 – The Future We Want;
- 2015 (March): Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030 (Sendai, Miyagi, Japan);
- 2015 (July): Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development;
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Third UN World Conference in Sendai, Japan, on March 18, 2015);
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Wider Caribbean (Cartagena Convention) and its Protocols, Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, and the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement);

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the objectives of international conventions addressing biodiversity, climate change, desertification, ozone depletion, marine pollution, the protection and conservation of vulnerable and endangered species of flora and fauna, the management of marine resources, the protection of sites of cultural, historic and ecological significance, and the management of hazardous wastes and substances, and obligations under these conventions;

**AFFIRMING** their shared commitments to the principles of sustainable development in order to minimize inherent environmental vulnerability, and further, that they remain actively committed to working in close collaboration with Civil Society at all levels;

**ENSHRINING** stakeholder participation in environmental management, including partnerships with civil society, private sector and academia.

**COGNISANT** of the need to establish fundamental principles to guide national and regional development, decision-making, and activities

**AWARE** that climate change poses an existential threat to mankind;





**ADOPT** to these ends, the REVISED St George’s Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability in the OECS (hereinafter called SGD 2040) and the Commitments contained herein, which proclaim the principles of sustainable development by which human conduct affecting the environment in the Eastern Caribbean is to be guided and judged.

## COMMITMENTS

The OECS Member States of the Eastern Caribbean:

**COMMITTED** to implementing the strategic actions contained in the Revised St George's Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability in the OECS (hereinafter called **SGD 2040**);

**RECOGNIZING** that fulfilment of this commitment to achieving the vision and goals of **SGD 2040** requires decisive action locally, nationally, regionally and globally;

**DETERMINED** to take decisive actions to create an Eastern Caribbean partnership in support of the goals of **SGD 2040**;

**RESOLVE** that operationalizing the **SGD 2040** will necessitate the following actions:

### 1. BY OECS MEMBER STATES

- i. Establish or strengthen, as the case may be, appropriate institutional mechanisms for coordinating and guiding the implementation of **SGD 2040**.
- ii. Provide adequate human, technical and financial resources to facilitate the development and implementation of the programmes contained in **SGD 2040**;

- iii. Coordinate and collaborate with national partners on the implementation of the programmes and transformative actions in [SGD 2040](#);
- iv. Develop policy, legal and institutional frameworks, as necessary, to support the effective and coordinated implementation of [SGD 2040](#);
- v. Collaborate to rationalize the responsibilities of regional agencies and, more particularly, the Environmental Sustainability portfolio of the OECS Commission;
- vi. Cooperate with national, regional and international agencies to facilitate the implementation of [SGD 2040](#);
- vii. Strengthen the national institutional structure to facilitate and coordinate monitoring and reporting on progress with achieving the goals of [SGD 2040](#);
- viii. Coordinate the sharing of best practices between States of the Eastern Caribbean; and
- ix. Ensure timely and complete reporting on implementing [SGD 2040](#).

## 2. BY THE OECS COMMISSION

The OECS Commission, in collaboration with national, regional and international agencies, shall intensify its efforts to implement the transformative actions in [SGD 2040](#) and in this regard shall:

- i. Assist Governments in the Eastern Caribbean with their implementation of the transformative actions in [SGD 2040](#);
- ii. Assist Governments in the Eastern Caribbean, upon request, to develop appropriate legislation and strengthen relevant institutions and structures to support implementation of programmes and transformative actions in [SGD 2040](#);

- iii. Facilitate cooperation between and among Governments in the Eastern Caribbean in adopting and implementing appropriate programmes to give effect to the vision and goals of [SGD 2040](#);
- iv. Support research programmes undertaken to implement [SGD 2040](#);
- v. Facilitate and support the reporting as laid down in [SGD 2040](#) and its complementary Reporting Framework;
- vi. Coordinate and where appropriate, mobilise sustainable financing, in conjunction with OECS Member States, to give effect to [SGD 2040](#);
- vii. Coordinate technical assistance and programmes in support of national activities to give effect to [SGD 2040](#);
- viii. Provide administrative and secretarial services to support the convening of the COMES and various thematic coordination mechanisms, working groups and committees that it may established or mandate; and
- ix. Coordinate initial implementation of its responsibilities under [SGD 2040](#) through the OECS Development Strategy – Environment (ODSe)

### **3. BY REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES**

Regional and International Agencies shall be encouraged to facilitate the coordination of projects and programmes to be undertaken in support of [SGD 2040](#), and in this regard shall encourage future programmes, transformative actions and enabling actions proposed for the Eastern Caribbean to be consistent with [SGD 2040](#).

## SGD 2040

# An Environmental Agenda for the Eastern Caribbean

## PREAMBLE

SGD 2040 expresses and reaffirms the commitment of the OECS Commission to support OECS Member States to achieve sustainable development for all, taking into account that OECS Member States are at different levels of national development and capacities, and different national realities; as well as respecting national policy space for sustained, inclusive, resilient and sustainable economic development. **SGD 2040 recognises:**

- ▶ That sustainable development in the Eastern Caribbean is based on transparent, inclusive and responsible decision-making, which considers not only the economic benefits of development, but also the importance of pursuing a balance between economic growth, social well-being and the health of the environment.
- ▶ The commitment of OECS Member States of the Eastern Caribbean to achieve sustainable development while cognizant of the different levels of national development and capacities, and different national realities as well as respecting national policy space for sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

- ▶ The need for regional economic integration in sustainable development pursuits: To this end, the Revised Treaty of Basseterre and the [SGD2040](#) provides the necessary frameworks for the effective translation of sustainable development policies into concrete action at the national level.
- ▶ That the active engagement of both the public and private sectors, civil society, regional agencies, and development partners as an essential contributor to achieving sustainable development.

