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A review of the status of institutional mechanisms for sustainable development planning in the Caribbean

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UNITED NATIONS

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Abstract

The 2030 Agenda underscores the importance of a strengthened institutional framework at the national and regional levels that integrates the three dimensions of sustainable development. This study provides an overview of integrated decision-making processes in Caribbean countries and the role that national institutions play in supporting systematizing integrated decision-making for sustainable development, including in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with focus on eight Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS): Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The study identified some innovative good practices, scalable at the subregional level, designed to support integrated decision-making and coordinated implementation and follow-up of national and international development frameworks at all levels, as well as the mainstreaming of SDGs into national and subnational policies that are integrated across sectors. These practices may also help in improving the clarity of institutional roles and responsibilities among government agencies involved in the implementation of 2030 Agenda.

All eight countries covered in this study have established or are in the process of establishing sustainable development frameworks, adopting the principles of multi-sector and inter-ministerial collaboration. Key elements of strategic integration at national level adopted by Caribbean countries include: Integrated development plans and strategies; Coordination mechanisms (Horizontal and Vertical); Participatory processes; Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and Access to information; Monitoring and Evaluation.

Whereas each country has made progress in specific areas and faces specific challenges, in continuing to build institutional capacity in the Caribbean for integrated decision-making, we recommend the following:

- Move toward integrated systems to enhance diagnosis, foresight and risk-informed planning and improve action-oriented results-based management;

- Promote a larger degree of vertical decentralisation and horizontal integration;

- Establish partnerships for the Goals;

- Enhance research, innovation and capacity development for sustainable development planning agencies and GIS units by ensuring political support, and the adequate technical, coordination, and budgetary resources; and

- Continue to strengthen peer exchange, learning and subregional cooperation.

Introduction

The countries of the Caribbean are facing important challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[1] and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a context of anaemic economic growth, high unemployment, and growing exposure to climate change impacts.

The Caribbean is one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world and is particularly vulnerable to climate change, sea level rise, and extreme weather events, with rapid impacts on the loss and erosion of coastal areas, and significant exposure of its vital natural protection systems —mangroves, seagrass and coral reefs. This extreme vulnerability and increasing high exposure of people, assets and livelihoods to natural hazards has resulted in tremendous costs in terms of loss of human lives, population displacement, physical infrastructure, and negative effects on economic activities especially in agriculture and tourism. Given the geographical location of Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) within the hurricane belt and the large proportion of population and economic activities located in coastal areas, disasters usually have nationwide impacts. In fact, in terms of the impact of disasters as a proportion of GDP, the ten countries most impacted by economic losses during the period 2000–2019 were all SIDS, nine of which located in the Caribbean.[2] This illustrates the existential threat that disasters pose to Caribbean SIDS, where one single event may cause nationwide devastation and derail an entire country's economy and development trajectory, as was the case when Hurricane Maria struck Dominica in 2017, causing damage and losses equivalent to 226% of the country's GDP.

Climate change, coupled with environmental degradation, public health risks, social inequalities, migration, and violence are increasingly correlated, with cascading effects through entire systems. The very high and uncontrolled urbanization rates in the Caribbean are further exposing human settlements, infrastructure, and businesses, to external shocks. The 2019 novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has added a new dimension to these multidimensional vulnerabilities, widening inequalities and demanding

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[1]   A/RES/70/1, "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

[2]   The ten countries suffering the greatest economic losses as a percentage of GDP in 2000–2019 were Dominica (15%), Cayman Islands (9.1%), Haiti (8.0%), Grenada (7.8%), Turks and Caicos Islands (5.8%), Bahamas (4.3%), Guyana (3.6%), Puerto Rico (3.5%) and Belize (3.4%) in the Caribbean, followed by Samoa (2.1%) in the Pacific region (UN, 2019a).

new approaches in how Caribbean countries must grapple with the pandemic's economic and social fallout. The complex and aggregated nature of the infectious disease in a context marked by social and economic disparity, has led to the adoption of the notion of a 'syndemic'. Due to the syndemic nature of the present threat, ECLAC recognises the need to adopt a broader and more integrated approach (Hoton, 2020; ECLAC, 2021).

Increasingly, Caribbean governments face one emergency after another, the steady erosion of resources undermining their capacity to fully recover from disasters. Meanwhile, the subregion's public debt burden and consequent attention to fiscal consolidation have constrained governments' efforts at long-term development investments, raising questions regarding the Caribbean's ability to meet the promise to leave no one behind during this 'decade of action' dedicated to delivery of the global goals.

As the Caribbean struggles to cope with the widespread health and socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is now increased acknowledgement of the critical role of institutions and of the value of public policies to ensure adequate and equitable delivery of public goods, to boost growth, encourage the development of technological capacities, and promote territorial development. For the Caribbean, institutional strengthening is seen as key to addressing resilience building. Enhanced institutional capacities assure reinforced integrated response in disaster and emergency situations.

Progress has been recorded in the region in the formalization of institutional arrangements for SDG implementation, in mainstreaming the SDGs, and in building national ownership of the global agenda. In the Caribbean, ECLAC has contributed to the establishment or strengthening of institutional frameworks for SDG implementation, the integration of the SDGs in national development planning processes, and the strengthening of institutional capacities for national development planning, integrating implementation of both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SIDS agenda.

In the wake of COVID-19, Caribbean countries have a unique opportunity to address institutional gaps that cause or exacerbate structural imbalances by implementing recovery strategies that are human-centered, equitable and inclusive, and that promote green growth. Efforts to promote sustainable development will remain essential to the post pandemic recovery, and to addressing the growing needs of the subregion's population. Integrating development priorities and managing any necessary trade-offs requires a sound national institutional infrastructure for policymaking.

Given the cross-cutting and multifaceted nature of sustainable development, outcomes cannot be achieved if development action remains stratified within traditional social, economic, and environmental silos. Instead, a more holistic or integrated approach is required. It is, therefore, necessary to break down the barriers to integrated action and to promote the connections between inclusive social development, economic growth, and environmental sustainability. Within the context of the 2030 Agenda, countries have been called to improve or restructure the decision-making process so that consideration of socio-economic and environmental issues is fully integrated, and a broader range of public participation assured. The Agenda also calls on countries to adopt cohesive nationally owned sustainable development strategies, supported by integrated national financing frameworks and "commit to pursuing policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors", in support of the implementation of relevant strategies and programmes of action, including the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.

The objective of the study is to review the status of institutional mechanisms[3] for sustainable development in the Caribbean and the role they play in entrenching integrated decision-making processes. The study focuses on eight Caribbean SIDS: Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago and seeks to examine their shared experiences in institution building in order to identify good practices in institutional arrangements for integrated policy and decision-making in the subregion.

Agenda 2030 underscored the importance of a strengthened institutional framework at the national and regional levels that integrates the three dimensions of sustainable development. Having that in mind, it is widely recognized that no single institution can tackle the totality of development challenges in one country. Therefore, national and local administrations, civil society organisations (CSOs), the private sector and international institutions all have a role to play. Their ability to work together and in a cohesive manner will determine whether an individual country, or a region as a whole, will be able to address some of the most pressing development challenges and, in a balanced manner, respond to current and future challenges, bridging gaps in the implementation of the sustainable development agenda (UNDP, 2017). This study therefore contributes to our understanding of integrated decision-making processes in Caribbean countries and the role that national institutions play in supporting the implementation of the SDGs. This is essential for identifying areas in need of improvement where national development in the focus countries is concerned.

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[3] Institutional mechanism typically refers to a formal structure that assigns primary responsibility as well as the authority to an agent (ministry, department, agency, division, or other national, regional or local administrative and/or government body). The mechanism also includes arrangements and procedures to facilitate coordination among stakeholders involved in the management and implementation of a given development activity.

I. Institutional mechanisms for integrated decision-making and the Sustainable Development Goals

Through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, governments have committed to addressing the long-standing structural economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities, including poverty, inequality, and environmental risks. By definition, and considering the strong interlinkages between the SDGs, sustainable development can only be successfully achieved by pursuing an integrated approach to decision-making.[4] While institutions are not the only means to promote integration and reduce inequalities, inclusive institutions may be seen as critical enablers of equity that is fundamental to achieving the objective of leaving no one behind (UN, 2016).

The concept of institutions for sustainable development is broad and multi-faceted, encompassing a "range of structures, entities, frameworks and norms that organize human life and society" (UN, 2016), as illustrated in Table 1. Since 1992 when the concept of sustainable development was firstly introduced under the Rio Earth Summit, the integrated nature of sustainable development has posed challenges to institutions that were often not designed to cut across boundaries. These challenges have been addressed with various frameworks (see Diagram 1) and concepts, such as systems-thinking, policy coherence, horizontal and vertical integration.

Since its inception, the 2030 Agenda underscores the policy integration approach as an implementation mechanism. It strongly advocates for a better coherence of measures across sectors, improved consistency of policy instruments, and enhanced cooperation between all actors involved in the process of both policy formulation and implementation (Domorenok et al., 2021). Policy integration

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[4]   On this topic see, ECLAC (2020), "Planning for resilience: an integrated approach to tackle climate change in the Caribbean", (LC/CAR/2020/1).

concerns the management of cross-cutting issues in policymaking that transcend the boundaries of established policy fields, which often do not correspond to the institutional responsibilities of individual departments (Meijers and Stead, 2005). Policy integration is central to bringing together divergent economic, social and environmental priorities, and to maximising synergies and minimising trade-offs at all stages of the policymaking process. This is important to: (i) avoid the risk that progress on one goal occurs at the expense of another, for example food (SDG 2) can compete for the same marine (SDG 14) or land (SDG 15) biodiversity resources; and to (ii) ensure that domestic policies are aligned with internationally agreed goals (OECD, 2018).

Table 1
Institutions for sustainable development

	Composition	Level of governance	Examples
Organizations	Global organizations Intergovernmental organizations Political actors: governments, nongovernmental organizations, unions, associations	Global	UN, OECD
		Regional / subregional (supranational)	CARICOM CDEMA
		National	Antigua and Barbuda's Ministry of Social Transformation, Human Resource Development and the Blue Economy
Institutional mechanisms	Formal system of rules: constitutional rules, organizational rules, standing orders of different governmental bodies, associations, unions, written agreements, etc.	Global	High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development
		Regional / subregional (supranational)	Forum of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development
		National	Grenada National Sustainable Development Plan
Institutional orientations	Informal system of rules: culture, religion, customs, values	Regional / subregional (supranational), National, local	Information, guidelines, beliefs

Source: Adapted from Bochańczyk and Pęciak (2015).

