Report on the Donor roundtable: Effective support for civil society and the Caribbean Sea and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems
March 20-21, 2018
Barbados

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Conceptual framing of the Small Grant Coordinating Mechanism (SGCM)
Strategy for developing the SGCM
Best practices in supporting civil society organisations through small grants
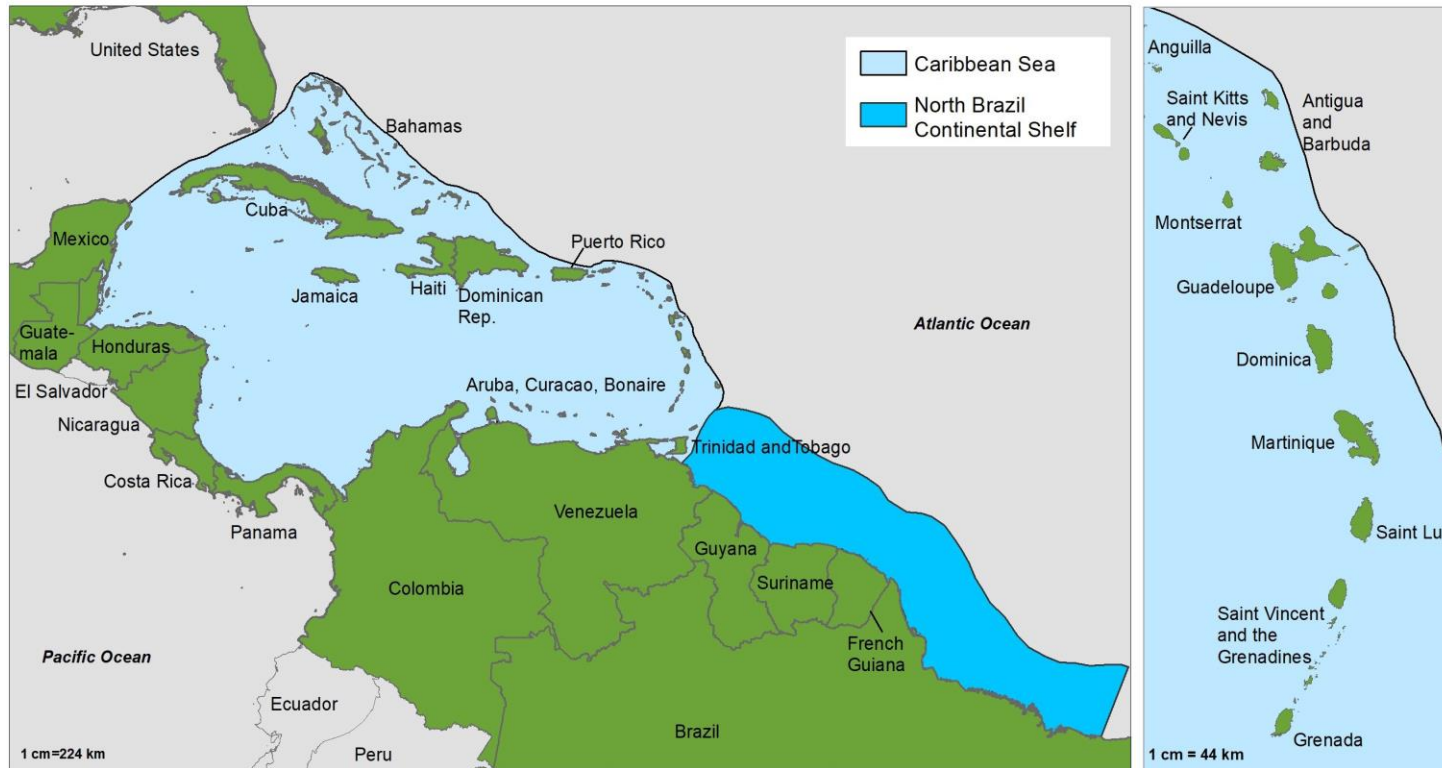Key areas for strengthening coordination among small grant programmes
Concept for the development of the SGCM to support implementation of the Civil Society Action Programme for the sustainable management of the shared living marine resources of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+ C-SAP)