## THE FOUNDATION

The foundation of **SGD 2040** is the **Islands Systems Management** (ISM) Framework which recognises that, despite physical and natural resource limitations, integrated planning and management is critical if the islands are to become economically, socially and ecologically resilient. The goal of ISM is to attain sustainable development of all-natural resources; to reduce vulnerability of the entire island and its inhabitants to natural and anthropogenic hazards; and to maintain essential ecological processes, life support systems and biological diversity in the area extending from the ridge to the outer limits of the EEZ.

The concentration and close proximity of ecosystems on an island means that each of these ecosystems is linked to the others either through biological processes, ecological impacts, or the impacts of human interventions. Thus, ISM is an adaptive management strategy which provides the necessary policy orientation to manage the complexities of the interaction between ecosystems from ridge to the outer limits of the EEZ and the anthropogenic impacts on them. It integrates and coordinates the initiatives of all sectors, both public and private, to ensure the achievement of common goals.

Environmental management within the ISM Framework is therefore the continuous and dynamic process by which decisions are taken for the sustainable use, development, and protection of an island's resources, from the ridge to the outer limit of its EEZ.

The ISM framework involves the application of the following principles which are further detailed in Schedule 1.

- i. Integration (e.g., inter-sectoral integration, intergovernmental integration, spatial integration, science-management integration, international integration, etc.);
- ii. Environmental stewardship;
- iii. Stakeholder participation;
- iv. Use of sound science and best practice, inclusive of local and traditional knowledge;
- v. Precautionary approach;
- vi. Environmental liability;
- vii. Access and benefit sharing;
- viii. Transboundary cooperation;
- ix. Good governance, including transparency and accountability; and
- x. Equality and inclusivity, including rights of marginalised and vulnerable stakeholders



## OUR NEW AGENDA: 2020 TO 2040

This agenda is a call for collective action for sound environmental management in the Eastern Caribbean. It recognises that building economic, social and environmental resilience is indispensable to pursuing sustainable development.

The agenda set out in [SGD 2040](#) responds to priority environmental problems and opportunities for nature-based solutions in the Eastern Caribbean: climate change and sea-level rise, threats to biodiversity, threats to freshwater resources, land degradation, degradation of coastal environments and marine resources, pollution and waste management, and high energy costs. [SGD 2040](#) affirms that sustainable development in the Eastern Caribbean can be achieved only through a broad alliance of people, governments, civil society, the private sector and international development partners, all working together.

[SGD 2040](#) recognises that each Member State has its own vision, policies, tools and approaches available in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities. Nevertheless, [SGD 2040](#) also recognises that building a resilient society and environment in the Eastern Caribbean will benefit from joint and collective action of its OECS Member States.

[SGD 2040](#) focuses on six (6) strategic priorities, and a number of key enabling actions (which cut across all strategic priorities) which will consolidate and strengthen the delivery of the transformative and strategic actions identified for each of the programmes. Strategic priorities and enabling actions are presented in Figures below.



**The OECS Vision**

***A Better Quality of Life  
 For The People Of The OECS***

**SGD 2040 Vision**

A healthy and productive environment, supporting the well-being and aspirations of the Eastern Caribbean

**SGD 2040 Values**

Local priorities, collective action, global impact;  
 Balance, Shared, Responsible, Smart

**SGD 2040 Goal**

To promote and support effective management and sustainable use of the natural capital of the Eastern Caribbean by enhancing its integrity and strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity

**SGD 2040 Strategic Priorities**



Ocean and Fisheries



Climate and Disaster Resilience



Biodiversity and Economic Systems



Land and Water Resources




Sustainable Energy





Chemicals, Pollution and Waste





## SGD 2040 Strategic Priority Goals


 The coastal and marine resources of the Eastern Caribbean and sustainably managed to optimize the potential for a blue economy and its associated long-term benefits

 Greater sustainable use of land and water resources is realized through integrated landscape management











 The risks and vulnerabilities associated with climate change and natural/ environmental hazards, and their impacts on natural and human systems, are adequately addressed at all levels

 The contribution of clean, reliable and affordable energy to sustainable development is optimized in the Eastern Caribbean

 Healthy and resilient biodiversity and ecosystems in the Eastern Caribbean provide goods and services that support socio-economic development

 Integrated approaches to waste management through sustainable consumption, production and management practices that reduce waste and pollution in the environment

## SGD 2040 Enabling Actions

			
Partnerships	Good Governance	Capacity Development	Education & Outreach
			
Research & Systematic Observation	Data, Information & Knowledge	Monitoring Evaluation & Learning	Regional Cooperation
			
	Equality and Inclusivity	Innovative & Sustainable Financing Mechanism	

The strategic priorities and enabling actions resonate with the work programmes of national environmental agencies, regional agencies such as the OECS Commission, CARICOM, and its associated organs<sup>3</sup>, and other regional and international agencies, including the various Multilateral Environmental Convention Secretariats. The transformative actions, the expected outcomes and the progress measures for assessing the actions and outcomes are provided under separate cover in the Reporting Framework.

