



**Organisation of
Eastern Caribbean States**



OECS REGIONAL GREEN-BLUE ECONOMY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

(DRAFT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY)

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List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
BE	Blue Economy
BVI	British Virgin Islands
CAIPA	Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies
CANARI	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
CARICOM	The Caribbean Community and Common Market
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
COMES	Committee for Environmental Sustainability
CROP	Caribbean Regional Oceanscape Project
CRS	Climate Resilience Strategy
C-SERMS	Caribbean Sustainable Energy Roadmap and Strategy
DFID	Department for International Development
ECCB	Eastern Caribbean Central Bank
ECROP	Eastern Caribbean Regional Ocean Policy
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
G-BE	Green/Blue Economy
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE ALG	Green Economy Action Learning Group
GE	Green Economy
GEC	Green Economy Coalition
GGGI	Global Green Growth Institute
GGKP	Green Growth Knowledge Platform
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
LEDS	Low Emission Development Strategies
MSMEs	Micro Small and Medium Enterprises
NSAP	Non-State Actors Advisory Panel
OAS	Organization of American States
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
ROM	Results Oriented Monitoring
SAMOA	Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action
SDD	Sustainable Development Dimensions
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGD	St. Georges Declaration of Principles on Environmental Sustainability
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UWI	University of the West Indies

1 Executive summary

1.1 Introduction

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) region, like many other small states around the world, faces many challenges to its sustained advancement including the buffeting effects of climate change, diminishing flows of international aid and development financing, rising unemployment and sluggish economic growth, unsustainable debt and aging infrastructure. The urgent need for new, and relevant, sustainable development strategies that build resilience and rest on a ‘triple bottom line’ of economic prosperity, social inclusiveness and environmental sustainability has thus been acknowledged by all the member states, either collectively throughout the various OECS Councils¹ or in public pronouncements by its individual leaders².

In October 2018, a diagnostic study by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) entitled *Exploring opportunities for transformation to inclusive, sustainable and resilient economies in the Eastern Caribbean*, was published in full and in a CANARI policy brief as well as by the Green Economy Coalition (GEC) in a separate Eastern Caribbean Green Economy Barometer.

The major policy actions recommended to support a transition to a more structured sustainable development strategy in the OECS were as follows:

- Develop an OECS Green/Blue Economy³ Strategy and Action Plan which define key principles, objectives, policy needs, pathways and capacity needs for economic transformation.
- Foster partnerships with a broad spectrum of governments, national, regional and international institutions, civil society and private sector to enable effective implementation of inclusive, resilient and sustainable economies in the OECS.
- Actively include Ministries of Finance and Planning and other key national and regional level economic and financial institutions in key decision-making processes for transforming into inclusive, resilient and environmentally sustainable economies.
- Create enabling regulatory, fiscal and financing policies and programmes which support micro, small and medium enterprises as a key pathway for economic transformation.
- Develop a clear programme of policies for greening of priority economic sectors.

The OECS Ministerial Council on Environmental Sustainability (COMES), in July 2018, mandated that the Commission pursue the development of a Green-Blue Economy (G-BE) Strategy and Action Plan, which would provide a more structured framework for implementation of a holistic, sustainable economic development plan. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the OECS Commission and CANARI was signed in July 2019 and in furtherance of the objectives of the MOU, the OECS Commission has partnered with CANARI to develop a Regional G-BE Strategy and Action Plan for the OECS and to make

¹ OECS Council of Ministers – Environmental Sustainability (COMES) 2018/2019 and OECS Authority Conclusions 2016-2019

² Andrew, M. 2018. *Exploring opportunities for transformation to inclusive, sustainable and resilient in the Eastern Caribbean*. Technical Report No. 404. Port of Spain: CANARI. pp 23-24

³ It is up to the OECS political directorate to determine how it will term this new economy. Labels are not as important as is adherence to the key principles of a green, blue, circular or climate-resilient economy. Those principles are elaborated elsewhere in this document.

recommendations for successful implementation of the G-BE Strategy and Action Plan based primarily on the core proposals of the GE Diagnostic study and in fulfillment of the COMES mandates.