Catalyzing implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf LME's (2015-2020)
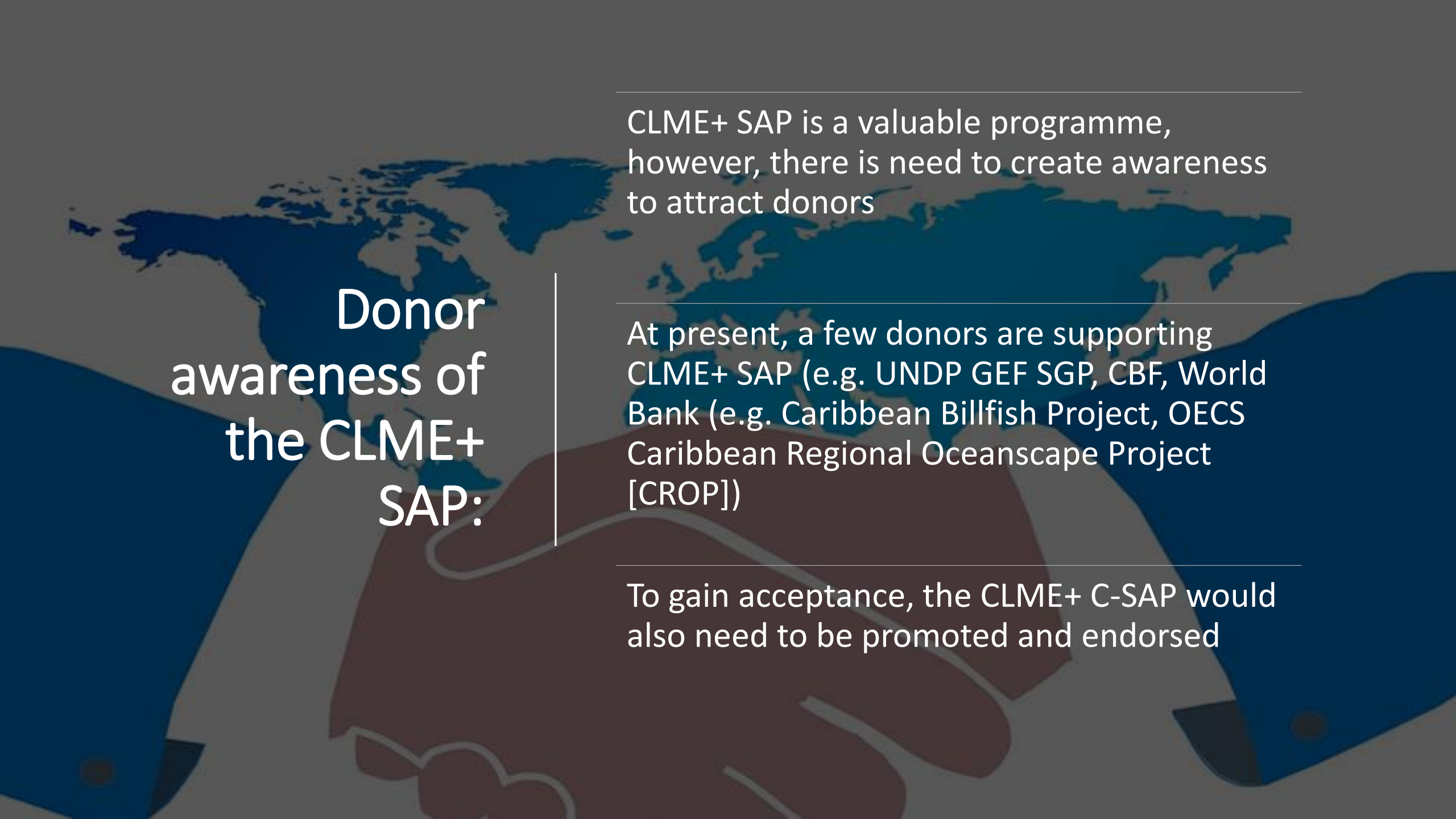
Background: the need

- The marine environment of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+ region) provides us with a multitude of goods and services that are critical for achieving enhanced livelihoods, human well-being and sustained socio-economic development.

- Within this vast marine area, three ecosystem types support the most important fisheries and biodiversity:
    - reefs and associated ecosystems
    - pelagic ecosystem
    - continental shelf ecosystem

- The capacity of these ecosystems to provide goods and services to our societies and to sustain such high levels of biodiversity is threatened by: (a) unsustainable fisheries, (b) habitat degradation, and (c) pollution. Impacts from these problems are made worse by climate variability and change.

The CLME+ Region

CLME+ Project
Caribbean & North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems

Legend:
Caribbean Sea
North Brazil Continental Shelf

Background: the initiative

- The Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of the Shared Living Marine Resources of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+ SAP) aims for "a healthy marine environment in the CLME+ that provides benefits and livelihoods for the well-being of the people of the region."

- The UNDP/GEF Catalysing Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems project (CLME+ Project) seeks to promote broader participation of, and contributions from civil society groups in the implementation of the CLME+ SAP.

- The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) was selected to develop the Civil Society Action Programme (C-SAP) to raise the profile of civil society and guide civil society capacity building for strengthening the role, participation and ownership of civil society in implementation of the CLME+ SAP.

- CANARI will also develop a Small Grants Coordination Mechanism (SGCM) that will support the implementation of priority actions identified in the C-SAP, and allow for better coordination amongst the different small grants programmes and projects in the region.