These enabling actions help improve efficiency and effectiveness in achieving the outcomes of the strategic priority. Hence, they are integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the strategic priorities. Experience in the Eastern Caribbean has shown that significant challenges undermine programme implementation because of, *inter alia*:

- i. Inadequate capacity for implementation of policy, plans and programmes;
- ii. Poorly structured and resourced institutions;
- iii. Limited and onerous access to financial resources which, *inter alia*, restricts the implementation of strategies and the conduct of research and development necessary for innovation;
- iv. Inadequate allocation of resources through unclear definition of roles and responsibilities;
- v. Difficulty in ensuring inter-agency and inter-sectoral coordination, and inclusive decision making with the private sector and civil society;
- vi. Skills shortage and the need for continued and enhanced support for skills development programmes and better accessing existing skills bases;

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<sup>3</sup> Including the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism, the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency

- vii. Inadequate education, awareness and outreach resulting in limited understanding of why and how an intervention is being proposed; and
- viii. Availability and reliability of indicators, information-gathering and databases, upon which to strategize and base decision-making to ensure sustainability. These point to the need for concerted efforts to ensure alignment and integration of the existing initiatives.

The **SGD 2040** is based on collective actions and is responsive to the present and future needs of society. In addition, in order to mitigate the challenges identified above, **SGD 2040** acknowledges the following enabling actions as being critical for the successful implementation of its strategic priorities.

### SGD 2040 Enabling Actions

#### Partnerships



OECS Member States acknowledge that the complexity, diversity and scope of the goals and outcomes proposed will require cooperation and collaboration with local, national and international development partners to achieve meaningful progress towards achievement. While governments should take the lead, all partners should be adequately engaged and empowered to participate in the formulation and implementation of decisions, policies and programmes to achieve the desired outcomes. Partnerships should seek to build synergistic relationships to promote efficiency in resource allocation, support continuity of efforts, and minimize stakeholder fatigue and friction. OECS Member States, recognising the unique, indispensable and emerging role of private sector, and civil society will especially ensure requisite engagement and participation of all stakeholders.

#### Good Governance

Governance is the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented. Good governance has eight (8) major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities



are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.

Good governance, which includes sound institutional, policy and legislative frameworks, requires the exercising of prudence and responsibility by public bodies. Transparency and accountability are central to good governance, meaningful engagement and collective responsibility.

Governance needs to be adaptive in order to deal with complexity and uncertainty associated with rapid environmental and social change. This requires a reflexive approach and continual improvement through learning from experience, based on collaborative and participatory processes. Adaptive capacity should be supported to enable flexibility and to remain resilient over time.

#### Capacity Development



Capacity development is the process through which individuals, organisations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain their capabilities to set and achieve their individual and collective development objectives. Components of capacity include skills, systems, structures, processes, values, resources and powers that together, confer a range of political, managerial and technical capabilities. It can occur at the level of the individual, the organization, communities, sectors, ecosystems and the enabling environment - which refers to the policy, legal, regulatory, economic and social systems - within which organizations and individuals operate.

#### Education & Outreach



Access to information is key to ensuring transparent and inclusive public participation for environmental sustainability. Stakeholders need to be adequately educated, informed, empowered and engaged to participate meaningfully in environmental decision making, enhanced advocacy, attitudes and practices.

Research and Systematic Observation



Policy formulation, planning, management decisions and developmental interventions should be based, as far as possible, on the best available science, knowledge and evidence of the natural, social, and economic processes that affect the environment and sustainable development. Decision makers should be able to obtain and understand high quality science, data and best practice to facilitate sustainable use of island terrestrial, marine and coastal resources. This will enable a risk-based approach that allows consideration of uncertainty in decision-making.

Data, information and knowledge



Data, information and knowledge are fundamental concepts (tools) in knowledge management, intellectual capital, and organizational learning. These support decision making and actions by bringing coherence and synergy in data collection processes, develops capacity to strengthen national and regional reporting, and ensures that the most pertinent, reliable, timely and up-to-date data and information are available and easily accessible for everyone.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning



It is important to apply knowledge gained from experience, evidence and analysis to improve development outcomes and ensure accountability for the resources used to achieve them.

Monitoring data are used to track the progress of an intervention in achieving set objectives. Evaluation is used to determine how and why results are being achieved, or not, as well as discovering unintended, unexpected, or emerging results. Learning means using M&E data/information as evidence for accountability and informing decision-making for management purposes, and for designing future intervention; and sharing of best practices, innovation and lessons learned.

Regional Cooperation



National and regional decision-making should take into account cooperation between and among Eastern Caribbean OECS Member States. Regional cooperation in projects will reduce costs and the burden of each State having to develop policy and legal frameworks, guidelines and standards that can be applied across all States. Neighbouring states should be consulted to ensure that any transboundary impacts are understood and managed co-operatively, and opportunities are optimised as appropriate. Regional cooperation also involves the facilitation and convening of regional governance and coordination mechanisms, and of international advocacy.

### Equality and inclusivity



Equality and inclusivity are promoted to ensure environmental justice and access to resources and opportunities. Economic participation and involvement in decision-making will be open to all regardless of gender and will also include those from disadvantaged or marginalised groups. Consultation and participation processes will include considerations of the views of all relevant groups.

### Innovative and Sustainable Financing Mechanism



Sustainable financing is about the generation and mobilization of funds over the long term for sustainable management of natural resources. Financing mechanisms can be directed at paying for environmental goods and services or for investments in environmental and natural resources management.

Such mechanisms help to optimise the mobilisation of project and grant financing from traditional, new and emerging sources. These mechanisms also provide opportunities for the increased engagement of the private sector and the promotion of entrepreneurship through the design and implementation of “bankable” initiatives, approaches and investments.



## TRANSFORMATIVE ACTIONS

As the Eastern Caribbean States take bold steps towards achieving economic, social and environmental sustainability and adaptive capacity, the goals and actions in [SGD 2040](#) will stimulate action over the next twenty (20) years to protect the terrestrial and marine resources from degradation, to build resilience to climate change and other hazards or risks, and to transition to a blue-green-circular economy.