In order to promote the effective implementation of the SDGs, the 2030 Agenda calls for transparent, effective, inclusive and accountable institutions to advance poverty eradication and sustainable development. It aims to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels, emphasizing the importance of promoting "as soon as practicable of ambitious national responses to the overall implementation of this Agenda. These can support the transition to the SDGs and build on existing planning instruments, such as national development and sustainable development strategies, as appropriate."

While the 2030 Agenda does not prescribe specific institutional models for the national level, it outlines broad principles such as "effectiveness, inclusiveness, and accountability" (SDG 16), "responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels" (target 16.7) and "policy coherence for sustainable development" (target 17.14) as essential means of implementation. In 2018, the Committee of Experts on Public Administration under the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), provided guidance on the principles of effective governance for sustainable development, recognising its importance for the full realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and other internationally agreed development objectives (UN, 2018).

Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD), as an outcome of the policy integration process, provides a solution for assisting institutional and other stakeholders to cut across policy silos and minimise fragmentation in decision-making. UN Environment (UNEP), with support from the OECD and other partner institutions, is the custodian agency responsible for developing a methodology for measuring PCSD that is universally applicable to all countries. PCSD is defined as an approach and policy tool to systematically integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development at all stages of domestic and international policy making. Its three main objectives are to:

- Foster synergies across economic, social and environmental policy areas.

- Identify trade-offs and reconcile domestic policy objectives with internationally agreed objectives.

- Address the negative spill-overs of domestic policies (OECD, 2018).

The OECD defines policy and institutional coordination as "ensuring whole-of-government coordination to identify and mitigate divergences between sectoral priorities and policies, including external and domestic policies, and promote mutually supporting actions across sectors and institutions" (OECD, 2021).

Diagram 1
Policy Frameworks for Sustainable Development and strategic integration

Global Policy Frameworks	Regional Policy Frameworks	Integration elements
• 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. • Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. • Paris Agreement • SAMOA Pathway • New Urban Agenda • Biodiversity Agenda 2020-2050, adopted in Kunming, China, in October 2021	• Building more resilient Caribbean states is the unifying theme for the 2014 to 2024 Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Strategy and Results Framework.	• Institutionalization of Political Commitment • Long-term considerations • Horizontal and Vertical coordination • Participatory processes • Policy linkages • Monitoring and reporting for policy coherence • Financing for policy coherence
• Integration of economic, social, and environmental objectives. • Nationally owned and country-driven process. • Strong political commitment at the national and local levels. • Spearheaded by a strong institution.	• Need to build resilient economy is recognised. • The CDM establishes as one of its seven strategic goals to strengthen "community resilience which has been enhanced for the most vulnerable with gender concerns at all stages and levels".	• CDM's Pathway for Resilience promotes capacity to mitigate, prepare, respond, recover and rehabilitate using a more strategically aligned and integrated risk management approach.
Sustainable Development	Resilience	Integrated Development Planning

Source: Authors' compilation.

A critical element for the implementation of the SDGs at national and regional levels is the establishment of an efficient coordination mechanism. Such a mechanism allows the effective communication and administration among different governmental levels–namely national and regional and/or local levels–to design or implement respective development policies (vertical coordination). The coordination mechanism should also secure effective communication and administration between measures and schemes of programmes at the same level (horizontal coordination).

In the Caribbean, a range of national frameworks exist to promote sustainable development at the country level (see Diagram 2, for a snapshot of focus countries' key sustainable development frameworks) and a series of initiatives have been undertaken to promote a new emphasis on how policy coherence and better-integrated planning mechanisms can help countries strengthen their planning processes, develop holistic development frameworks reflecting global, regional and special commitments, such as SAMOA Pathway, and achieve their national development objectives in a more effective, efficient, equitable and sustainable way.

Diagram 2
Caribbean focus countries at a glance: National population, Development Plan and SDG coordination mechanism

	Population	Plan	Temporality	SDG Coordination mechanism
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	97,929	Medium Term Strategic Development Plan of Antigua and Barbuda (2016-2020)	Medium term	National SDG Committee
BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS	30,231	National Sustainable Development Plan (in preparation)	Long term	Not yet established
DOMINICA	71,986	National Resilience Development Strategy 2030 of Dominica	Long term	Prime Minister's Office. Interim SDG Technical Committee. Ministry of Planning and Economic Development of Dominica.
GRENADA	112,523	National Sustainable Development Plan 2020-2035 Grenada	Long term	Sustainable Development Institute of Grenada (in establishment)
JAMAICA	2,961,167	Vision 2030 Jamaica. National Development Plan (NDP)	Long term	The National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee (NAOC)
SAINT LUCIA	183,627	Medium Term Development Strategy 2020 - 2023 of Saint Lucia	Medium term	National Coordinating Mechanism for implementing the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs of St Lucia
SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES	110,940	National Economic and Social Development Plan 2013-2025 of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Long term	Office of the Prime Minister
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	1,399,488	Vision 2030: National Development Strategy of Trinidad and Tobago	Long term	High Level Ministerial Sub-Committee of Cabinet on Vision 2030 and SDGs' of Trinidad and Tobago

● Urban ● Rural

Source: Authors' compilation. Source of population data: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. World Population Prospects: The 2019 Revision.

The Commission's support to Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is provided through capacity development, in collaboration with the wider UN system. Particular attention is given to strengthening statistical capacities to support evidence-based decision making and enhance countries' ability to follow-up and review progress on the 2030 Agenda, as well as strengthening ICT, knowledge management and exchange. It also includes the development of tools, notably a template to structure an institutional framework for SDG implementation, and technical cooperation support to mainstream the 2030 Agenda into national planning instruments, policies, strategies and financial frameworks. This is within the context of the challenges that Caribbean countries face in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Significant among these are the limited capacities to develop evidence-based integrated development plans that mainstream the SDGs, the SAMOA Pathway and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The limited capacity that countries have to implement, monitor and evaluate progress in the achievement of national and internationally-agreed development goals is also a major challenge. Despite these challenges, experiences of Caribbean countries indicate that the subregion is making progress in localizing the 2030 Agenda. Countries have established inter-ministerial working groups and held consultations to improve national ownership of the global Agenda. Several countries have also benefitted from mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support (MAPS) missions to help advance their implementation of the SDGs. In addition, a series of capacity development initiatives[5] have been implemented in the subregion to enhance national capacity for policy coherence and integration. These training programmes have emphasize policy coherence that increase synergies between policies to reduce trade-offs and ensure internal consistency among policies (ECLAC, 2019a).

Two capacity development projects[6] implemented in the subregion have made significant contributions to the areas of national development planning, mainstreaming of the SDGs, formalization of institutional arrangements for SDG implementation, and building national ownership of the global agenda. In developing its first long-term national development plan, Grenada ensured that the National Sustainable Development Plan 2020-2035 was evidence-based and developed through a rigorous stakeholder participation process. In addition, the country is taking steps towards the establishment of a Sustainable Development Institute that will coordinate an integrated approach to national development and policy coherence. Dominica conducted a review of its National Resilience Development Strategy 2030 (NRDS), which was implemented before the global adoption of the 2030 Agenda, in order to mainstream the SDGs in the national development process. The review also included aligning sectoral plans with the national development priorities identified for each sector in the NRDS and in the SDGs. As regards national assimilation of the 2030 Agenda, Aruba, one of the first Caribbean countries to formalize its SDG institutional framework, engaged in a participatory process that ensured a role for the legislative arm of government in the implementation of the SDGs.

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[5]   For example, a Learning Conference on Implementing the 2030 Agenda in the Caribbean Region, in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), was held in 2019. As a follow-up from this conference, a regional workshop on "Integrated Policies and Policy Coherence for the SDGs" was hosted by ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean in the same year, and jointly organized with UNITAR and UNDESA. The workshop included a training of trainers component which enabled participants to further transfer their acquired knowledge and skills.

[6]   "Planning for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean", funded by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), and "Strengthening institutional frameworks in the Caribbean for an integrative approach to implement the 2030 Agenda and the SIDS Sustainable Development Agenda", a UN Development Account project, implemented by ECLAC in collaboration with DESA's Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Unit.

Table 2
Elements of strategic integration for sustainable development and resilience building

	Integrated development planning and strategies	Coordination mechanisms (Horizontal/Vertical)	Participatory processes	GIS and Access to information	Monitoring and Evaluation
Antigua and Barbuda	Medium Term Strategic Development Plan of Antigua and Barbuda (2016-2020)	National SDG Committee	Consultation	Standard GIS mapping; Ratified Escazú Agreement	Gap analysis of the country's capacity to collect data to inform a strategy for the collection and strategic use of data
British Virgin Islands	National Sustainable Development Plan (in preparation)	Not yet established	Consultation	Standard GIS mapping	
Dominica	National Resilience Development Strategy 2030 of Dominica	Prime Minister's Office. Interim SDG Technical Committee. Ministry of Planning and Economic Development	Consultation	Signatory of Escazú Agreement	Dominica NRDS Resilient Development Results Monitoring Matrix
Grenada	National Sustainable Development Plan 2020-2035 Grenada	Sustainable Development Institute of Grenada (in establishment)	Sustainable Development Network (SDN); Sectoral consultations	Signatory of Escazú Agreement	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS); Grenada NSDP Results Monitoring Framework
Jamaica	Vision 2030 Jamaica. National Development Plan (NDP)	The National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee (NAOC)	SDG Core Group; Stakeholder-driven VNR; Vision 2030 Jamaica Thematic Working Groups	Thematic GIS mapping; Signatory of Escazú Agreement	National Statistical System (NSS); development of a Statistics Master Plan; Multi-stakeholder Mechanism for Monitoring the Advancement of Vision 2030 Jamaica
Saint Lucia	Medium Term Development Strategy 2020 - 2023 of Saint Lucia	National Coordinating Mechanism for implementing the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs of St Lucia	Consultation	Ratified Escazú Agreement	Saint Lucia MTDS Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework; Performance Management Delivery Unit
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	National Economic and Social Development Plan 2013-2025 of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Office of the Prime Minister; Office of the Director of Economic Planning	Consultation	GIS Division established; standard mapping Ratified Escazú Agreement	Central Statistical Office
Trinidad and Tobago	Vision 2030: National Development Strategy of Trinidad and Tobago	High Level Ministerial Sub-Committee of Cabinet on Vision 2030 and SDGs of Trinidad and Tobago	Consultation Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB); National Tri-partite Advisory Council (NTAC),	GIS	Ministry of Planning and Development through the Environment and Policy Planning Division and the Technical Cooperation Unit; Central Statistical Office; National Performance Framework to be produced

Source: Authors' compilation.

Furthermore, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago benefitted from technical assistance in the preparation and presentation of their Voluntary National Review (VNR) to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). A key lesson learned in delivering this technical assistance is that the VNR process serves as an opportunity to stimulate national ownership of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, affording member States a unique occasion for self-assessment of their national development plan and its monitoring and evaluation framework, along side a review of the progress in the achievement of the SDGs.