Donor awareness of the CLME+ SAP:

CLME+ SAP is a valuable programme, however, there is need to create awareness to attract donors

At present, a few donors are supporting CLME+ SAP (e.g. UNDP GEF SGP, CBF, World Bank (e.g. Caribbean Billfish Project, OECS Caribbean Regional Oceanscape Project [CROP])

To gain acceptance, the CLME+ C-SAP would also need to be promoted and endorsed

Overview – Donor Roundtable

Who?

14 representatives from multilateral and bilateral donors and their intermediaries/small grant operators implementing civil society small grant programmes, projects and initiatives in the CLME+ region

Why?

To raise awareness, build commitment and develop agreement on the design of a Small Grant Coordination Mechanism to support civil society's contribution to governance and management of the living resources in the CLME+ region

Specific objectives:

1. Map alignment between small grant programmes and priorities identified in the draft CLME+ C-SAP.

2. Share information on and best practices from current and planned relevant initiatives supporting civil society action in the CLME+ region.

3. Develop a Terms of Reference and Work Plan for development of a Small Grants Coordination Mechanism to support implementation of the C-SAP.

How?

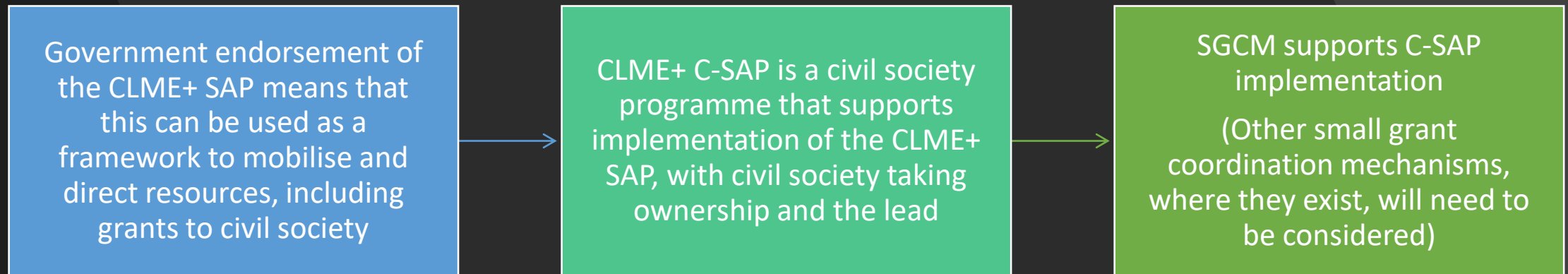Donor roundtable from March 20-21 in Barbados

Endorsement and promotion of the CLME+ C-SAP would require:

Articulation of a promotion and endorsement process which could take a phased approach, but should include:

- Explanation of the process of C-SAP development to add credibility

- Endorsement by the 18 CSOs and SMEs which took part in the January 2018 C-SAP development workshop

- Creation of awareness and endorsement by other key CSOs and SMEs in the CLME+ region

- Creation of awareness and buy-in among governments, inter-governmental organisations and donors which would be important for mobilising resources

- Appreciation of donors' endorsement processes

- Establishing links to global and regional commitments e.g. SDGs

- Building capacity of civil society to advocate for resources for CLME+ C-SAP priorities

- Establishing a "coalition of the willing" - donors and intermediaries as champions for promoting the CLME+ C-SAP

Conceptual framing of the SGCM

Government endorsement of the CLME+ SAP means that this can be used as a framework to mobilise and direct resources, including grants to civil society

CLME+ C-SAP is a civil society programme that supports implementation of the CLME+ SAP, with civil society taking ownership and the lead

SGCM supports C-SAP implementation

(Other small grant coordination mechanisms, where they exist, will need to be considered)

In the context of the CLME+ C-SAP, "Small Grant" refers to any size grant <u>for civil society</u>

Strategy for developing the SGCM

- CANARI is currently developing a Microsoft Access database which includes data/information on existing small grant programmes that are operational within the CLME+ region and that can contribute to the objectives of the CLME+ SAP and CLME+ Project