While [SGD 2040](#) spans the next twenty (20) years, the transformative actions presented herein are, however, for an initial period of five (5) years. At the end of this period the theory of change for each of the programmes will be evaluated to determine challenges, lessons learned and best practices garnered in order to develop further actions that will be reflective of the changing environment and priorities nationally, regionally, and internationally. The outcomes identified for the programmes will also be regularly monitored to determine their performance and validity and to ensure that [SGD 2040](#) remains relevant as the environmental agenda for the Eastern Caribbean States. As the life of [SGD 2040](#) progresses, the Strategic Priorities will change as will the transformative actions and expected outcomes and progress measures in each priority.

No targets have been introduced to monitor and evaluate the success of implementation of the proposed outcomes. Instead, progress measures<sup>4</sup>, provided under separate cover in a companion manual, will be used to assess progress in achieving the outcomes of each programme at the national and regional levels. In addition,

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<sup>4</sup> **Progress measurement** is used to measure outcomes and results, which generates reliable data on the effectiveness and efficiency of the programmes.

SGD 2040 subscribes to, and is guided by targets that have been set at the national, regional and international levels under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other instruments, such as, *inter alia*:



SDG 14 (Life Below Water)

Eastern Caribbean Regional Ocean Policy and Strategic Action Plan

Marine Research Strategy

OECS Green Blue Economy Strategy and Action Plan

Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism Strategic Action Plan, 2013 to 2021

Sustainable Management of Shared Marine Living Resources in the Caribbean

Regional Strategy and Action Plan for the Valuation, Protection and/or Restoration of Key Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean 2021-2030



SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) & SDG 13 (Climate Action)

National Adaptation Plans

Sectoral Adaptation Strategies and Action Plans

Nationally Determined Commitments

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Strategy and Programming Framework 2014-2024

National Disaster Plans



SDG 14 (Life Below Water) & SDG 15 (Life on Land)

Aichi Targets and the subsequent Global Biodiversity Targets

OECS Green Blue Economy Strategy and Action Plan

OECS Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management Framework and Strategic Action Plans

National Biodiversity Reports

National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans



SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) & SDG 15 (Life on Land)  
 National Climate Change Adaptation Strategies  
 Land Degradation Neutrality Targets  
 National Water Strategies



SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) & SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)  
 National Renewable Energy Strategies and Action Plans  
 NDCs  
 National Adaptation Plans



SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) & SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)  
 Cartagena Convention  
 Protocol on Land Based Sources of Marine Pollution (LBS)  
 Protocol on Oil Spills  
 The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)  
 Global Plan of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA)  
 Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal  
 The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (**MARPOL**)  
 Minamata Convention on Mercury  
 Rotterdam Convention  
 Stockholm Convention



## OCEAN AND FISHERIES (OF)



The OECS recognises that the ocean and its resources offer significant opportunities for economic diversification and the generation of wealth for the benefit of all Eastern Caribbean countries. The marine waters of the Eastern Caribbean support unique flora and fauna of global significance and are among the top five global biodiversity hot spots in the world. The Caribbean is home to around 9% of the world's coral reefs covering about 20,000 square miles, most of which are located around the Eastern Caribbean islands and the Central American coast. However, the region is under environmental stress as climate change, habitat degradation, pollution, unsustainable exploitation, and unsustainable tourism threaten these resources, and the livelihoods linked to them.

Ocean ecosystems are under increasing pressure from many uses, such as fisheries, shipping, offshore petroleum activities, tourism and recreation. These give rise to environmental pressures, such as the introduction of invasive, non-native species, poorly planned and regulated coastal development, pollution from cruise ships, hotels or resorts, and unsustainable extraction of natural resources such as fisheries and sand for construction. The habitats supported by the region's coral reefs are critical for tourist activities such as fishing and diving, and their decline could severely damage the region's economy. In addition, these habitats support fisheries resources which contribute to food security, livelihoods and household income. Unfortunately, the sector has been recording declining productivity, loss of fish habitats and damage to boats and infrastructure due to extreme weather events, higher ocean temperatures and coral bleaching, ocean acidification and sea level rise.

**GOAL: Sustainably manage the coastal and marine resources of the Eastern Caribbean to optimise the potential of a blue economy, ensure resilience and adaptation to climate impacts, and protect and restore the marine ecosystems of the region.**

### Objectives:

- OF 1: Ensure access and rights to utilize marine resources.
- OF 2: Monitor and secure the coastal and maritime areas of the Eastern Caribbean States .
- OF 3: Restore, maintain and improve ecosystem integrity of the marine space in the Eastern Caribbean.
- OF 4: Optimise the contribution of the marine resources of the Eastern Caribbean to socio-economic development
- OF 5: Adopt integrated approaches to managing marine space in the Eastern Caribbean.