The G-BE Strategy seeks, among other things, to combine economy, environment and society, in keeping with the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also provides an outlined Action Plan for implementing the G-BE with a focus on **communications/engagement; resources; governance; institutions and regulations; management/greening of key sectors; and monitoring.**

The first step of this exercise was a Needs Assessment, which focused on six areas deemed critical to the successful implementation of a G-BE in the region. The identified areas were:

- 1) Communications and Engagement
- 2) Finance
- 3) Human Resources/Expertise
- 4) Regional Coordination and Leadership
- 5) Institutions and Regulations
- 6) Data

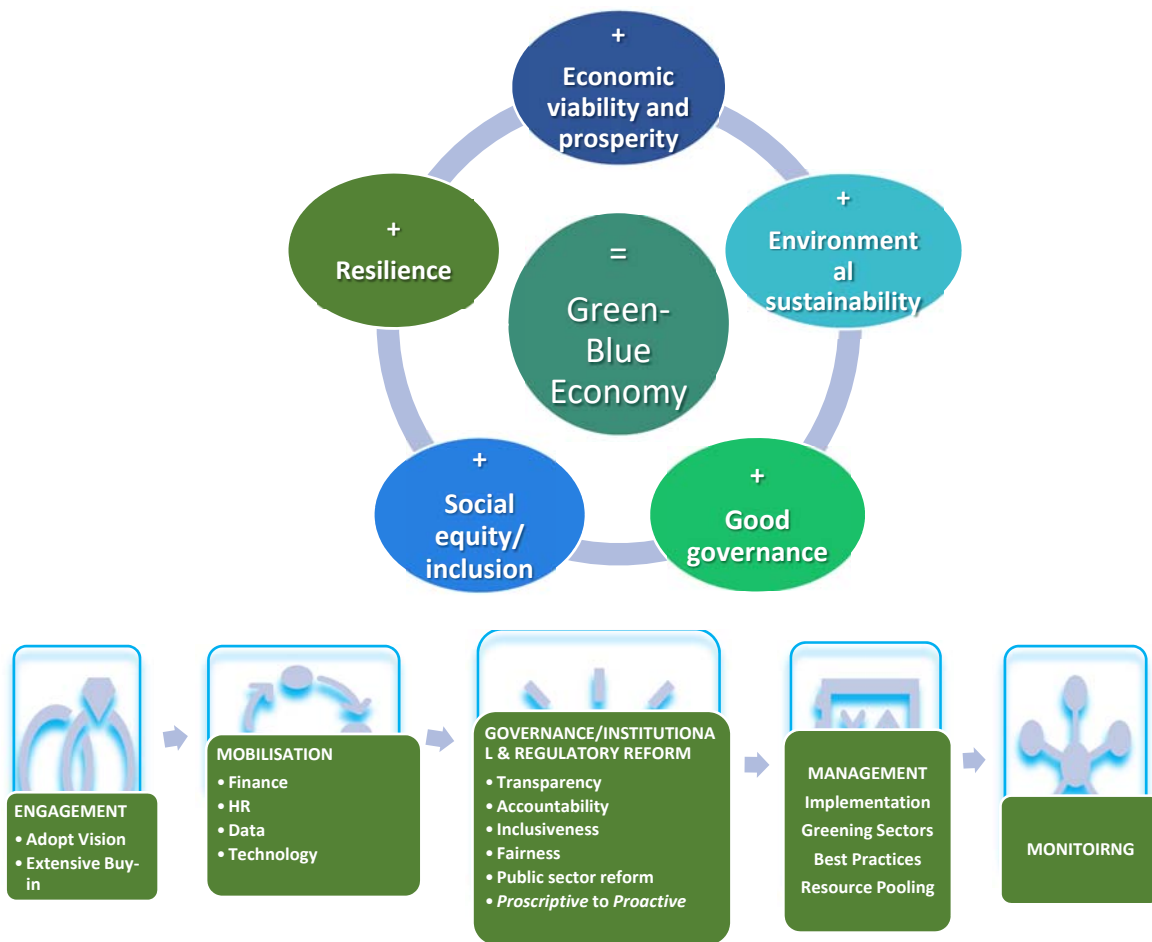
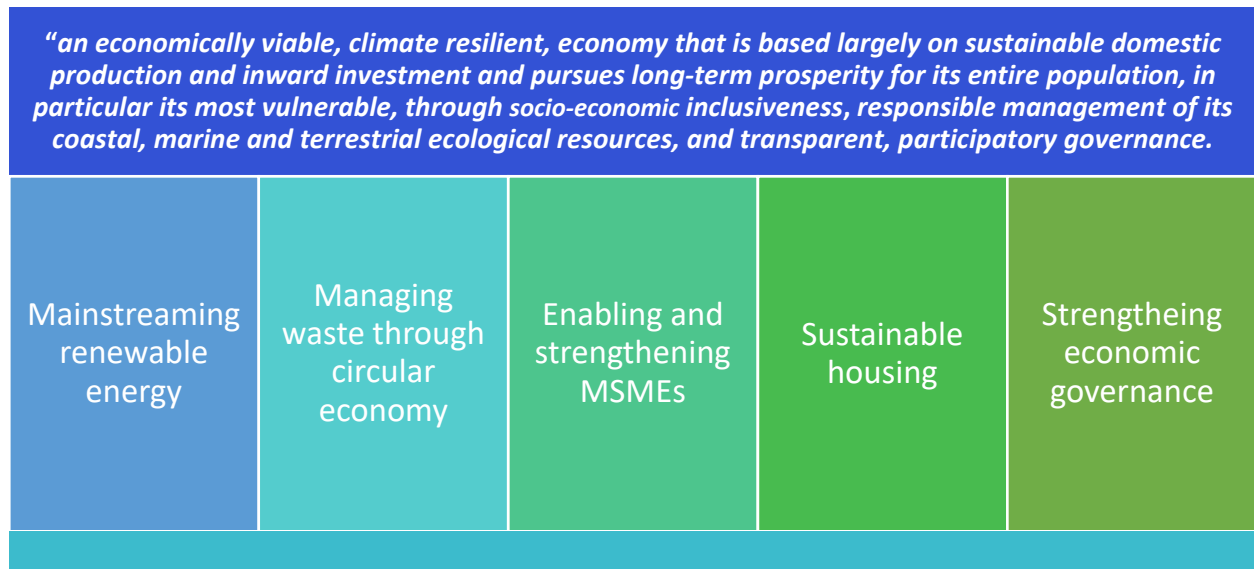
The Needs Assessment outlined existing and new actions, policies and initiatives that support a transition towards a G-BE in OECS Member States and in the region generally. The aim of this report was to identify gaps, current policies, hurdles and any initiatives that could be accelerated or better coordinated in the quest towards a G-BE in the region. This would in turn assist in identifying purposeful actions and approaches to implementing a G-BE in the 11 OECS Member States.

1.2 The Conceptual Framework

The OECS G-BE Strategy is predicated on the belief that the region is at a developmental crossroad that challenges its very existence. It is indeed in danger of being overwhelmed by the myriad issues of climate change, economic decline, social upheaval, environmental degradation and moral decay. The region must therefore forge a better and more sustainable way to safeguard and further its developmental goals and achieve a more prosperous, climate-resilient, sounder and more fulfilling existence for its people. The G-BE Strategy is based on four key elements, namely, the 'triple bottom line' of economic prosperity, social equity and environmental sustainability: prosperity, people and planet, plus good governance. The simple approach therefore will be one of **positive arithmetic**, wherein any developmental or investment proposal that in any way negates either one of those elements will be rejected as anathema to the G-BE concept. This approach would similarly be employed in assessing the success of implemented initiatives.