- Database development will focus on progammmes, projects and initiatives with small grant components targeting civil society and relevant to implementation of the CLME+ SAP, including elements aimed at raising awareness and building civil society capacity to operate in the coastal and marine areas of the CLME+ region.
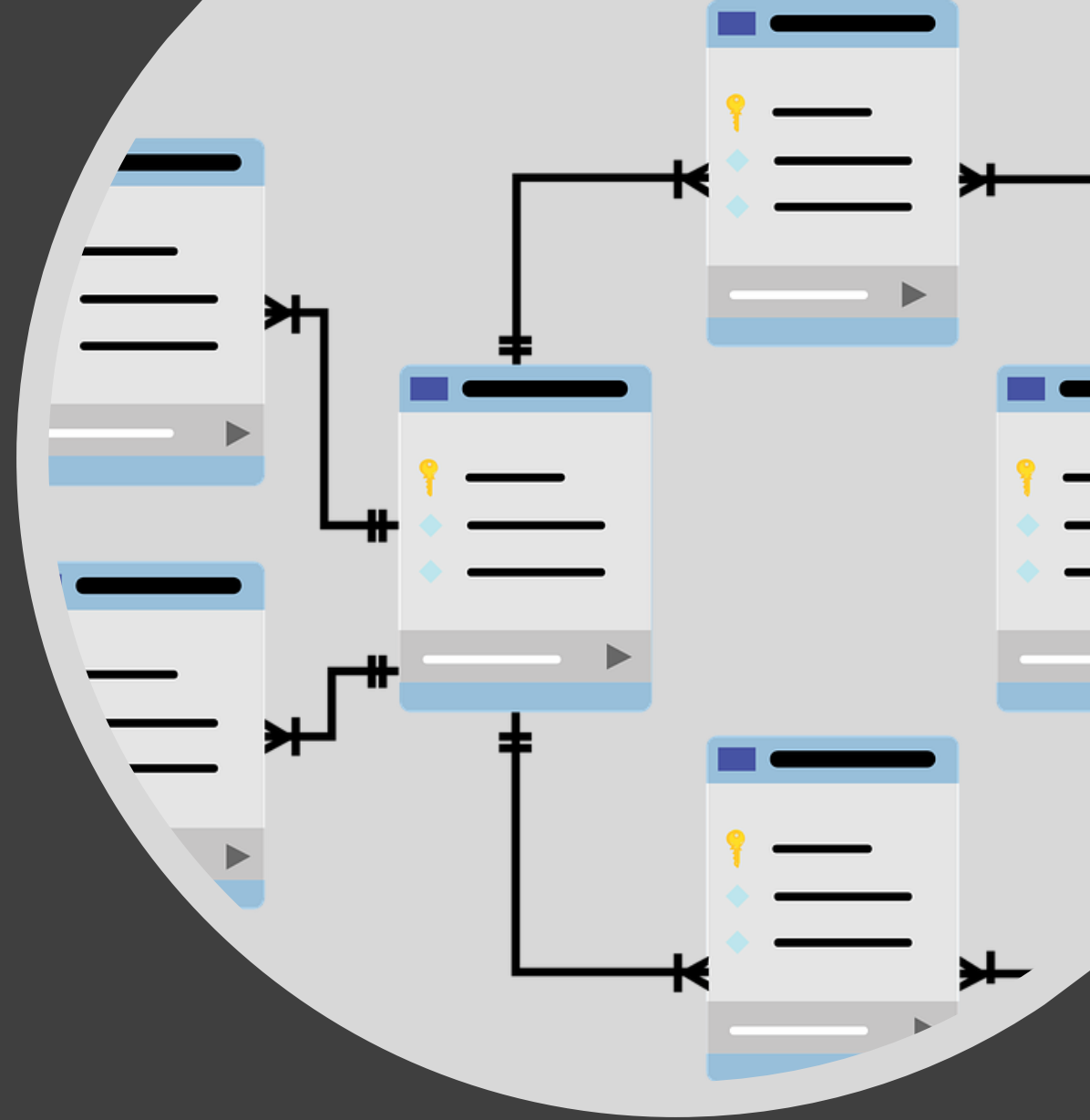
Likely sources of information for development of the SGCM database

- Eastern Caribbean donors coordination group, with subgroups (Private sector sub-group has developed a database of projects)

- Network of Environmental Funds of Latin America and the Caribbean (RedLAC)

- Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF)

- Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

- Global mapping of climate adaptation funds

- Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) – Regional Clearinghouse

- European Union (EU) website – thematic programmes

- Caribbean Biological Corridor

- Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF)

- Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystem Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States - GEF (IWEco)

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program

- US Fish and Wildlife Services

- Commonwealth Foundation

- Climate Investment Fund (CIF) Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR),

- United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Local Capacity for Local Solutions (LC4LS)

- Embassy of Japan Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP)

- Other embassy programmes e.g. Canada, Australia, Germany

- Private foundations

- Philanthropists with interest in the Caribbean and Latin America

- Corporate social responsibility programmes (e.g. by petroleum companies, banks, hotels)

- World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) entrepreneurship support programmes

- UN Agencies and other intermediary organisations e.g. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Conservation International (CI) which implement GEF and Green Climate Fund (GCF) projects

Developing the database

The database should be useful to donors and CSOs, and should include information relating to:

General grant criteria: e.g. geographic focus (specific countries), focal areas, target groups

Relevant themes – e.g. climate change, coral reefs, governance, organisational strengthening of CSOs, business strengthening of SMEs

Total investment and grant allocation size

All donors involved in a multi-donor initiative (e.g. CEPF)

Funding cycles

Mechanism for accessing resources (through intermediaries - regional, bilateral, government, CSO arrangements)

Grant eligibility

Co-financing requirements (just a yes/no indication)

Reporting cycles for grantees

Donor and CSO contact information

Percentage of funds provided for administration of the grant programme

Options for maintaining and updating the database

CLME+ Hub as a means of sharing and updating information on relevant projects, programmes and initiatives

CLME+ Permanent Policy Coordination Mechanism as a means of maintaining and updating the database

Different "hubs" managing CLME+ databases across the region

CANARI could take on this role within its mandate, but would require resources to do so

"Coalition of the willing" (donors and intermediaries) that are willing to support CLME+ C-SAP implementation

CAMPAM and other listservs could assist in collecting information to populate the database(s)

Demonstrate usefulness of the information to donors, which could attract resources for maintenance of the database

Assessment of synergies and gaps across donor priorities

How do donors determine/set their investment priorities?