- OF 6: Increase ocean stewardship, awareness, participation and wellbeing of the citizens in the management of coastal and marine resources in the Eastern Caribbean.
- OF 7: Strengthen resilience measures to guard against negative climate induced coastal changes.
- OF 8: Employ best available evidence for a Blue Economy
- OF 9: Increase informed decision making through the collection and management of statistics on fisheries resources and productions
- OF10: Sustainably manage the fisheries resources of the Eastern Caribbean.
- OF 11: Achieve the sustainable use of fisheries resources
- OF 12: Strengthen adaptation to climate change and disaster risk management in fisheries



## CLIMATE and DISASTER RESILIENCE



Eastern Caribbean States are highly vulnerable to extreme natural hazards including hurricanes, droughts, floods, volcanic eruptions, oil spills and earthquakes. Among these, the hydro-meteorological events are being exacerbated by climate change. Despite their minimal contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions that ultimately lead to climate change, Eastern Caribbean States, like other SIDS, are disproportionately impacted by climate change. Climate change is projected to intensify vulnerabilities of Eastern Caribbean States. The warming global climate has already seen increased sea-water temperatures, increased storm and drought intensity and impacts on the health and integrity of ecosystems. With large shares of the Caribbean population living in high-risk areas exposed to sea-level rise and weak infrastructure, and heavy reliance on weather-sensitive sectors such as tourism and agriculture, the risks are expected to worsen through, among others, damage to biodiversity, coastal erosion, risk to food and water security, and increased health risks.

Climate-triggered events have led to a continuing saga of loss, dislocation, and disruption of economic growth. There are many challenges that stymie social and economic development, and these are compounded by growing urbanisation, changing concentrations of settlements, and competition among land use options such as housing, agriculture, tourism, and commercial enterprise. The projected impacts of climate change and increased incidence of disasters are expected to increase the challenges faced by the Eastern Caribbean States which have limited capacity to reduce the associated risks. Notwithstanding, there is a growing acceptance that there are limits to adaptation and that, as a result, some natural and cultural assets are at risk of being irreparably damaged or lost as a result of climate change. It is for this reason that the concept of loss and damage is now enshrined in the Paris Agreement.

While climate change and disasters may occur on different timescales and sometimes involve different stakeholders, it is increasingly recognised that integrating climate adaptation and disaster into development involves thinking holistically about building resilience through preparedness, *inter alia*, for extreme events, as well as adapting to the “new normal” with a changing climate. Resilience can be built through a variety of strategies: enhancing preparedness; relocating critical facilities and assets to safer areas; better use of data to inform planning and development strategies; increased use of ecosystem-based approaches to resilience-building; integrating disaster risk reduction measures into infrastructure improvements; and strengthening governance structures that allow the integration of climate and disaster risks. All of this has implications for accessing finance. Short-term funding for disaster response from humanitarian donors must be linked with long-term financial support for resilience-building and, in turn, must be mainstreamed into development planning and financing. Forecast-based action, including associated financing, is also being seen as an area requiring further consideration. The integration of climate and disaster is particularly critical for future development and creating new vulnerabilities.

Although they are not major greenhouse gas emitters, OECS Member States stand to benefit from climate change mitigation actions, including a transition to renewable energy sources.

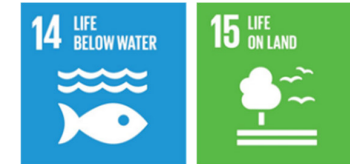
**GOAL:** The risks and vulnerabilities associated with climate change and natural/environmental hazards and their impacts on natural and human systems are adequately addressed at all levels

**OBJECTIVES:**

- CDR 1:** Build resilience, in key natural systems, human systems and economic sectors, to climate change and natural hazards
- CDR 2:** Pursue the Reduction of Net Greenhouse Gas Emissions and the Transition to Low-Carbon Economies
- CDR 3:** Enhance the Enabling Environment for Climate and Disaster Resilience
- CDR 4:** Enhance the Policy and legislative Environment for Climate and Disaster Resilience
- CDR 5:** Enhance Research, Systematic Observation and Data Management for Climate Resilience
- CDR 6:** Enhance public awareness, knowledge and empowerment in support of climate and disaster resilience
- CDR 7:** Build institutional and individual capacity at all levels in support of climate and disaster resilience
- CDR 8:** Pursue the mobilisation of financial, technical and other resources in support of climate and disaster resilience



## BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS (BE)



The benefits and potential uses of the region’s ecosystems and biological resources, including marine and coastal living resources, must be recognised, promoted and properly managed to ensure that there is a balance between multiple uses and protection. These resources provide a range of essential environmental goods and services that would be extremely costly or impossible to restore or replace once they are lost. Additionally, if they are sustainably managed and utilised, they can continue to serve a broad range of economic, social and cultural functions.

The health, productivity and diversity of ecosystems are essential to the economic viability and survival of the people in the OECS Region. Therefore, as the demand for ecosystems goods and services is predicted to increase during the next two decades, the integrity of these must be rehabilitated or maintained where necessary for future generations.

**GOAL: Healthy and resilient biodiversity and ecosystems in the Eastern Caribbean provide goods and services that support socio-economic development**

### OBJECTIVES

- BE 1: Secure, restore, and optimise the contribution of ecosystem goods and services across transboundary landscapes and seascapes to achieve socio-economic development of the Eastern Caribbean.**
- BE 2: Minimise the threats to the Eastern Caribbean from invasive alien species, such as sargassum seaweed, and enhance biosafety and biosecurity.**
- BE 3: Build the Eastern Caribbean’s biodiversity and ecosystems resilience to climate change and natural hazards.**
- BE 4: Equip stakeholders for participatory management of biodiversity and ecosystems while protecting their rights and benefits.**
- BE 5: Integrate Biodiversity and ecosystem valuations into national development policies and poverty reduction strategies.**
- BE 6: Mainstream and upscale traditional knowledge in biodiversity management in the Eastern Caribbean**