Although Caribbean countries have made notable strides, six years into the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, many countries continue to face persistent challenges in maintaining adequate mechanisms and capacities for integrated and coherent multi-stakeholder approaches to policy design and reporting on the SDGs. This situation is now exacerbated in a context of widened socioeconomic inequities resulting from the pandemic. Indeed, most of these challenges pertain to the adoption of systemic integration principles into the daily routine of sectoral institutions or other institutions that were not specifically created to address or implement sustainable development.

Table 2 outlines some of the key integration elements for institutions for sustainable development which will be detailed in this chapter.

A.   Strategic frameworks for development

As illustrated in Diagram 3, the strategic development framework provides the context for implementation of the SDGs in a given country. It offers a long-term vision and a perspective to ensure that long-term considerations are integrated in decision-making, policies, plans, programmes, and projects. The strategic development framework is a multi-layered interrelated assemblage of strategies, policies, plans, programmes, actions and projects. These are both horizontally integrated, i.e. all of the above within the same thematic sector, as well as vertically integrated among different levels of governance, within and between sectors.

Diagram 3
Strategic Development Framework and the elements for integrated decision-making
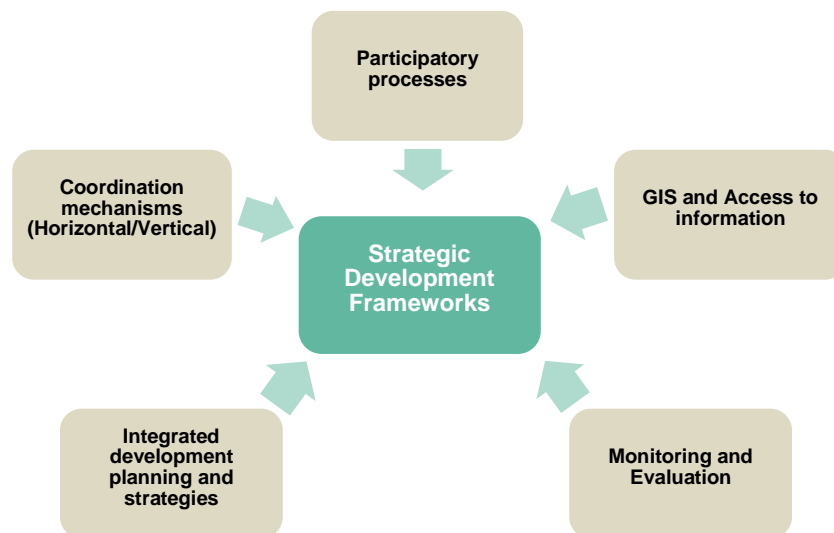
Source: Authors' compilation.

The eight focus countries have invested significant resources in developing a strategic framework that will assist in implementing the 2030 Agenda and associated SDGs. Table 3 gives an overview of the strategic plans and actions undertaken by the countries. It should be noted that in some cases long- and medium-term plans and strategies were developed before the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. However, because of their relevance for the implementation of the Agenda, they have been taken into account for this analysis. A number of sectoral documents, supplementing and further articulating national plans were also developed after the 2030 Agenda was adopted and after the individual countries' national long-term development plans were approved.

While all countries have put in place an elaborate structure of sectoral plans, strategies, policies, and programmes, not all SDGs are covered by a respective sectoral policy. The VNRs that have been prepared by the focus countries (five in total) clearly indicate which sectoral documents are associated with specific SDGs. Some of the sectoral documents mentioned in Table 3 were adopted prior to the 2030 Agenda and the formulation of the countries' development plans. However, they remain relevant as they address in detail aspects of a specific development sector. Only a few countries prepared a national physical development plan, but those that didn't have formulated local development plans.

Table 3
An overview of strategic frameworks

Country	Long-term development plan	Medium-term plans/ strategy	Physical plan	Sectoral plan/strategies/action plan
Antigua and Barbuda		Medium Term Strategic Development Plan 2016-2020	National Physical development Plan 2016-2020	• National Action Plan to Combat Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought 2015-2020 • National Strategic Plan for Health • CBD Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2020 • National Gender Action Plan and Policy • Integrated Water Resources Management Road Map • Green Tourism Initiative • Sustainable Energy Action Plan 2013
British Virgin Islands	National Sustainable Development Plan (in preparation)	Medium Term Fiscal Plan 2020-2022	National Physical Development Plan 2019	• Strategic Blue Economy Road Map 2020-2025 • Green Paper on Environmental Management Climate Adaptation and Sustainable Development • Recovery to Development Plan 2018
Dominica	National resilience Development Strategy 2030	Medium Term Growth and Social Protection Strategy 2014-2018		• National Land Use Policy 2014 • Public Sector Investment Program • CBD Strategy 2014-2020 • Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan 2020-2030 • National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equality – updated 2014
Grenada	National Sustainable Development Plan 2020-2035	Medium Term Fiscal Framework 2021-2023		• National Climate Change Policy 2017-2021 • Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan 2014-2024 • Grenada Smart Small State 2020 • ICZM Policy for Grenada 2015 • Strategic Plan for Educational Enhancement and Development
Jamaica	Vision 2030 Jamaica Roadmap for SDG Implementation in Jamaica 2017	Medium term Socioeconomic Policy Framework 2018-2021	Local spatial plans	• National Policy for Gender Equality 2011 • National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence 2016-2026 • National Policy Poverty and National Poverty Reduction Programme • National Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2013 • Social Protection Strategy 2014 • Food Safety Policy 2013 • Climate Change Policy Framework for Jamaica 2015 • Development of a 10-Year Strategic Plan for the health sector (under development) • National Financial Inclusion Strategy • Social Enterprise Boost Initiative

Country	Long-term development plan	Medium-term plans/ strategy	Physical plan	Sectoral plan/strategies/action plan
				• National Squatter Management Policy and Implementation Plan and a National Resettlement Strategy (in development) • National Waste Management Policy and Strategy (in development) • National Energy Policy 2009-2030 • Water Sector Policy 2018 • Forest Policy for Jamaica 2017 • Government of Jamaica Public Sector Procurement Policy 2010 • Agriculture & Fisheries Strategic Business Plan 2017-21 • Beach Restoration and Coastal Guidelines 2017 • National Strategy and Action Plan on Biological Diversity 2016-2021 • Protected Areas System Master Plan: Jamaica 2013-17
Saint Lucia	National Development Plan is in preparation Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPs) Engagement for the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development SDG Roadmap	Medium Term Development Strategy 2020-2023		• Saint Lucia National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2018-2028 • Saint Lucia's Climate Change Communications Strategy • Saint Lucia's Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Water Sector (Water SASAP) 2018-2028 • Saint Lucia's Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Agriculture Sector (Agriculture SASAP) 2018-2028 • Saint Lucia's Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries Sector (2018-2028 • Guidelines for the Development of Sectoral Adaptation Strategies and Action Plans: Saint Lucia's experience under its national adaptation planning process • 2015-2020 Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP) • National Energy Transition Strategy
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	National Economic and Social Development Plan 2013-2025	Medium Term Debt Strategy 2019-2021	National land use policy and land-use zoning plans to be finalised.	• COVID-19 Food Security and Impact Mitigation Plan is being developed • National Agriculture and Fisheries Sector Development Plan (2017-2025); Strategic Plan for Agricultural Development 2012-2018 (draft) • Strategic Plan for Rural Development; and Livestock Sector Investment Programme • Education For All (EFA) strategy • National Multi- Sectoral Action Plan against Gender-Based Violence • Groundwater Management Programme and Water Safety Plan • National Energy Action Plan (NEAP) 2009-2030 • National Disaster Management Programme (NDM) • National Climate Change Policy 2019 • National Adaptation Plan 2019 • Regional Disaster Vulnerability Reduction Project • National Ocean Policy (NOP) and Strategic Action Plan 2018-2030 was approved in 2018 • draft National Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Sector Development Plan (2017- 2025) • Wastewater Management Strategy and Effluent Regulatory Standards (commenced in 2020) • National Biodiversity Action Plan (2015 – 2020)
Trinidad and Tobago	Vision 2030	Medium Term Policy Framework 2011-2014		• National Policy for Gender and Development (draft) • National Social Mitigation Plan • Social Sector Investment Programme 2020 • Education Policy Paper 2017—2022 • National Literacy Plan (2016–2020) • National Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (2017-2021) • Education Policy • National Climate Change Policy 2011 • Carbon Reduction Strategy 2015

Source: Authors' compilation.

While most countries have set up a robust strategic development framework consisting of a long-term development plan which contains a vision and integrated SDGs; the medium-term plans, strategies, and action plans aimed at implementation within a shorter time frame; and a host of sectoral strategies, plans and programmes, the countries still recognise challenges in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

B.   Integrated Planning for sustainable development and resilience building

National Sustainable Development Plans and Strategies represent the efforts from governments in trying to integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions from the earliest strategic planning stage, with a hope to increase structural synergies, policy coherence and intersectoral coordination. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, ECLAC has emphasized the importance of national development planning as a key tool for policy coherence, stressing that the SDGs are integrated and indivisible, and proposing to balance the three dimensions of sustainable development (ECLAC, 2020, 2019b, 2018a, 2018b).

Integrated planning lies at the heart of efforts to secure long-term development and, consequently, underscores the need for the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs to be implemented at the global, national and local levels. Integrated planning is the approach that simultaneously advances benefits across the three dimensions of sustainable development. It requires a strong political will to achieve effective governance for sustainable development, policy coordination and coherence across all levels of government (vertically and horizontally), and effective integration of all stakeholders in the development process. The above elements are pivotal for the following assessment of institutional integration in the eight focus countries of the Caribbean covered in this study.

Long-term planning also ensures that implementation of development objectives is not limited to the achievement of short-term goals, but that short-term decisions and gains are always being brought in alignment with the long-term goals, in theory, irrespective of the election cycles. The reason for the latter lies in the fact that developing a long-term development plan is normally the result of a wide consultation process where many interests are taken in consideration and negotiated to achieve a realistic consensus between the opposing views. Therefore, the national integrated development plan should be seen to represent a strong long-term political commitment and strategic plan towards implementation of countries' development goals including the SDGs.

Five of the eight focus countries have adopted national development strategies and/or plans; in two others preparation is ongoing. All plans have an agreed long-term vision for development until 2030 and beyond. Each national strategy/plan is aligned to the SDGs, while some of the SDGs are linked to more than one national strategic development goal. This shows that the SDGs are well integrated into development plans/strategies and this may be considered as an expression of policy coherence for sustainable development. Therefore, there is a large degree of coherence between the national and global development goals. However, while every plan or strategy contains sections on implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), there is no explicit mention of how the SDGs will be implemented within the context of the strategy/plan implementation, and how the progress of the SDGs implementation will be monitored.