- Interests of the donors (e.g. geographic area, focal area(s) of interest, specific tools/approaches, what's "hot")

- Political, economic and other relationships, and donor commitments, e.g. EU/ACP EPA

- Global/regional/national commitments of recipient governments

- Development status of the region/country

- Broader global framework and the specific country programme defined based on local needs (e.g. strategy and priorities set in consultation with stakeholders)

- Compliance with regional strategies and plans e.g. CDEMA's Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy

- Level of data/information on issues/problems/needs

- Gap analysis, innovation and high impact of actions e.g. ecosystem based adaptation

- Capacity of partners
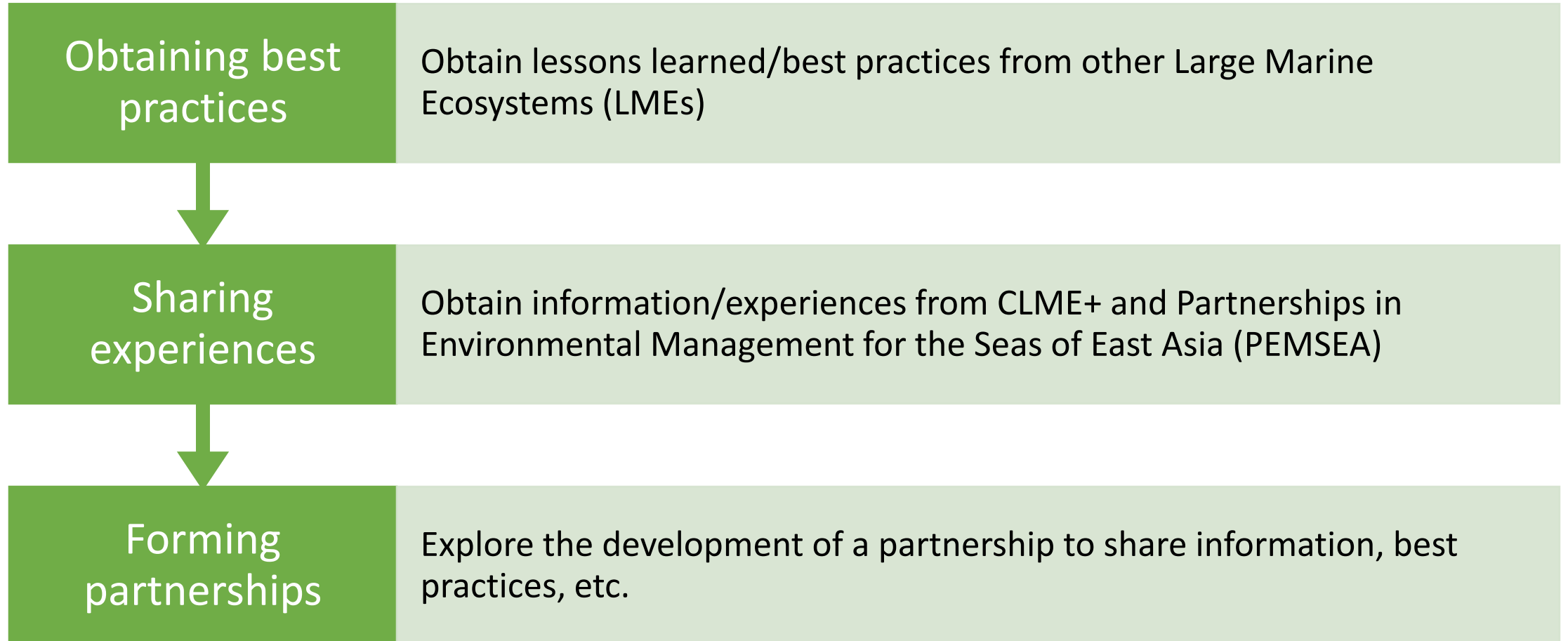
- Commitment to sustainability

# Initial reactions to the draft CLME+ C-SAP (January 2018)

Participants recommended refining the document:

- Use a logical flow with vision, goal, objectives, etc.