## LAND AND WATER (LW)



OECS Member States which are also SIDS, are extremely dependent, directly or indirectly, on the development and use of natural and environmental resources, both terrestrial and marine. The management of impacts of human intervention on these resources will determine whether they are able to sustain us into the future. Land based sources of pollution arising from land degradation, in particular coastal and terrestrial development, have been major contributors to habitat and ecosystem destruction and deteriorating conditions in terrestrial, marine and coastal waters. This is a critical issue for the OECS Member States, which are characterized as having limited land resources and high population densities, and very strong competing claims for the use of available lands. In response to these challenges, the OECS Member States have continued to intensify investments in effective programs and approaches aimed at allocating and managing land and water resources towards achieving economic and social development objectives while preserving natural ecosystems and the essential services they provide. The premiere land and water-oriented programs and processes pursued amongst others, are Integrated Landscape Management (ILM), Sustainable Land Management (SLM), and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). These are directly applied to address: 1) food and nutrition security, resilience, sustainable agriculture, rural development and job creation; 2) climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction; 3) biodiversity, ecosystem restoration/ rehabilitation, land degradation, desertification, drought and/or land-based sources of pollution. ILM, SLM, and IWRM are seen as critical to the pursuit of sustainable development that would result in sustainably providing resources for a growing population, preventing biodiversity collapse and mitigating and adapting to climate change).

**GOAL: Improved and sustainable use of land and water resources aimed at reducing land degradation and enhancing maintenance of biodiversity and water resources**



- LW 1: Strengthen land and water sector governance, planning, and administrative systems towards increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change.**
- LW 2: Mainstream sustainable natural resources management strategies into national development.**
- LW 3: Enhance participatory management for land and water resources using partnerships and capacity building approaches**



## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY (SE)



Eastern Caribbean SIDS, like all SIDS, face geographic barriers to economic as well as sustainable energy development. SIDS generally rely heavily on imported fossil fuels for their energy needs, particularly for transportation and electricity generation. Their disproportionate reliance on fossil fuels renders them highly vulnerable to fluctuations in global oil prices and directly results in these States having some of the highest electricity tariffs in the world. This leads to higher costs of living for families and increases the cost of doing business.<sup>5</sup> In addition, due to their geographical location their energy infrastructure is highly exposed, and vulnerable, to climate-induced and other natural hazards.

At the same time, Eastern Caribbean States can reduce their energy imports, build resilience and transition to low-carbon economies by shifting to renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, hydro and geothermal. Currently, Geothermal Energy (GE) presents the largest potential to provide low-cost, reliable, non-intermittent electricity from a renewable energy source in the region.<sup>6</sup>

The OECS Member States also have vast opportunities to improve both supply and demand side management in the electricity and transportation sectors. This can be achieved by adopting energy efficiency and conservation strategies, building the enabling environment, scaling up existing initiatives, establishing new partnerships, adopting new technologies and gaining better access to financing.

**GOAL: To optimize the contribution of clean, reliable and affordable energy to the sustainable development of the OECS region**

<sup>5</sup> HLPF 2019 High-level Side event on Scaling-Up Energy Transition in Small Island Developing States 17 July 2019

<sup>6</sup> OECS Member States actively pursuing geothermal Energy -Dominica -Grenada -Martinique Montserrat - St. Kitts and Nevis -Saint Lucia – St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Guadeloupe-only geothermal plant in the region.

## OBJECTIVES:

- 
- SE 1: Increase the contribution of renewable energy to the energy supply mix.
- SE 2: Provide universal access to clean energy.
- SE 3: Pursue energy supply cost optimization.
- SE 4: Improve energy management through improved conservation, end-use efficiency, and energy retrofits
- SE 5: Reduce transmission and distribution losses.
- SE 6: Promote a clean and efficient transport sector
- SE 7: Empower the public to make informed decisions on energy related investments and use.



## CHEMICALS, POLLUTION AND WASTE (CPW)



Waste management is an issue of increasing importance for the island nations of the Eastern Caribbean. Growing populations, rapid development and increasing amounts of imported goods are exerting pressure on the limited capacity of these States to safely manage and dispose of toxic and polluting substances, and solid and liquid waste. Waste management is not limited to the disposal of litter. Sewage, hazardous and toxic wastes also form part of the waste problem. The large amounts of wastes generated by tourists, for example, is a difficult problem for the Eastern Caribbean particularly since it is typically generated over a short period, thereby often overloading existing disposal and treatment facilities. Protection of the environment from pollution is also extremely important for the Eastern Caribbean since the health and wellbeing of the populations, and the tourism and fisheries industries all depend on a pristine environment.

Some progress has been made in the management of pollution and waste in the Eastern Caribbean. Sanitary landfills had been established in five of the Eastern Caribbean states that participated in the OECS Solid and Ship Generated Waste Management Project. As a result of this project there were significant improvements in collection coverage and disposal in the participating countries. But recycling and waste separation activities were not fully implemented. Unfortunately, without continued external financing, countries were not ready to sustain processes for addressing their remaining waste management issues. Be that as it may, the many successes of the project still remain relevant and can be readily scaled up to the entire Eastern Caribbean.

The UNEP's Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) in Jamaica is involved in a number of activities aimed at reducing pollution in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR), including the Eastern Caribbean States. The Basel Convention Regional Centre

for Training and Technology Transfer for the Caribbean, is also involved in: Preventing the Future Build-Up of Chemicals Entering Caribbean SIDS; Safe Management and Disposal of Existing Chemicals, products and materials with in the Caribbean SIDS; and Safe Management of Products entering SIDS and Closing Material and Product loops for Products entering these SIDS. Given that there are a number of agencies that are working on pollution issues, albeit in the Wider Caribbean, the focus of SGD 2040 will be limited, in the short term, to only those activities that will compliment and/or scale up and scale out best practices in plastic waste management.