All countries have a medium-term development strategy or plan, with a duration of three to five years. An integrated planning approach envisages the implementation of longer-term plans through short- or medium-term plans, which propose specific objectives and actions, aimed at implementation of the long-term objectives. These actions are usually very detailed, are tightly linked to the budget and indicate the amount and the origin of financial resources needed for their implementation, which is

something that long-term plans normally do not have. A minority of the medium-term plans in the focus countries is directly linked to the long-term development plans. Some of the countries have mid-term plans as a temporary substitute for the absence of the long-term plans. However, it is interesting to note that in these countries, the mid-term plans will be used to build the long-term development plans, as a form of "bottom-up" approach. Another important point to mention is the fact that mid-term plans are, in principle, very closely linked to the budget securing thus realistic financing for development actions in medium term. With this, the countries are fulfilling one of the most important 2030 Agenda targets, the target 17.1, i.e. strengthen domestic resource mobilisation.

Countries are using different strategies to promote horizontal integration, including through the establishment of cross-cutting thematic working groups. For example, in Saint Lucia, further to the plan framework–which establishes the pillars of development and key result areas–cross-cutting themes were also identified in the areas of climate change and disaster reduction, productivity and competitiveness, gender mainstreaming and social protection. These are themes that cut across the pillars and the six key result areas and are seen as elements of strategic integration. In addition, mechanisms for integration of territorial and physical planning in the national development planning should be highlighted. Area-based approaches have the potential to promote both horizontal and vertical integration. In Dominica, physical planning is a statutory body that functions under the Ministry of Planning establishing zoning and identification of risks related to spatial vulnerabilities, including the understanding of where the indigenous population resides and where higher pockets of poverty are also observed. This has the potential to introduce bottom-up approaches. Not all countries have well established multi-level policy coherence and the debate on vertical decentralisation could be enhanced.

C.   Institutional coordination mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda

All the analysed countries in the subregion have established national coordination mechanisms for the implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda.[7] Most of these mechanisms have entrusted planning institutions with the role of coordinator or technical secretariat for coordinating the various sectors, convening stakeholders and defining the strategies and partnerships for achieving the SDGs as well as monitoring and ensuring accountability of the Goals.

There is a wide agreement that ensuring efficient and responsive institutional mechanisms is an essential precondition for the successful mainstreaming of the SDGs into national and subnational strategies, plans, policies and their integration across sectors (UNDP, 2017). Consequently, the lack of sound institutional coordination mechanisms could be the root cause of many failures in delivery of expected outcomes. Such failure often results from the lack of a clear institutional "designation" for planning and management, together with limited capacity within institutions to coordinate and manage initiatives.

The national development institutional framework enables the efficient implementation of the 2030 Agenda and other international agreements. All countries covered in this analysis have established some form of institutional structure for SDGs implementation. However, based on the VNRs, only a minority of countries have clearly identified the entry point for specific SDGs. For most countries, the VNRs have identified only partially clear entry points for specific SDGs while for the rest, the linkage could only be indirectly identified by analysing the mandate of the respective ministry or the government agency that is sectorally responsible for a certain issue and linking it to the thematic subject(s) of the specific SDG. In the majority of cases, the lead institution, and entry point, is the ministry of finance and/or economic development, sometimes with an expanded mandate that has

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[7]   See Regional Observatory on Planning for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean for updated information: https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/en.

incorporated other sectoral areas such as social development, blue economy, planning, sustainable development, labour affairs, etc. Most focus countries cluster a number of sectors in one ministry, which might facilitate intersectoral communication. For example, there are positive experiences with having spatial planning and environment situated in the same ministry, because it helps avoid the "silo" approach to programme implementation and facilitates integrated decision-making.

Coherent policymaking requires the systematic consideration of interactions between economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Interactions among the SDGs allows to measure synergies and trade-offs between different policy domains (see Annex 1 for a mapping of SDG interactions among focus countries). The SDGs offer an opportunity to build complementarity of policies, plans, programmes and actions to achieve long-term goals. However, this relies on the ability to work across policy domains and to adopt integrated approaches to sustainable development. In the case of the SDGs, the first step is to establish or designate a coordination mechanism with a mandate and authority to reach across the sectoral authorities. Several of the focus countries have already established or will soon establish the coordination mechanism, usually with the office of the prime minister on top. Having the prime minister placed directly in charge of the 2030 Agenda implementation brings the requisite leadership to the initiative. Furthermore, as most of the SDGs and their targets are closely interrelated, achieving them is often conditional upon putting in place integrated implementation policies (e.g., reducing inequality could only be achieved by improving quality of education), with emphasis on both horizontal and vertical integration and coordination.

D.   Participatory and multi-stakeholder governance systems

It is well established that coherent policymaking relies on solid and systematic engagement of different stakeholders. These represent multiple perspectives of society and may enrich the knowledge base, redirect policy ambitions and trigger decisive and collaborative action. The 2030 Agenda emphasizes that "all countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan." The implementation of the SDGs requires mechanisms for dialogue and multi-stakeholder participation within a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. However, in the Caribbean, such mechanisms have not been a priority and from the analysed countries there are not many innovations in terms of multi-stakeholder arrangements established to identify common challenges, set priorities, contribute to policymaking, establishing from the basis a common agreement on priority actions, and mobilize resources for sustainable development.

Despite the well-recognised participatory nature of Caribbean governance systems, especially in the context of environmental decision-making (Mohammed, 2021), enabling effective partnerships and stakeholder engagement may be seen as an area of opportunity for many Caribbean countries, particularly in promoting private sector collaboration. Countries recognise the need for better quality communication and collaboration across sectors as well as for enhanced civil society engagement.

Jamaica is noteworthy in this context as, beyond a sound coordination mechanism, it has established Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) which support the monitoring of implementation of the National Development Plan (Vision 2030). Jamaica's National Agenda Oversight Committee (NAOC) is a multi-stakeholder body, comprising representatives from ministries, departments and agencies of government, as well as civil society, and academia. NAOC is representative of the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach in the implementation of the SDGs. Jamaica's multi-stakeholder mechanism also integrates the TWGs which bring together partners from different sectors to work cohesively and coherently towards advancing implementation of the national development plan through monitoring, policy dialogue and support in identifying gaps. TWGs also act as a forum to address gaps and promote integrated policy dialogue and follow-up. In Trinidad and Tobago, the National Ozone Unit collaborates with various ministries, departments and agencies for data and

information on cooling and refrigeration. This is a cross-sectoral issue that informs various SDGs and is dependent on such collaboration, but technical capacity and human resources often impede quality collaborations.

At the subregional level, the Sustainability Network of Caribbean Civil Society Organisations, an initiative of the United Nations Information Centre for the Caribbean Area (UNIC), provides a platform for CSOs to engage in a more concerted manner, within a common mechanism for integrated action, collecting the diverse voices of civil society. Another subregional initiative, the Caribbean Civil Society SDGs Knowledge Platform established by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) offers an online repository of knowledge, which facilitates connecting people and organisations with information on or expressing interest in the role of Caribbean civil society in implementing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. By increasing knowledge about the SDGs in the Caribbean and strengthening national and regional networks, the platform aims to promote and enhance civil society inclusion in and contributions to development, implementation, monitoring and reporting on the SDGs. CANARI created the knowledge platform as part of the project CSOs For Good Governance: Enhancing civil society's contribution to governance and development processes in Trinidad and Tobago (CSOs4GoodGov), implemented from 2017-2020 with the support of the European Union (CANARI, 2019). These are important initiatives that may, in the future, support more participatory approaches and promote the development of multi-stakeholder mechanisms at national level.

E.   Geographic Information Systems

Geospatial data systems have proven to be powerful integration tools, among sectors as well as among institutions. They assist in gathering different types of information with varying perspectives and sources. The integration between all kinds of information supports decision-makers to set the right plans and define strategies in order to achieve their expected objectives. However, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) tend to produce and accumulate a lot of data over time, but "making sense" of the data, i.e. turning data into information and intelligence, requires an adequate institutional capacity as well as a long-term vision of what is needed to be produced by using GIS.

The Organization of American States (OAS) has been one of the pioneers in Latin America and the Caribbean in using GIS tools for physical vulnerability assessment, focused on infrastructure and critical facilities. A pilot project launched early in the 1980s has implemented more than 200 activities in 20 countries by integrating hazards, natural resources, population and infrastructure data (UNISDR, 2004). Important efforts are being made in the Caribbean to invest in geospatial technologies as a key instrument of spatial planning, resilience-building and strategic coordination and response capacity. The Caribbean Geospatial Development Initiative (CARIGEO) is a good example of this.[8]

At the national level, the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) in Jamaica has undertaken the development of an emergency management GIS, which is integrated across their functional business units. The methodology involved mass data conversion and data acquisition from other related agencies. A data model, which outlined the various aspects of the ODPEM's work, was created promoting inter-agency integration through a customized application.

The work of the ODPEM is an integral component of the Vision 2030 National Development Plan for the country. The office also provides support to subnational level risk and vulnerability assessment, using GIS, as well as Community Hazard Mapping, and Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment

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[8] CARIGEO is a collaborative effort spearheaded by the United Nations Regional Committee on Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas (UN-GGIM: Americas), ECLAC, the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), representatives of member States and territories within the Caribbean, academic institutions, private sector organizations and civil society. See Box I for more information.

methodologies to analyse multidimensional risk. The Climate Risk Atlas of Coastal Hazards and Risk in Negril is an excellent example of the use of geospatial technologies and data in developing multi-hazard vulnerability mapping and multi-risk scenarios, using quantitative and qualitative risk analysis at local level.

The analysis shows that some countries have developed elaborate GIS. For example, Jamaica has established GIS divisions in various institutions, including the National Works Agency, the National Environment and Planning Agency, and the Planning Institute of Jamaica. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has also established a GIS Unit. Other countries, however, are using GIS as a basic mapping exercise, not coherently linked to integrated planning or used as a decision-making tool in its full potential to support foresight and develop multi-hazard risk scenarios, suitability analyses or plans with multisectoral approaches. From this perspective, strengthening the existing CARIGEO and other subregional collaborative initiatives and developing national and local capacities to utilise these resources is seen as a way forward for countries and territories of the Caribbean to advance the use and sharing of geospatial data.

F.   Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems provide the evidence required for mutual accountability, while at the same time enabling measurement of progress, relevance, and collecting valuable knowledge to provide feedback into the policy cycle, as a basis for policy review, adjustments and quality assurance. Caribbean countries recognise the need to invest in the strengthening of M&E systems that can assess the performance of national development plans and measure national progress towards the SDGs. Trinidad and Tobago, for example, has identified capacity gaps in the national statistical system that prohibits the collection and timely dissemination of data (GoTT, 2020).