The proposed strategy is built on the aforementioned pillars of engagement; resource mobilisation; good governance; process management and implementation including key sector greening; restructuring/establishment of appropriate institutions and regulatory reforms; and proper monitoring of the entire process before during and after implementation. It requires a dedicated effort on the part of all players and begins with a deliberate attempt to obtain the requisite embrace of the G-BE vision by the political directorate as well as by the leadership of the private sector and civil society.

Figure 1. G-BE Conceptual Framework



1.3 Key Elements of Green-Blue Economy

- I. **Engagement** – This is an essential first step and involves getting the key policy/decision makers in both the public and private sectors to adopt the G-BE vision and to champion its implementation. Similarly, institutions, people, sector leaders, public and private sector functionaries and entities, civil society, academia etc.) would have to buy into the vision through expert engagement and communication initiatives using the most effective ‘entry point’ or levers to influence G-BE supporting action.
- II. **Mobilisation** – Resource mobilisation and efficient allocation is critical to this major transformative development effort, which will require a reallocation of existing public and private sector resources from the traditional ‘brown economy’ to the new sustainable, climate- resilient, people-centred, economically empowering paradigm that a G-BE represents. The key resource needs would be finance, human capital/ skills/expertise, data and technology.
- III. **Governance/ Institutional and Regulatory Reforms**
 - Good governance is an indispensable tenet of a green/blue economy and a central pillar of the proposed implementation process. It is necessary for influencing leadership at all levels and for effective sharing and extensive embrace of the G-BE vision. Good governance demands a commitment to transparency, accountability, fairness, and inclusiveness to stimulate a widespread commitment to the G-BE transformation project.
 - – Moving from *proscription* to *facilitation* is necessary for any forward progression and particularly so for the G-BE transitioning effort. Thus, such a new ecosystem is essential to implementing a Green-Blue Economy as well as for building the capacity to access climate finance and to utilise it for the implementation of a successful G-BE. The framework would, among other things, provide positive incentives for investment in climate friendly goods and services and would penalise new investments in traditional ‘brown economy’ activities and measures that militate against achievement of the G-BE. This compels deliberate policy formulation and legislative action throughout the OECS region.
- IV. **Implementation/Management** – The G-BE will be determined by the extent to which, for instance, greening of sectors, development of new sustainable goods and services, involvement of the private sector particularly micro, medium and small enterprises (MSME), and the roll out of supporting policies, regulations and practices. This is a mammoth task that necessitates the full participation and support of all OECS member states and supporting institutions. The strategy will be implemented steadfastly in distinct phases over the short, medium and long term within a framework of sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness. Partnerships for effective implementation across the broad spectrum of governments, domestic, regional and international institutions, civil society and the private sector are critical to success of the G-BE given the need for policy coherence, pooling of strengths/ resources and effective, sustainable development supporting implementation modalities.
- V. **Monitoring** – Regular, expert monitoring is key ensuring accountability, transparency, efficiency, relevance and effectiveness and to minimising wastage of scarce resources. It will also help to determine whether new measures are adding to or compromising the ‘triple bottom line’ or the four sustainability principles that are elaborated elsewhere in this document.

1.4 The Proposed Strategy and Action Plan

The proposed strategy is built on the aforementioned pillars of engagement; resource mobilisation; good governance; process management and implementation including key sector greening; restructuring/establishment of appropriate institutions and regulatory reforms; and proper monitoring of the entire process before during and after implementation. It requires a dedicated effort on the part of all players and begins with a deliberate attempt to obtain the requisite embrace of the G-BE vision by the political directorate as well as by the leadership of the private sector and civil society. It also necessitates the contribution of the leading regional development agencies including the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), OECS Commission and University of the West Indies (UWI) as well as the private sector, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and civil society. The strategy borrows from successful blue economy initiatives in Mauritius, Seychelles and other countries that have been able to implement elements of the sustainability principles. It will be prosecuted over the short, medium and long term but with specific projects that seek to build the capacity, understanding and momentum of OECS Member States, as they transition to a new climate resilient, sustainable economy.