- Include likely results (specific outcomes)

- Show alignment/linkages and non-alignment with CLME+ SAP (e.g. root causes, strategies/actions), and global and regional commitments

- Identify strategies and/or actions outside the CLME+ SAP

- Balance focus between fisheries and environment (as the CLME+ C-SAP is now significantly skewed to fisheries)

- Refine Strategies/Actions and prioritise – include more active roles for civil society, not just support

- Emphasise what is new and innovative

- Monitoring & Evaluation:
  o Take a flexible approach.
  o Consider outcome mapping, dashboard and/or scorecard approaches.
  o Align with CLME+ SAP M&E framework to the extent possible and focus on high level outcomes
 o Keep it simple

Sharing experiences among donors and intermediaries

Obtaining best practices	Obtain lessons learned/best practices from other Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs)
Sharing experiences	Obtain information/experiences from CLME+ and Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA)
Forming partnerships	Explore the development of a partnership to share information, best practices, etc.

Sharing on best practices in supporting civil society organisations through small grants – looking at all stages of the grant making cycle
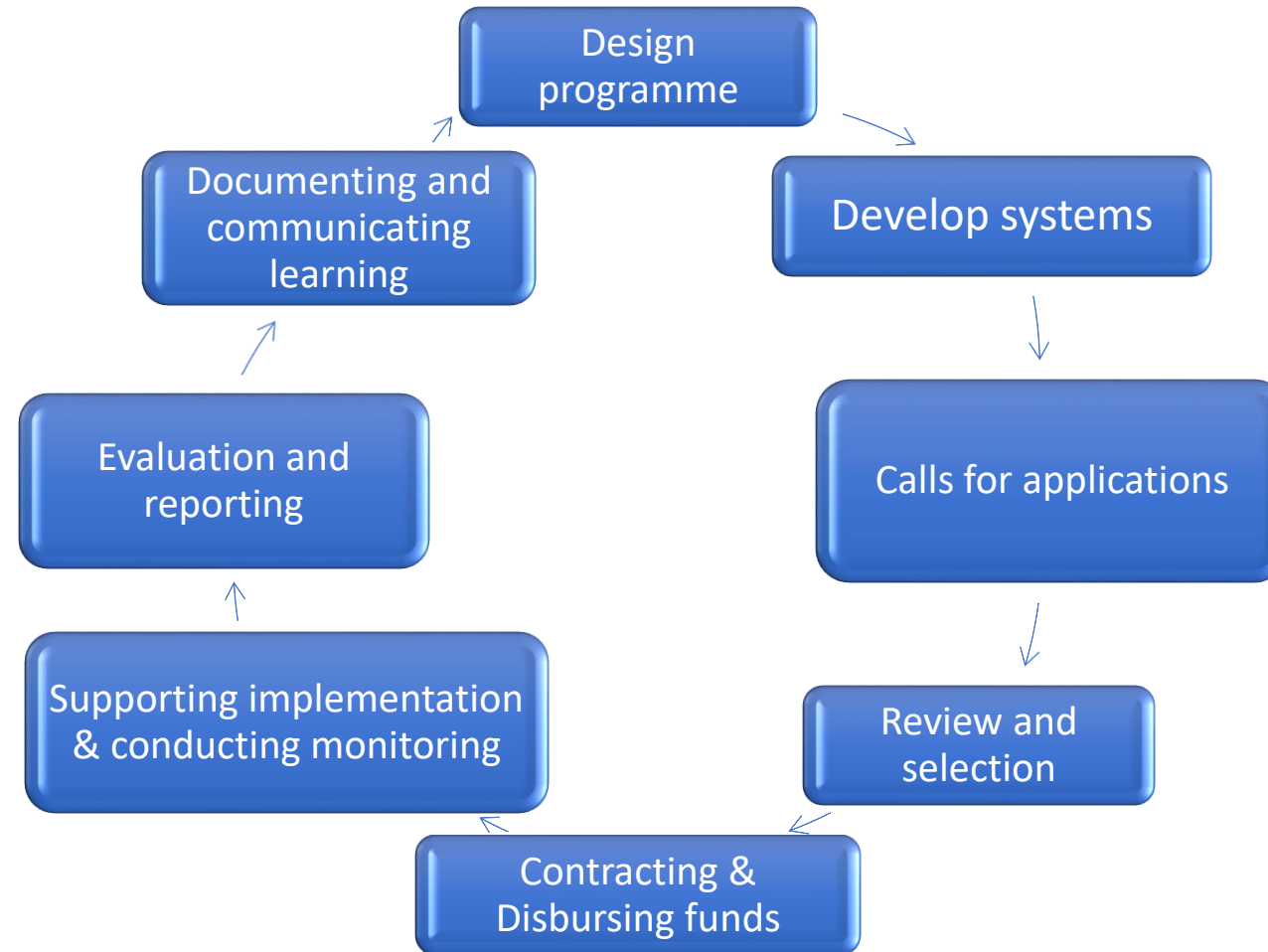
The Grant Making Cycle
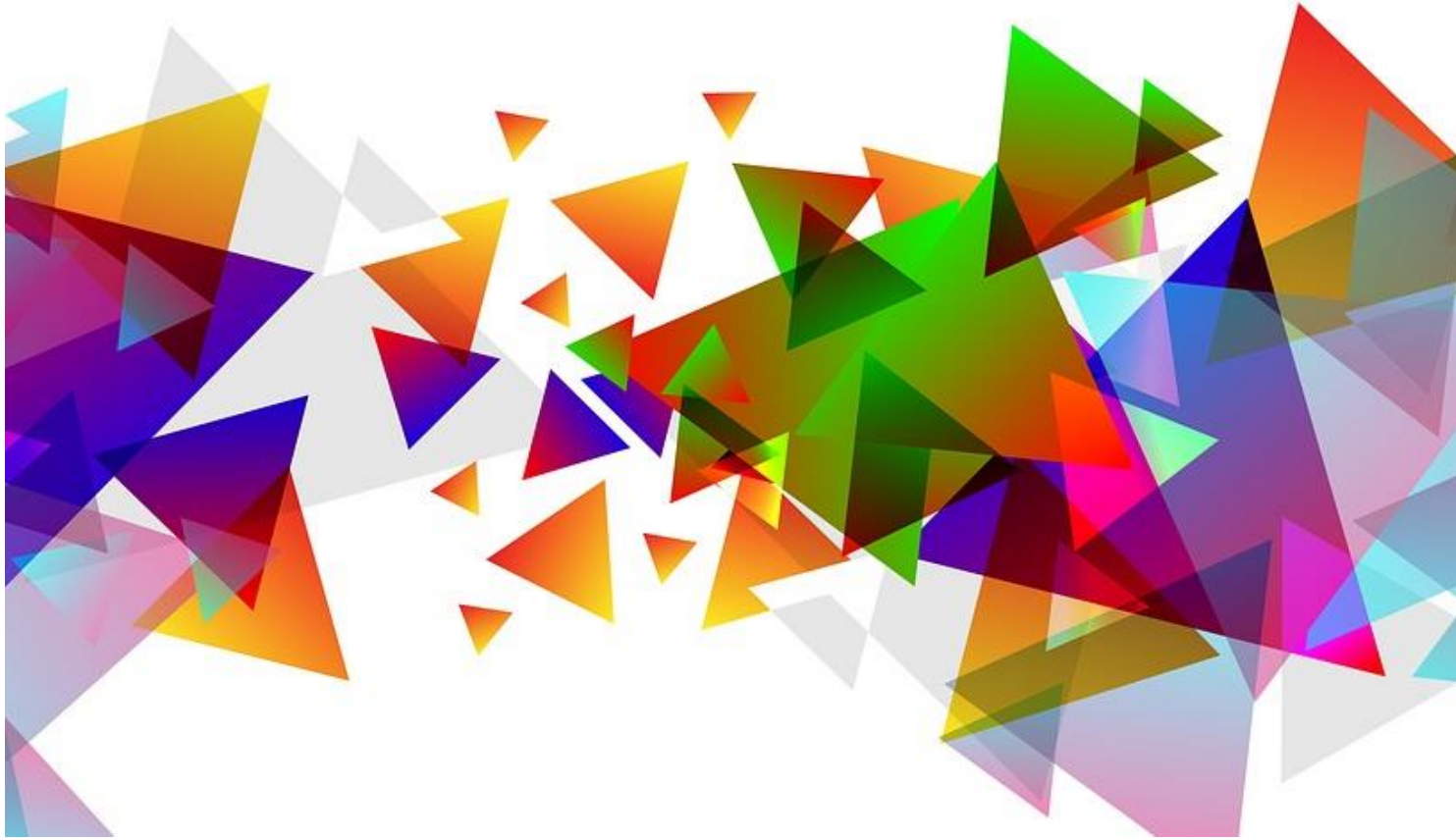
Best practices on designing programmes