Initiatives across sectors for enhanced statistical capacity and adaptation of a system for monitoring and reporting on SDG indicators require improvement and further support. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was able to provide data for the VNR of just over 50% of the relevant indicators. However, the country continues to work on populating the SDG indicator template, and will advance to set up an SDG portal under the governments' statistical website.

Developing skills in data collection, disaggregation, and the production of multidimensional analyses, highlighting vulnerabilities and inequalities, enables policymakers to focus on building solutions that may be best fit for purpose and that may protect those that are often furthest left behind, facilitating evidence-based policy development. All the countries analysed have or are in the process of developing high-quality national development strategies in place and in alignment with the 2030 Agenda. Yet, only five of the eight governments have data and systems to track the implementation of those national strategies. This is a critical area for the Caribbean, as it will facilitate the development of the full criteria for multidimensional diagnosis and to promote risk-informed decision-making. Nevertheless, all the counties recognise this challenge and are taking measures to strengthen national M&E policies. In some countries, priority is given to M&E through legislative changes, national frameworks and active M&E strategies. There is enhanced investment in M&E capacity development and ECLAC and ILPES are also providing targeted support to Caribbean countries which are members and associate members of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC).[9]

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[9]   Anguilla, Aruba, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Curaçao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, and United States Virgin Islands.

II. Analysis of the mechanisms that facilitate integration and resilience building in the Caribbean

A. Key trends in mechanisms that facilitate integration in the Caribbean

The analysis of institutional mechanisms, which also included the individual country sessions with representatives of coordinating institutions in the focus countries, have uncovered the following key trends related to institutional integration for the implementation of the SDGs:

1. Strategic frameworks supporting the implementation of Agenda 2030 have been created

All focus countries have or are in the process of establishing their strategic frameworks to facilitate integrated decision-making, following different approaches to mainstream the SDGs, according to their unique situation and resources:

     (i) adoption of national development plans mainstreaming the SDGs, and developing medium-term strategies/plans;

     (ii) adoption of national development plans mainstreaming the SDGs, but without the development of medium-term strategies/plans;

     (iii) adoption of national development plans, but without reviewing them to integrate substantively the SDGs;

     (iv) development of medium-term strategies or plans without the adoption of national development plans; and

     (v) in the process of developing a mid- and/or long-term strategy/plan.

This diversity in approaches is in itself a positive trend as there should not be a one size fits all approach to development planning. These differences demonstrate the range in motivation, background, specific character and uniqueness of each territory. However, among the analysed countries, there is still one which has not promoted SDG mainstreaming. This is reflected in the inordinate weight given the promotion of the economic perspective over other critical areas of sustainable development, and gaps in the adoption of key global objectives such as good health and wellbeing (SDG3), gender equality (SDG5), and the in the promotion of decisive action on resilience building and climate change (SDG13) in areas such as sustainable urbanisation (SDG11), water and sanitation (SDG6), and energy security (SDG7).

In addition to the diversity of development planning processes, the following key trends could be observed:

(i) Countries that adopted their national development plans (NDPs) before the 2030 Agenda came into force (like Jamaica) have not yet formally revised their plans. However, in the case of Jamaica, the Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) conducted in 2016 determined that there was great coherence (91% alignment) between the country's planning documents and sectoral plans and Agenda 2030. Jamaica has reinforced this alignment through the Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF) 2018- 2021. The MTF was the guiding framework for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The country is also in the process of strengthening and developing its results-based monitoring and evaluation framework and plan by integrating the SDGs, aiming to promote a greater coherence also at the level of monitoring indicators. Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago adopted their NDPs after the 2030 Agenda came into force and have integrated the SDGs right away. Some countries have not yet adopted NDPs but are in the process of doing so and it is advised that they integrate the SDGs in a substantive manner, which will also include the indicators to monitor their implementation alongside those that are monitoring implementation of their development goals.

(ii) Most of the NDPs put focus on five to seven development goals aligned to the relevant SDGs. However, most of the plans do not elaborate in detail how the implementation of a certain development goal will reflect on the implementation of the SDGs. In particular, the quantitative indicators are often missing to show this correlation.

(iii) All the focus countries are developing medium-term development strategies (MTDS) and/or plans. This trend demonstrates their commitment to implementation of the development goals, as well as indigenous capacity for national planning. It should be noted that some of these MTDSs were formulated prior to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. The MTDS is an important mechanism to support implementation of a long-term plan as it translates long-term objectives into decisive action-oriented projects and programmes within shorter time horizons. Also worth noting is the fact that most of these plans are very closely linked with budgetary planning, so are realistic. This is consistent with the objective of medium-term plans. Some countries started with the MTDS in the first instance and are now building the NDP from the "bottom up" (Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, and Saint Lucia). This is an understandable approach, making use of available experience, knowledge, and existing resources, and appropriately transitioning to new development goals.

(iv) Integrated planning is not a substitute for sectoral plans. Rather, integrated planning is about making linkages and synergies between sectoral plans. There are numerous sectoral plans and/or strategies in each of the focus countries, covering most of the

development sectors. Countries should promote PCSD by reviewing sectoral plans to ensure that their targets are revised in accordance with the SDGs' targets. Further, it is important that the trend towards developing sectoral plans and/or strategies continues because these documents get into much more detail when outlining the future of the sector. Ultimately, future sectoral plans should be well aligned with the SDGs and their targets, and that link should be clearly stated.

(v)   Another important requirement for integration is effective synergy between long-term NDP and MTDS, where the latter is a form of an action plan with detailed activities that have clearly identified budget, mid-term objectives, responsible agents, clear outcomes and outputs and very strict timelines. The analysis shows that this strategic framework already exists in most of the focus countries and that it needs to be further strengthened in the future.

(vi) Policy linkages among sectors are instituted through the strategic framework. In most of the countries these linkages are established through medium-term strategies. Being action oriented and strongly linked to the budgetary processes, medium-term plans and strategies have been developed following a process characterised by strong inter-linkages between sectors. As a positive example, the territorial and physical planning in some countries has been strongly linked to the national development planning process.

2.   National coordination mechanisms for implementation of the SDGs are in place in all countries

The institutional frameworks for SDG implementation have been analysed from two perspectives: the existence of coordination mechanisms to integrate all efforts and guide the implementation of SDGs across sectors, and the individual sectoral implementation of SDGs through distinct entry points. With regard to the coordination mechanisms, all countries have identified an institution that is responsible for the overall guidance. This trend will likely continue as more resources become available and increased awareness improves recognition of the validity of SDGs across the countries' entire population. This should ultimately result in stronger mandates for the coordination mechanisms.

Diagram 4
National mechanisms for sustainable development and integrated decision-making
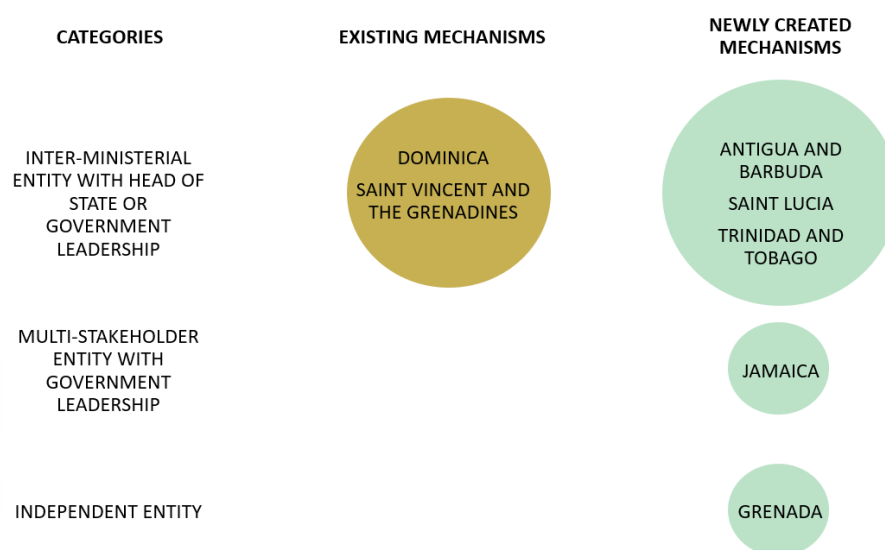
Source: Authors' compilation.

It is possible to identify different typologies of coordination mechanisms (see diagram 4):

- countries that have established explicit inter-ministerial coordination bodies (Grenada–in development; Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago–strongly linked to the Prime Minister's Office), which are sometimes accompanied by a competent technical secretariat (Jamaica);

- countries that have created an interim mechanism or made use of the existing structures to oversee the implementation process (Dominica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines – closely linked to the Prime Minister's Office); and

- countries that have yet to establish a formal coordination mechanism (British Virgin Islands – the Premier's Office is in charge of inter-ministerial coordination and policy leadership).

In addition, the following key trends in terms of national coordination mechanisms, could be observed:

- The mandates of national coordination mechanisms have not yet been fully determined. Countries where these mechanisms are linked to the Prime Minister's Office or other high-level government oversight leadership assess their mandate as being stronger. In countries that have designated an individual ministry to guide the process the mandates may be less articulated.

- The role of technical support for implementation of the SDGs is clearly articulated in the case of Jamaica, where the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) is providing strong technical support to the National Agenda Oversight Committee (NAOC), and in Grenada where this role is expected from the soon-to-be-established Sustainable Development Institute.

- Individual SDG' entry points in most of the countries are not clearly articulated. The analysis shows that this has been most consistently done in Antigua and Barbuda. Ultimately, the implementation of a specific SDG need not be the responsibility of a particular ministry or agency. Given that the NDPs are aligned to the SDGs this responsibility and mandate is being established through the National development planning process. The focus countries would certainly benefit from a larger degree of vertical decentralisation and horizontal integration. Implementation of the SDGs has proven very complex, and it wouldn't be reasonable to expect that a central coordinating body will assemble all interested stakeholders for all SDGs, bringing together all other interested stakeholders, government ministries, agencies, CSOs, professional organisations as well as any other governance-related actor.

- In most of the countries there are integrated decision-making mechanism for SDG' implementation that cut across sectors, which are linked to the national development plans, for example through the planning units, thematic working groups, and cross-sectoral themes established at national level. The implementation of the SDGs is being localised into national development plans and strategies. This strategic management encompasses the processes and tools for the development of key decisions and actions in organisations and their execution, i.e. setting the objectives, developing implementation strategies and their execution.