An Action Plan with recommended initiatives, lead implementing/coordinating agencies, timelines and indicators of success is outlined in greater detail in the final section. This plan includes four proposed sector greening project ideas on: alternative energy; waste management/circular economy; sustainable housing; and forging a comprehensive regional green/blue economy; that could be implemented over the short, medium and long term respectively.

The Short-term, denoted by 'S' is within 12 months; the medium-term, signified by 'M' is from 12-60 months; and the longer-term, 'L' is from 60 months and beyond. The Plan assumes that the required political and public/private sector commitment will be forged and that fundamental changes to the traditional institutional arrangements that current exist will be made in a timely enough manner to allow the enabling national and regional framework for supporting a successful G-BE progression and will, in turn, influence actions across a broad range of sectors over the short, medium and long-term.

Table 1. OECS Green-Blue Economy Action Plan

1. ENGAGEMENT				
Required Action	Responsible Agency	Methodology	Timeline	Indicators of Success
Develop an expert driven programme to advocate acceptance by Governments and private sector of an OECS Green-Blue Economy Vision and their leadership in securing public buy-in.	OECS Commission, CDB, ECCB	Programming/ Advocacy/Coordination	S, M	Green/ Blue Economy or however termed becomes a regional policy priority and is mainstreamed into national and sub-regional programmes and plans.
Build Up widespread understanding and obtain significant public buy-in for G-BE.	OECS/ECCB/CDB/ CANARI	Advocacy/ Professional Communication and Engagement/ Media Sensitisation. Introduction of widespread GE education and promotion programme.	S, M	Whatever term is adopted (G-BE, BE, GE, new economy etc.) becomes familiar to at least 60% of the OECS populace, with a basic understanding of its tenets and main policy proposals.
Green-Blue Economy Visioning- Agree on a programme of implementation with key priorities areas reflected in national budgets as well as in the budget and programming of the OECS commission and other supporting entities	OECS/ECCB/ Ministries of Finance & Planning Departments	Detailed national G-BE implementation plans captured in medium Term Strategic Programme and subsequent annual budgets over five years	S, M	Lucid, publicly accepted new economy implementation plan is formally adopted, unveiled and actioned after wide consultation.

2. RESOURCE MOBILISATION				
Required Action	Responsible Agency	Methodology	Timeline	Indicators of Success
Financing the transition- A comprehensive, phased financing proposal that matches the implementation plan	CDB/ECCB/OECS Commission/OECS Member Governments	Multilateral grants and soft loans / public financing/ targeted private investment attraction/bilateral donor funding /Climate finance sourced	M	Green-Blue Economy fund established and fully pledged/capitalised.
Development of comprehensive responsible/sustainable regional investment strategy	Caribbean Export/CAIPA/CDB/OECS Commission	Build on the CAIPA 2015-2019 Strategic Plan and the Regional Investment Promotion Strategy by inserting a responsible/sustainable investment principle in all propositions	S	The region is distinguished by a well-known, credible, predictable and harmonised responsible investment propositions across all its investment promotion platforms.
Obtain technical assistance for development of data/information base for valuing capital and setting policy goals, targets and specific national and regional objectives. Include the valuation of natural capital in national/regional economic assessments	CDB/OECS/ECCB/ National Statistical Offices	Research/ data & information management/analyses/ expert review	S, M	Funding/ technical assistance secured for informed and reliable targeting/programming. Valuing natural capital becomes commonplace. In all economic assessments, led by the CDB and ECCB from their 2020-member country assessments.
Establish a regional skills training and human resource development programme for G-BE. Target public officials, private sector and MSMEs	OECS/CARICAD/ CANARI/UWI	Work with national/regional training and educational institutions to develop curricula and special programmes for G-BE implementation/management skills development	S, M, L	A distinct G-BE skills training programme is established and run through the existing national and regional training programme.
Access and develop new technology to build resilience and competitiveness	Private sector/ OECS Energy Unit/National Investment Promotion Agencies	Propagate successes in alternative energy and other new sustainable technology investment. Work with Mauritius and Seychelles to observe best practices and replicate successes, where feasible	M, L	Investment in new technology takes hold throughout the region and positively impacts the G-BE process through sustainable production and consumption initiatives.