**GOAL: Integrated approaches to chemicals and waste management through sustainable consumption, production and management practices that reduce waste and pollution in the environment.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- CPW 1: Implement an integrated approach to waste management nationally and regionally**
- CPW 2: Promote and develop the circular economy nationally and regionally**

## MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Within the broader policy framework established under international agreements and conventions, and all relevant national and regional development and environmental policies and strategies, each Member State agrees to:

- i. With all due diligence, take such steps and adopt such measures as may be necessary to give effect to the provisions of [SDG 2040](#), including the setting of national targets and establishment of standards and best practices against which to monitor and report progress;
- ii. Designate Focal Points within each Member State to collaborate with the OECS Commission to monitor and facilitate the compliance of each Member State with [SGD 2040](#), and to report on measures undertaken to implement it;
- iii. Work concertedly together to achieve the regional goals, objectives and outcomes identified in [SGD 2040](#);
- iv. Design and conduct national communication programmes and activities aimed at increasing awareness of, and commitment to [SGD 2040](#);
- v. Share relevant information related to [SGD 2040](#) and its implementation with other interested States and development partners;
- vi. Develop, with the full participation of all relevant stakeholders, actions aimed at achieving the national commitments, and the goals, objectives and outcomes identified in [SGD 2040](#);
- vii. Collaborate through the OECS Commission and other regional organisations to ensure that the environmental needs and requirements of the OECS Member States are clearly articulated to the international community in ways that rationalise the environmental management interventions of the

international community, including international financial institutions, so as to reduce duplication and achieve optimum cost-effectiveness.

The OECS Commission agrees to support OECS Member States in their efforts to achieve the goals, objectives and outcomes of [SGD 2040](#), through:

- i. support for the formulation and implementation of strategies and actions at the national level;
- ii. facilitation of technical assistance and access to financial resources;
- iii. conduct of communication programmes and activities aimed at increasing public awareness of and commitment to [SGD 2040](#);
- iv. identification and dissemination of regionally-appropriate standards and best practices;
- v. leadership in the development of harmonized legislation, policies, strategies, management frameworks and measures for regionally shared ecosystems and resources, and joint positions on international environmental issues;
- vi. provision of assistance with training, capacity development, technical resources and tools to improve national capacity to apply standards and best practices, meet targets and monitor the impacts of environmental management measures; and
- vii. facilitation and support for decision-making, coordination and governance mechanisms, networks and fora.



## REPORTING

Systematic monitoring and evaluation of the progress of [SGD 2040](#) is necessary to ensure that the Vision, Goals and Objectives are being achieved by the OECS Member States and by the region, and to make adjustments where necessary. The OECS Commission has developed a *Reporting Guide* as a complement to [SGD 2040](#), to be used by OECS Member States, the OECS Commission and partner organizations to report on their activities which will contribute to the implementation of [SGD 2040](#) Agenda.

Timely, accurate and reliable reporting for [SGD 2040](#) is necessary for Monitoring and Evaluation. An appropriate reporting framework is therefore necessary to ensure that actions proposed by [SGD 2040](#) are successfully executed, and that the information necessary to allow the region to benefit from [SGD 2040](#) is correctly generated and effectively disseminated.

The [SGD 2040 Reporting Framework](#) describes the overall framework and approach for reporting progress related to [SGD 2040](#). It aims to implement an empirically driven and effective reporting regime that achieves the purposes of reporting, while overcoming reporting challenges known to exist. These challenges include the level of effort required for reporting, as well as difficulties in sourcing and providing the required information on a timely basis and with the required quality.

The framework enshrined in the [SGD 2040](#) Reporting Framework is based on 3 "levels" of reporting. This approach takes account of the fact that different types of data and analyses are required to produce the information required

by stakeholders. It also recognizes different roles and responsibilities in establishing and sustaining an effective reporting process.

Level 1 reporting is intended to determine the extent to which OECS Member States are executing activities designed to achieve the Outcomes specified in [SGD 2040](#). At Level 1, OECS Member States report against specific "Progress Measures" designed to show their level of progress for each of the Outcomes defined in [SGD 2040](#).

Level 2 reporting builds on Level 1, providing more in-depth interpretation of data and analysis of specific Strategic Priorities.

Level 3 reporting builds on Levels 1 and 2, providing comprehensive in-depth analysis of progress made towards the Vision, Goals and Objectives of [SGD 2040](#) as well as recommendations for the future consideration.

## REVIEW

Three years into the life of [SGD 2040](#), the Commission, in collaboration with the OECS Member States will undertake a review in order to ascertain the frequency and quality of Level 1 Reporting and the challenges, if any, to such reporting. The results of this review will be used to make changes, as appropriate, to the outcomes and complimentary performance measures. The evaluation will also be used to address any challenges that OECS Member States face in timely and quality reporting.

Five years into implementation, the Commission will undertake an external evaluation of the implementation of [SGD 2040](#). The Commission will determine what elements of the SGD will be reviewed, how the evaluation findings will be used and the evaluation framework to be used. This evaluation will also address the role and value of [SGD 2040](#) in contributing to its Vision.

The five-year evaluation will provide the Commission the opportunity to make any necessary amendments to [SGD 2040](#) so that it remains responsive and relevant to national and regional challenges and opportunities. This evaluation will also provide recommendations on the relevance of the reporting format and a plan for the further reporting on and evaluation of [SGD 2040](#).