- Communications and awareness raising strategies to facilitate the implementation of SDGs and associated national development priorities will have to be improved. These strategies are still largely missing in most of the focus countries. The preparation of CCAs and VNRs was an opportunity to raise the awareness on the SDGs. However, it was certainly less than enough. Surveys in some countries show that knowledge on and understanding of the SDGs is at a very low level.

B.   The voluntary national review process as an opportunity for multi-stakeholder engagement

Voluntary National Reviews are part of the 2030 Agenda mechanism for follow-up and review. The 2030 Agenda encourages Member States to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven" (paragraph 79). In the Caribbean, the process has been supported by a Community of Practice on VNRs for Caribbean countries, which has galvanized peer exchange and knowledge sharing, in preparation to the process. ECLAC has advocated for the inclusion of different groups of stakeholders, highlighting good practice in CSO implementation and including stakeholders as reviewers or drafters of certain sections or chapters of the VNR report or inviting them to the delegation presenting at the High-level Political Forum. A VNR stakeholder engagement strategy and clear plan with allocated resources is recommended.

Figure 1
Total number of VNR presentations by 2021 (CDCC countries)
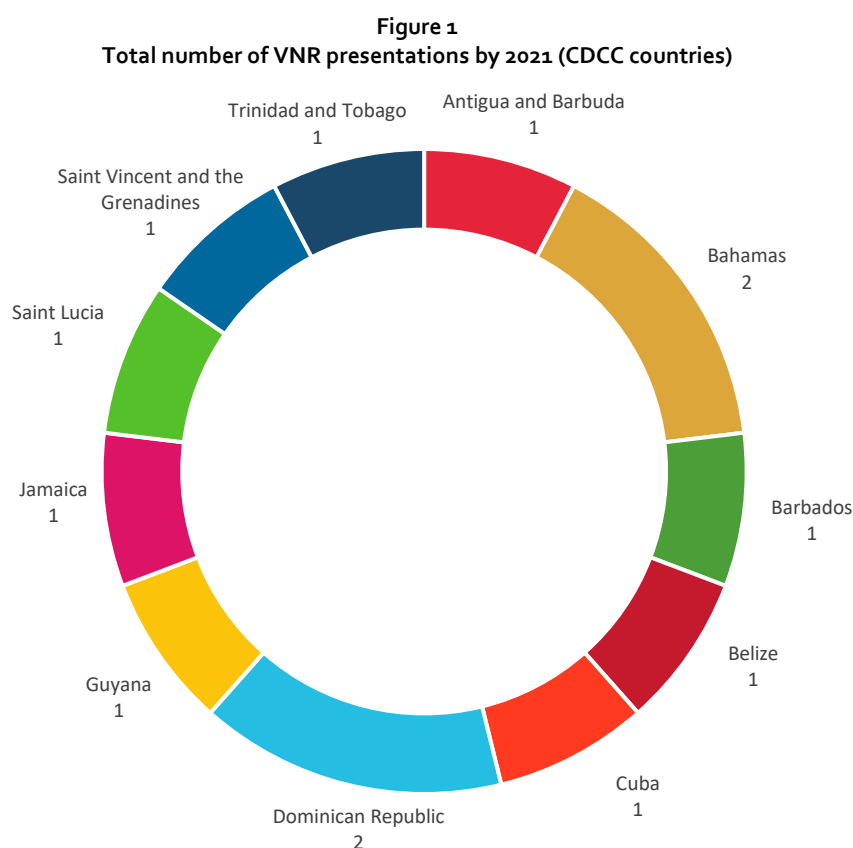
Source: Authors' compilation.

Trinidad and Tobago's VNR is a good example of such a process, which underscores the Government's commitment to sustainable and inclusive development that leaves no one behind. The VNR process engaged stakeholders through a series of consultations, allowing for a concerted debate promoting a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. These included Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), CSOs, the private sector, women's groups, academia, subject matter experts and members of the general public. Methods of consultation included in-person interviews, a series of focus groups, an online survey and communication via e-mail, print and social media. Consultations also catered for groups at risk of being left behind which, in Trinidad and Tobago, are identified as the poor and vulnerable, women, children, persons with disabilities, the elderly, persons

living with HIV/AIDS, ex-prisoners, deportees, and the socially displaced. The Ministry of Planning and Development spearheaded the VNR activities, in partnership with ECLAC and the United Nations System in Trinidad and Tobago, establishing a Steering Committee to provide technical oversight and guidance (GoTT, 2020). It is now important for countries to move up the ladder of participation, from consultation to effective partnership for the goals.

C. Challenges for the implementation of mechanisms that facilitate integration and resilience building in the Caribbean

As mentioned earlier, the focus countries have made significant progress towards adopting the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs as well as integrating them in their national development integrated plans and sectoral strategies and plans. However, the following challenges lie ahead which, if not addressed, may affect the progress towards better integrated development planning and decision-making in the region:

- Capacity gaps that impact the performance of the institutional mechanisms include the practices and tools of integrated development planning and foresight, systems thinking and methods for cross-sector collaboration; participatory budgeting, and linkages between the budget development process and implementation of development goals.

- Participatory processes do occur but need to be more inclusive, moving from consultation to partnership approaches. Some countries describe participatory processes as 'tokenistic', with most of the planning, and integration among sectors taking place within government bodies. The integrated development planning process seems to be considered in most of the countries strictly as a government business. Improved multi-sector, multi-level, and multi-stakeholder collaboration is required, including through appropriate integration tools, such as GIS, multi-criteria decision-making, scenario building, and area-based approaches. VNRs are an area of opportunity for increased dialogue and partnership at national level, collaborating to coordinated monitoring and review process.

- Financing for sustainable development is critical for this 'decade of action'. Several VNRs recognise the abundance of policies and programmes, while highlighting the importance of decisive action based on the identification of priorities, and the activation of innovative financing. While MTDS function as action plans and results-based management, linking plans to operational implementation, reinforcement of capacity to generate public-private partnerships for the goals, attracting financing and resources for the implementation of priority actions, is still required.

- Improvement of Monitoring and Evaluation systems, which all countries have indicated as an essential prerequisite for implementation of the SDGs, but which are significantly lagging behind. This also includes the need for improved capacity for data collection and processing.

III. Case studies: mechanisms for integrated decision-making in the Caribbean

A.   Mainstreaming the SDGs into national sustainable development planning (Planning Institute of Jamaica)

Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan, the country's first long-term national development plan, began implementation in 2009. It marks the commitment to the mainstreaming of the SDGs into the different levels of action and simultaneously to participation and ownership of national development. This coordination mechanism is multi-layered and comprises a National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee (NAOC), the Thematic Working Groups and other sector specific committees, and the 2030 Agenda SDGs Core Group. Both the Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs secretariats are located in the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ). While PIOJ is coordinating the implementation of the SDGs in Jamaica, the Vision 2030 secretariat is responsible for integrating the SDGs into the National Development Plan and the associated monitoring. The SDGs secretariat has the responsibility for monitoring and reporting on the SDGs, maintaining the institutional framework, and for communications and advocacy. Regular progress reports on the 17 SDGs are produced by the SDGs secretariat and successive 3-year Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Frameworks (MTF)[10] provide opportunities to assess the alignment of national goals and outcomes with the SDGs and the alignment of national and sector strategies with the SDG targets. The Parliament and the Cabinet are the higher-level decision-making instance and provide accountability and responsibility to the institutional framework.

The Oversight Committee reports to Cabinet and is composed of high-level representatives of the government (Ministries, Departments and Agencies), civil society groups, private sector, academia,

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[10]   Four successive MTFs have been in place, covering the periods 2009-2012; 2012-2015; 2015-2018; and 2018-2021.

trade unions and youth. Its mandate is to provide policy and strategic advice to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs. The Core Group is a mechanism designed to support the Oversight Committee, to provide technical and policy advice to Cabinet, Parliament, Ministries, Departments and Agencies, to promote institutional coordination at national and sub-national levels, to facilitate multi-stakeholder participation, to coordinate monitoring, reporting and accountability frameworks for the SDGs and to manage public campaigns and advocacy for the SDG. The Core Group is composed of three key focal points: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the PIOJ and STATIN, the National Statistics Office. The Core Group is also responsible for facilitating the integration of other international development frameworks (SAMOA Pathway, Sendai Framework, Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Paris Agreement) into the national development agenda.

Diagram 5
Institutional Arrangement for SDG Coordination in Jamaica
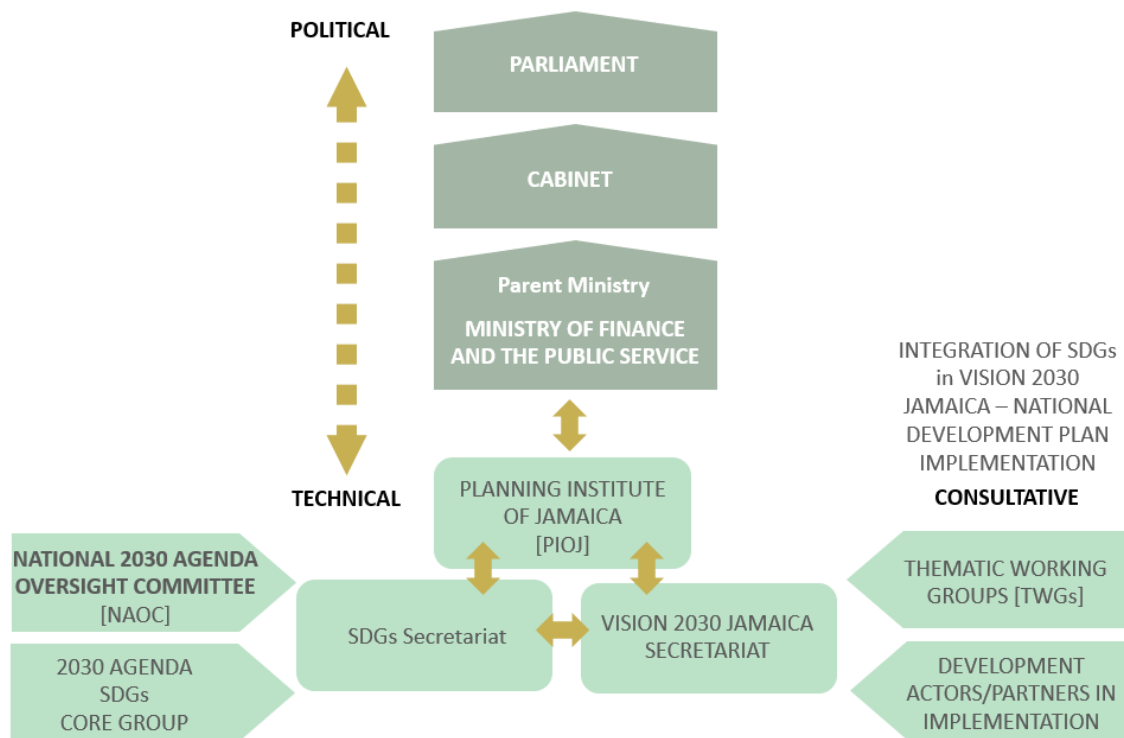
Source: ECLAC, based on PIOJ, 2021. Status as of November 11, 2021.