3. GOVERNANCE & INSTITUTIONAL AND REGULATORY REFORM				
Required Action	Responsible Agency	Methodology	Timeline	Indicators of Success
Good Governance	OECS Governments/ OECS Commission/ Selected Inter-governmental Agencies	Constitutional and administrative review to ensure that transparency, accountability, responsibility and inclusiveness objectives are well established, consistently enforced and maintained	M, L	The region receives accolades and recognition for its governance standards
Administrative restructuring/ Public Sector Reform	OECS Commission/ OECS Member Governments/ CARICAD	Streamline existing structure to align with new economy transitioning and increased administrative efficiency. Public sector and related policies, regulations reoriented from proscription to facilitation	M, L	Marked improvement in public sector output/ Key Performance Indicators set, more than 80% met and high ratio of implementation of programmes.
Mainstream G-BE implementation with restructured Ministerial focus	OECS Commission/ OECS Member Governments/ CARICAD	Ministries of Finance, Planning and Development (Sustainable Development) as a possible means of ensuring that the G-BE/new economy idea. Follow the lead of Dominica/Barbados by establishing a Ministry for the Blue (Green) Economy.	M, L	G-BE implementation becomes the main focus of national economic and social development agencies.
Water and waste management policies and legislation	OECS Member Governments	Review and update policies and legislation to better conserve and sustainably produce clean water while instituting new waste management and planning guidelines that support sustainability.	M, L	Cleaner and more aesthetically pleasing physical environment and efficient waste management Climate resilient building standards well established and commonplace.

4. MANAGEMENT/IMPLEMENTATION				
Required Action	Responsible Agency	Methodology	Timeline	Indicators of Success
Greening/Bluing sectors	CDB/ Member Governments/ Relevant Agencies/ Private Sector	Sector by sector programming in association with national and regional private sector, MSMEs and subject specialists	M, L	International certification/ discernible sector growth in Green-Blue Economy context.
Project 1. Pilot Circular Economy/Waste Management for MSMEs	CANARI/OECS	Project designed to minimise and re-use waste in all productive and consumption processes	S	Project developed, funds sourced, and implementation managed expertly. Project idea replicated across sectors over time.
Project 2. Model sustainable housing project	OECS/CDB/National Housing Departments	Use a public/private partnership approach to develop and fund a sustainable housing project(s) on a pilot basis with energy, water, waste management and sustainable, climate resilient materials and fittings.	M	Project developed, funds sourced, and implementation managed expertly. Project idea replicated across sectors over time. New sustainable housing standards are adopted for all new build applications throughout the region.
Project 3. Comprehensive multi-sector greening/bluing project	OECS/CDB/Member Governments	Consolidates individual sector greening initiatives with establishment of a comprehensive national sustainability-oriented programme of G-BE within a broad national development plan	L	Project developed, funds sourced, and implementation managed expertly over time. OECS region has a distinct green/blue/circular economy that largely reflects the key principles of sustainability
5. MONITORING				
Required Action	Responsible Agency	Methodology	Timeline	Indicators of Success
Establish a dedicated monitoring mechanism	OECS Member Governments	Obtain expert assistance for establishing a dedicated regional monitoring mechanism (supported by country-based officials) to regularly assess the G-BE implementation process and ensure that the essential principles upon which the G-BE rests are continually maintained.	M, L	A dedicated monitoring mechanism for the G-BE is established and operational throughout the region.