- Learn from other small grant programmes

- Consult with key stakeholders

- Adjust design – be flexible [factor into design]

- Use a Technical Advisory Committee

- Communicate programme design

- Separate government components from CSO components in donor programmes or include checks and balances to protect CSO freedom

Best practices on developing systems

- Use government as intermediary to facilitate grantmaking to individuals if this is allowed

- Use appropriate application and reporting forms (simple, clear, appropriate for the size of the grants), and test them with stakeholders

- Use Excel, not Word, for budgeting

Best practices on calls for applications

- Use video/mobile phone in initial call for ideas, then put in appropriate format (use targeted calls)

- Use regional listservs

- Use interviews

- Use mentoring and coaching to help CSOs develop applications

- Let applicants do presentations, then revise the proposal

- Organise workshops to explain the call and get ideas

- Promote networking

- Promote institutional self-assessments to guide capacity building during implementation (identify priority capacity needs and include them in budget for project implementation)

- Link to/be guided by the donor and system, with recipient consultation

- Undertake pre-selection of target CSO or target group of CSOs

- Seek endorsement and approval by government focal point – be aware of the pros and cons of this approach

- Engage with government agencies in CSO projects

- Use of a two-stage application approach in competitive process: pre-selection, then determination of the grantees for the next phase

- Obtain expectations of partners

- Use of expert reviewers as volunteers – clarify expectations and provide incentives [not necessarily monetary]

- Conduct orientation sessions
- Practice an "open door policy"
- Build relationships
- Build in scope for adaptation of call for application into the manual itself
- Build in flexibility in project delivery

Best practices on implementing and monitoring

Best practices on evaluating and reporting

- Use forms (quantitative and qualitative that seek big picture results) – complete as appropriate

- Use narrative and financial reports, with examples

- Encourage use of photographs

- Assist with doing baseline and delivering of targets and indicators (establish baseline through data sheet, logframes)

Best practices on documenting and communicating learning

- Require sharing of results and lessons – communication of the story

- Bring people together to share experiences, lessons learned, best practices

Best practices on building capacity

- Invest in intermediary (including country coordinators) or other mentors to provide support

- Separate roles between oversight and mentoring re: monitoring, implementation, evaluation, reporting

- Build capacity of CSOs in project management during implementation via training, coaching, and use of templates and examples

- Use mentoring and coaching throughout the project management cycle

- Use independent external experts as mentors
  - Ensure that mentors have the appropriate competencies
  - Build capacity of mentors, and get them to commit by way of a TORs, with agreement/rules of engagement, application process to be a mentor, offer honorarium and cover action expenses

- Build the mentor/mentee relationship

Key areas for strengthening coordination among small grant programmes

Best practices for coordination among small grant programmes

Use themes/thematic groups to convene different donors around topics (e.g. climate change)

Seek to create synergies, share information, build database of projects

Do not discard "rejected" proposals, but put them up for funding when other opportunities arise

Share information on applications across programmes to avoid double-dipping by likely grantees

Invite donor representatives on national committees to address duplication of applications under various programs and identify options for co-financing

Share information and try to co-finance projects that may need more funding

Use common applications, similar procedures and harmonised monitoring across programmes

Learn from small grant experiences and share them through project management meeting/multiple teams/team member experiences

Share experiences informally among team members across projects

Promote meetings of national coordinators across small grant programmes

Share experiences through annual conferences with a theme, members manuals, reports, websites

Concept for the development of the SGCM to support implementation of the C-SAP

The concept should include:

- Background

- Purpose - support the implementation of priority actions identified in the CLME+ C-SAP

- Specific Objectives - facilitate enhanced coordination amongst the different small grants programmes for civil society in the region

- Rationale – the SGCM increases visibility, effectiveness (impact and synergies), efficiency and transparency of grant programmes

- Implementation
  - Membership - core group from the Roundtable/ "coalition of the willing"
  - Development, coordination, maintenance
  - Monitoring, evaluation, learning, change

Approach to implementing:
Use a phased approach:
Testing - sharing information
Building relationships among Donors/Intermediaries/CSOs
Creating synergies

- As a starting point, the SGCM could provide information on small grant programmes, projects and initiatives and foster relationships among donors and intermediaries.

- As a means of attracting donors, the SGCM could demonstrate that it:
  o assists in the identifications of gaps
  o provides scope for synergies
  o is being utilised by other donors, intermediaries, CSOs (as users) and Governments (as users)
  o provides visibility for donors
  o provides opportunities for learning

Next steps

The core group, made up of CANARI, UNDP GEF SGP, IUCN BIOPAMA, CAMPAM, EFJ, Canadian High Commission will take part in:

drafting the concept for the development of the SGCM; and

testing the concept by establishing the database with actual small grant projects, programmes and initiatives being implemented

The concept will be prepared by June 30, 2018, with testing taking place to May 31, 2019.

CANARI would like to thank the following organisations for participating in the
Donor roundtable: Effective support for civil society and the Caribbean Sea and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems

Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF)

Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)

Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management (CaMPAM)

CLME+ Project, Project Coordinating Unit

Environmental Foundation of Jamaica

European Union (EU)

Global Affairs Canada - Canada Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Fund (CCDRMF)

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - The Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) Programme

United National Development Programme (UNDP)- Barbados and Eastern Caribbean

UNDP-Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP)

The development of the SGCM is an activity under the [Engaging Civil Society in CLME+ SAP Implementation project](#) which is being executed by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) as a component of the [CLME+ Project](#). The five-year (2015 – 2020) CLME+ Project is being implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and co-financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

CLME+ Project co-executing partners:

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For more information about the *Engaging Civil Society in CLME+ SAP Implementation project,* *including development of the C-SAP, contact Mr. Terrence Phillips, Senior Technical Officer,* *CANARI at terrence@canari.org*