Thematic Working Groups (TWG) have been established as an important integration mechanism/tool to support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Vision 2030 Jamaica. These TWG are multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder platforms and are designed to be the key institutional arrangement for monitoring and evaluating the Vision 2030 Jamaica NDP. They have a pivotal role in the development of each MTF and are critical in policymaking and in identifying and assessing development gaps. TWG are responsible for providing input on new and existing sectoral policies in relation to thematic areas,[11] review progress of implementation of the consecutive MTF and provide feedback on sectoral targets, facilitate partnerships towards the successful implementation of

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[11]   Current WTGs are: Education and Training, Effective Social Protection, Energy and Minerals Development, Environment and Planning, Governance, Hazard Risk Reduction and Climate Change, Health, Infrastructure and Construction, Justice, National Security, Population, Sport, and Tourism.

MTF and the overall goals and outcomes of the NDP. The engagement between government and civil society is further enhanced by having Permanent Secretaries or other senior government officials chairing each TWG.

As illustrated in see Diagram 5, this multi-layered coordination mechanism seeks to be politically overarching, through bi-partisan support and ownership; is stakeholder-driven, through a strong participatory framework; and is designed to be continuously improved through learning and action, namely through the MTFs.

The MTFs are another key element of the Jamaican Agenda for Sustainable Development as they are conceived to be the guiding framework for the planning, reviewing, and monitoring of its implementation. They are implemented in three-year cycles, and they are framed around a results- and evidence-based methodology, grounded in the principles of sustainability, inclusiveness, and equality (GoJ, 2018). Each MTF consists of a medium-term strategic programme to advance in implementing the NDP. Its cyclical nature allows a constant realignment of policies and the possibility of informed readjustments according to the assessment of the previous exercise. At the same time, they are approved by Cabinet and are directed to Ministries, Departments and Agencies to enforce its integration in their operational planning. MTFs are a 'template for integrated social, economic, and environmental policy coherence' (PIOJ, 2021).

PIOJ's approach to institutional building for sustainability, inclusion and resilience is based on Integrated Evidence- and Results-based Management (IERBM). The approach aims to facilitate the identification and definition of institutional processes and arrangements (governance and coordination, strategic planning), recognizing that a participatory development model is critical. This institutionalized process should promote the cyclical incorporation of lessons learned from IERBM as a key to resilient institutions.

B.   Grenada Sustainable Development Institute

Eastern Caribbean islands such as Grenada, are particularly vulnerable to exogenous shocks. Indeed, the country has not fully recovered from the impact of Hurricane Ivan in 2004, when 90% of the country's housing stock was damaged with ECLAC estimated direct and indirect damages worth some EC$2.39 billion totalling over 200% of Grenada's GDP (ECLAC, 2005).

Prior to the pandemic, the Government of Grenada (GoG) affirmed its commitment to building the country's social, economic, and environmental resilience through its pursuit of a development agenda that would result in Grenada, by 2035, being "*a resilient and prosperous nation, with a conscious and caring citizenry, promoting human dignity, and realizing its full potential through sustainable economic, social and environmental progress for all*" (GoG, 2019a).

In 2019, after three years of development and refinement, the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) was promulgated, following a national consultative process involving state and non-state stakeholders. Developed with support from ECLAC and led by a Technical Working Group, the plan is a national attempt at a comprehensive framework for the balanced and inclusive development of the country.

Grenada's NSDP was drafted in the context of the challenges impacting SIDS including a weakening of the multilateral system, and the climate emergency affecting Caribbean States. To meet these challenges, Grenada identified the need to build institutions for national planning, to mobilize resources and manage risks and shocks. Part of the need for a new approach to planning was to build on the deficiencies revealed by the previous decades of development dominated by economic

liberalization, free-market deepening, and deregulation. As trade liberalization took hold, many commodity-based economies like Grenada suffered from the loss of preferential access and prices for sugar and banana exports to the European Union. Further, the development model accentuated deep inequalities and caused the neglect of the environment and climate change-related issues.

The new approach to planning adopted by Grenada emphasizes national ownership through a process of wide participation and consultation, with attention focused on good governance principles. Planning around the NSDP was undertaken through a process of communication and negotiation addressing the desired future, involving the significant groups of Grenadians who bargained and negotiated from varying degrees of power and influence to achieve shared objectives within a shared set of values.

The drafted Sustainable Development Bill (2019) enshrines the NSDP into law; establishes a Sustainable Development Institute (SDI) with the responsibility of coordinating the implementation of Grenada's NSDP; and creates a Sustainable Development Network (SDN) for the national promotion of sustainable development and monitoring the implementation of the NSDP. The bill also aims to forge a new governance arrangement that brings together existing structures, processes, and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, and how decisions are taken towards the achievement of sustainable development within the Grenadian context. This innovative piece of legislation covers sustainable development on a much broader scale than previous Grenadian legislation dealing with physical planning, forestry and conservation, and national heritage, through the creation of a "framework for the institutionalisation of sustainable development principles and practices across the public sector, private sector, civil society organisations and the public" while creating a dedicated entity (the SDI) with "autonomous oversight coordination" for the Government of Grenada's NSDP and the mainstreaming of sustainable development principles and practices across the Grenadian "public sector, private sector, civil society organisations, and the public" (GoG, 2019b).

At the time of preparing the NSDP in 2018-19, it was envisaged that a SDI would be established as Grenada's coordinating entity for SDGs implementation. However, as a direct consequence of COVID-19, the Government has had to reprioritize the establishment of the SDI. An ECLAC-funded study that examined the modalities for the operationalization of the SDI has proposed a 5-year implementation horizon, with preparatory works towards the operationalization of the SDI beginning in earnest tentatively from 2023. Once created, the Grenadian Sustainable Development Institute will provide technical support to Grenada's government MDAs, for the design, preparation, monitoring, and review of the Medium-Term Action Plans (MTAPs), the intended strategic policy instruments through which the NSDP will be operationalized and implemented in the country.

The SDI is designed to be a semi-autonomous agency, with its mandate enshrined in law. Operationally, the SDI will function as the Nation Plan implementation agency, as well as the national coordinating entity for SDG implementation in Grenada. Technical staff will comprise a director general and three thematic specialists aligned with each of the strategic pillars of the NSDP – society, economy, and environment. The National Plan Secretariat will be converted to serve as the administrative arm of the SDI. If it is able to maintain the partnership that drove the drafting of the NSDP and if it achieves the institutionalization of the participatory process, it can bolster trust and reinforce national ownership of the planning process.

Legislating the Grenadian government's commitment to sustainable development represents a major advance in the Caribbean. The creation of an autonomous institute devoted to coordinate and support the implementation, monitoring and reporting of SDG-related activities has the potential to turn Grenada into a relevant example of commitment to achieving sustainable development.

C.   Cross-sectoral integration (Belize)

From environmental, social and economic points of view, coastal areas in the Caribbean are of key importance. Ecosystems that are of particular interest for the conservation of biodiversity are located in coastal marine areas. Population concentration in cities within coastal zones has increased dramatically[12] in areas at greatest risk to natural phenomena, such as hurricanes, floods and tsunamis and that are vulnerable to climate change, sea level rise, erosion, flooding, etc. This recent, often unplanned urbanisation process is causing great territorial imbalances and explains a series of problems and conflicts that affect most coastal areas in the Caribbean, including degradation of coastal and marine ecosystems, loss of biodiversity, effects of climate change on the socio-ecological system, coastal erosion, aquifer salinization, contamination of soil, water resources, etc. Furthermore, because of the uniqueness of many marine ecosystems in Caribbean SIDS their coastal systems may span across their entire territory. Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) therefore emerges as an instrument that may be relevant to national priorities and respond to the above issues. In recent decades, Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) has emerged as an effective instrument for regulating use of the wider marine areas that could be considered as a territorial extension and an integral part of the coastal area.

Based on the analysis of the countries' ICZM and MSP policies, regulations, institutions and instruments, most of the countries could be considered, with the exception of Jamaica, to be in the pre-initial stage of implementation of ICZM and MSP.[13] It is necessary to assist countries to build the capacity and establish the effective systems for ICZM and MSP.

ICZM and MSP are considered as a cross-sectoral subject. They are directly linked to SDG 14, and in particular targets 14.1, 14.2, 14.3, 14.4, 14.5 and 14.7. Strong linkage is also envisaged with SDGs 13, 15, 16 and 17, and indirect linkage with SDGs 2, 6, 8, 11 and 12.

Belize's coastal zone has complex and dynamic marine ecosystems that support innumerable ecological processes and a vast array of marine life and habitats. In addition to its important ecosystem functions, the coastal zone is vital to the Belizean way of life. The highly productive coastal zone is the resource base for a broad range of economic activities. In fact, approximately thirty-percent of the country's gross domestic product is directly linked to these commercial activities that take place within the coastal zone. The coastal zone also has important social and cultural values to the Belizean people, especially to the approximately 40% of the population that reside on the coast and in offshore areas. The National Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy outlined a clear-cut strategy for improving the management of Belize's coastal area. The Strategy, which underwent extensive public consultation, was endorsed by the House of Representatives and adopted as a national policy document in 2003.

Belize has been pioneering for this topic and the concept of coastal zone management was introduced in the historic International Coastal Resources Management Workshop held in San Pedro, Ambergris Caye, in 1989. Coastal Zone Management (CZM) was identified as an approach that could best balance economic development and sustainable management of the coastal zone. By March 1990, a CZM Unit and Technical Committee were formed. The country enacted the Coastal Zone Management Act in 1998, whose main function is to promote the sustainable development of coastal areas through coordination of existing legislation affecting coastal resources, and through building capacity and increased public participation to manage coastal resources. Based on this legislation, the Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute (CZMAI) was created as the focal agency with

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[12]   On this topic see ECLAC (2019), Planning for sustainable territorial development in Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/CRP.17/3), Santiago.

[13]   Barragán Muñoz, Juan M. (2020), "Progress of coastal management in Latin America and the Caribbean", *Ocean and Coastal Management*, Vol. 184.

responsibility for coordinating programs and activities for integrated coastal zone management. Central to its mandate is the preparation of a comprehensive coastal zone management plan.