## SCHEDULE 1

### ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

ABS	Access and Benefit Sharing
BE	Biodiversity and Ecosystems
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CCCCC	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
CCCFCP	Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CDM	Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy
CDR	Climate and Disaster Resilience
CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
CEP	Caribbean Environment Programme
COMES	Council of Ministers of Environmental Sustainability
CPW	Chemical Pollution and Waste
CRW	Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management
GE	Geothermal Energy
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GPA	Global Plan of Action for the Protection of the marine Environment from Land-based Activities
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
ISM	Island System Management
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
LBS	Land Based Sources of Marine Pollution

LDC	Least Developed Country
LMO	Living Modified Organisms
LW	Land and Water
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MARPOL	Marine Pollution Protocol (of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships)
MS	OECS Member States of the OECS
ODS	OECS Development Strategy
ODSe	OECS Development Strategy - Environment
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OF	Oceans and Fisheries
RAPMaLi	Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter
RBT	Revised Treaty of Basseterre
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
RG	Reporting Guide
SAMOA	SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SE	Sustainable Energy
SGD	St Georges Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
WCR	Wider Caribbean Region

Sustainable development

Sustainable development recognises the need for integration of social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects of decision making, and that any current and future natural resource development will be carefully undertaken without compromising the social, economic or environmental benefits or the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Integration	Integration refers to inter-sectoral integration, intergovernmental integration, spatial integration, science-management integration, international integration, etc.)
Ecosystems based Management	Ecosystem based Management (EBM) is a resource planning and management approach that integrates the connections between land, air and water and all living things, including people, their activities and institutions. Stemming from the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), EBM is the main tool to help meet and balance the objectives of conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of common resources.
Environmental stewardship	Environmental stewardship is the action taken by individuals, groups or institutions to protect, care for and responsibly use the natural environment. Ideally, everyone is a steward of the natural environment, understanding its importance and playing a part in looking after it.
Stakeholder participation	Full awareness and participation of the general public, the private sector, CSOs and community-based organisations contribute to credible, accepted rules that ensure empowerment and accountability. All stakeholders should be fully engaged and empowered to participate in the formulation and implementation of policies, programmes and decisions that advance environmental sustainability and sustainable development goals.
Public and private participation	Full awareness and participation of the general public, the private sector and CSOs contributes to credible, accepted rules that ensure empowerment and accountability. All stakeholders should be fully engaged and empowered to participate in decision making associated with SGD 2040. The support of the public in the formulation and implementation of decisions concerning governance of ocean uses is crucial to its success. Partnerships between government, the private sector and civil society will be built in order to ensure co-responsibility for marine management and to empower stakeholders to participate effectively.
Use of sound science and best practice	Policy formulation, planning, management decisions and developmental interventions should be based, as far as possible, on the best available information on the natural, social, and economic processes that affect the environment and sustainable development. Decision makers should be able to obtain and understand high quality science, data and best practice to facilitate sustainable use of island terrestrial, marine and coastal resources. This will enable a risk-based approach that allows consideration of uncertainty in decision-making.

Monitoring, Evaluation and learning	<p>The purpose of monitoring, evaluation and learning is to apply knowledge gained from experience, evidence and analysis to improve development outcomes and ensure accountability for the resources used to achieve them.</p> <p>Monitoring data are used to track the progress of an intervention in achieving set objectives. Evaluation is used to determine how and why results are being achieved, or not, as well as discovering unintended, unexpected, or emerging results. Learning means using M&amp;E data/information as evidence for accountability and informing decision-making for management purposes, and for designing future intervention; and sharing of best practices and lessons learned</p>
Precautionary approach	<p>Where there is scientific uncertainty, risk-based management incorporating precautionary, adaptive measures should be applied. Scientific uncertainty is acknowledged, and implementation of measures should be accompanied by adequate monitoring to gather further evidence and inform adaptive management.</p>
Environmental liability;	<p>Those responsible for causing, or with potential to cause, marine pollution or environmental damage should bear the costs of managing their activities to prevent such pollution or damage, of carrying out the measures decided by public authorities to ensure that the environment is maintained in an acceptable state, and of meeting any sanctions put in place as a consequence of their actions, including environmental restoration. Costs should be proportionate to the level of risk of harm or damage done. To ensure that this principle is effectively implemented, it is important that those who could be liable fully understand their obligations and responsibilities and are educated and empowered to act responsibly.</p>
Access and benefit sharing;	<p>The benefits arising from the use of common natural resources, and the responsibilities for their continued health and productivity, should be shared in a fair and equitable way among all citizens. Access to common natural resources for private profit should be priced to give a fair and equitable rate of return to a nation. Charges for access to natural resources should reflect the national interests at all levels, including short- and long-term economic, environmental, social, and cultural costs and benefits. Use of common natural resources should be governed in a manner that aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilisation of these resources (including genetic resources) in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies</p>

Regional cooperation

National and regional decision-making should take into account cooperation between and among Eastern Caribbean OECS Member States. Regional cooperation in projects will reduce costs and the burden of each State having to develop policy and legal frameworks, guidelines and standards that can be applied across all States. Neighbouring states should be consulted to ensure that any transboundary impacts are understood and managed co-operatively, and opportunities are optimised as appropriate. Regional cooperation also involves the facilitation and convening of regional governance and coordination mechanisms, and of international advocacy.

Good governance

Governance is the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented. Good governance includes transparency and accountability and has 8 major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.

Good governance, which includes sound institutional, policy and legislative frameworks, requires the exercising of prudence and responsibility by public bodies. Transparency and accountability are central to good governance, meaningful engagement and collective responsibility.

Equality and inclusivity.

Gender equality and inclusivity is promoted to ensure equality of access to resources and opportunities. Economic participation and involvement in decision-making will be open to all regardless of gender and including those from disadvantaged or marginalised groups. Consultation and participation processes will include considerations of the views of all relevant groups.