By 2004 CZMAI prepared development guidelines for the country's more than 300 cayes, including the three atolls and for eight of nine coastal planning regions. The development of both the National ICZM Strategy and site-specific development guidelines for the cayes were the preparatory phases for the development of the ICZM Plan. The ICZM Plan represents a national planning strategy that is compatible with the consolidated national view for long-term sustainable development in Belize presented in the Horizon 2030 National Development Framework. The ICZM Plan Vision states that it "is a planning framework to focus management activities that are already being undertaken, ensuring these are integrated, and to highlight additional activities and actions that could be undertaken to help meet the challenge of ensuring a sustainable future for the coastal zone where healthy ecosystems support, and is supported by, thriving local communities and a vibrant economy." The Plan proposed three scenarios for the future coastal development (see figure 2).

Figure 2
Belize Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan: scenarios for coastal development (2015)
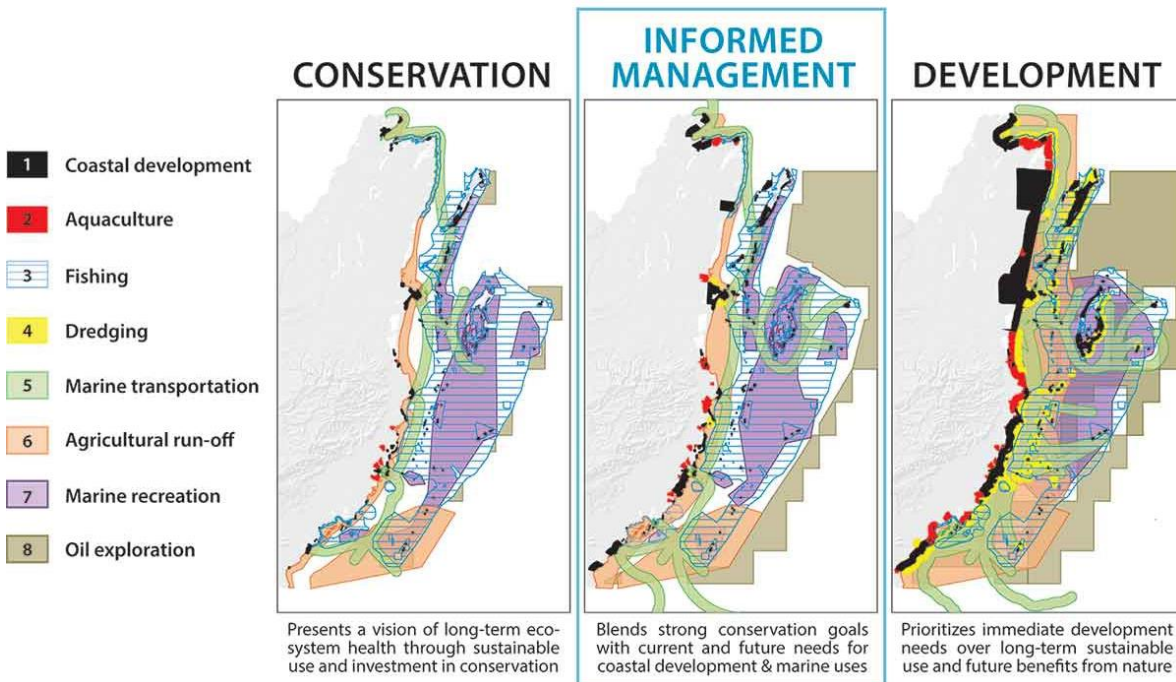
Source: Verutes et al, 2017.

CZMAI discussed the scenarios through training and public consultations. Stakeholders provided local information about possible human uses and more specific preferences for the future, including the intensity and location of human uses. They also asked for specific changes to test alternative development plans or natural resource uses. Scenarios were mapped by CZMAI using ArcGIS and reviewed by stakeholders over several iterations. Over the course of a year, the scenarios were honed to focus on particular options or problems. Stakeholder inputs were gathered through Coastal Advisory Committees (CACs) and public consultations. In a final iteration, the "informed management" scenario was released for public comment and reviewed by CZMAI's advisory council. The resulting Plan was submitted to the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development for approval and then to the National Assembly for a vote. It was adopted in 2016. It is important to note that the area covered

by the plan also extended to the marine zone, and regulation of that area could be considered as a Marine Spatial Plan.

The Belize ICZM is a good example of how the policies, institutions and instruments are integrated into one system, which is particularly important for issues that are of a cross-cutting nature.

D. Subregional coordination mechanisms: the case of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)

Subregional coordination and cooperation mechanisms provide a critical support framework for the states and territories of the Caribbean. Effective partnerships on climate risk monitoring, assessment and early warning have been built throughout the subregion, including through the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) and the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH).

Established in 1991 as Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) to coordinate the emergency response and relief efforts in Participating States,[14] this inter-governmental agency transitioned to Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) in 2009 to fully embrace the principles of the Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Strategy 2014-2024. The Strategy, endorsed by the respective governments of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) after a series of stakeholder consultations in 2013, is an example of adoption of the international Disaster Risk Management (DRM) agenda into regional DRM strategies.

The Regional CDM Strategy, further refined by "A Caribbean Pathway for Resilience", puts forward four priority areas for safer, more resilient, and sustainable countries: strengthened institutional arrangements for CDM; increased and sustained knowledge management and learning; improved integration of CDM at sectoral levels; and strengthened and sustained community resilience (CDEMA, 2014).

As the regional inter-governmental agency for disaster management under CARICOM, CDEMA's action has been decisive in assisting Caribbean governments and affected populations in mobilising and coordinating disaster relief, mitigating immediate consequences of disasters, providing immediate and coordinated response, providing reliable and comprehensive information on disasters, and in promoting the adoption of disaster loss reduction and mitigation policies by participating States.

The recent La Soufrière volcano eruption in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines of April 2021 is a good example of CDEMA's critical role in disaster emergency response. Already exposed to a range of climate change impacts, including drought and unpredictable rainfall (with an 80% reduction in rainfall in 2020), land degradation and the effects of more frequent hurricanes and other extreme weather events, the impact of the volcanic eruption exacerbated the already complex mix of environmental threats, affected livelihoods, and produced a food crisis and diverse socioeconomic challenges in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The government has reacted proactively to these overlapping crises, through a coordinated response which was set in motion in December 2020, as La Soufrière volcano began to show its first signs of impending eruption.

The main pillars of the articulated response relied on effective and regular communication, engaging the media, as well as different scientific and development agencies, through information exchange, production of regular situation reports with data, and the establishment of partnerships and

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[14] Presently, the agency comprises 19 participating States: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Cayman Islands, Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the British Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Republic of Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

coordination with regional organizations and response mechanisms such as CDEMA and the United Nations system. Based on consultations with the National Emergency Management Organisation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the CDEMA Coordinating Unit activated the Regional Coordination Plan (RCP). This measure also activated the Volcano Response Plan and the Regional Logistics Plan, which included monitoring the situation in collaboration with the University of the West Indies (UWI) Seismic Research Centre, the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines National Emergency Management Organisation, and the national disaster management offices of countries near the volcano. A multidisciplinary team was established at the international level to assist with the immediate disaster management response.

The Regional Coordination Centre was activated to provide logistical and coordination support to the Regional Response Mechanism. This Centre, which was guided by the deployment protocols for operating within the current COVID-19 pandemic environment, also comprised the CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination (CDAC) Team, the CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST), the Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT) and the Caribbean Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU).

Evacuation efforts led by the government, along with several disaster response teams, moved an estimated 24,000 people to the southern end of Saint Vincent, to the Grenadines and to some neighbouring countries. People were received in 85 government-run formal collective shelters, informal collective shelters such as hotels, some available rented residences and —the majority— in the private homes of family and friends.

Box 1
GIS as an integration tool in emergency response in the Caribbean

The experience of emergency response during the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines volcano eruption also highlights the valuable contribution of geospatial data not only for disaster risk reduction but also in the context of immediate response. Important efforts are being made in the Caribbean to invest in geospatial technologies as a key instrument of spatial planning, resilience-building and strategic coordination and response capacity. For example, the Caribbean Geospatial Development Initiative (CARIGEO) is a collaborative effort led by the United Nations Regional Committee on Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas (UN-GGIM: Americas), ECLAC, the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), representatives of member States and territories within the Caribbean, academic institutions, private sector organizations and civil society. It focuses on engaging the national mapping and statistical agencies of the subregion, aiming to reinforce the use and sharing of geospatial and statistical data to support improved decision-making for sustainable national and regional development.

Sources: UN-GGIM Americas: http://www.un-ggim-americas.org and CARIGEO portal: https://www.caribbeangeoportal.com.

Beyond its climate and disaster emergency support, CDEMA also played an important role during the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of a coordinated response to the pandemic, CDEMA supported its participating States in implementing measures to contain infections, by providing joint medical assistance and establishing a COVID-19 Integrated Regional Logistics Hub (IRLH) in Barbados.

The nature of systemic risk for the Caribbean subregion is connected to its multidimensional vulnerabilities. In responding to natural disasters, subregional cooperation has proven to be an effective way to compensate for national deficiencies and strengthen overall response capacity. Recent disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic have amply demonstrated the key role that institutional coordination and cross-sectoral cooperation play in response to emergencies. In addition to reinforced national measures, subregional mechanisms and exchange have compensated, to a certain extent, for the lack of maturity of disaster emergency management in some Caribbean countries, which have successfully addressed the needs of impacted populations by leveraging existing response mechanisms, access to experts, technology, and data.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

Caribbean countries are taking decisive action to implement the SDGs and other global agendas, actively pursuing the improvement of planning systems to promote integration and vibrant whole-of-society and whole-of-government approaches. A number of general findings emerged from this analysis, which can be summarised in seven main points:

(i)   All focus countries have established or are in the process of establishing sustainable development frameworks, adopting the principles of multi-sector and inter-ministerial collaboration. Key elements of strategic integration at national level adopted by Caribbean countries include: Integrated development plans and strategies; Coordination mechanisms (Horizontal and Vertical); Participatory processes; GIS and Access to information; M&E.

(ii)   All focus countries have high-quality national development strategies, six of which are aligned and two are in the process of being aligned with the 2030 Agenda. Further, all countries have developed medium-term strategies, very closely linked to the budget, securing domestic resource mobilisation. While all countries have developed an elaborate structure of sectoral plans, strategies, policies, and programmes, not all SDGs are linked to a respective sectoral policy, nor has an implementation agency or sectoral coordination mechanism been identified. This may translate into a certain degree of lack of accountability for SDG implementation at sectoral level. However, given the alignment with national development plans and strategies, the MTS, in most cases, will replace that gap.

(iii)   All focus countries in the subregion have established a national coordination mechanism for implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda. Most of these mechanisms have entrusted planning institutions with responsibility for coordination or assigned a technical secretariat to coordinate various sectors, convening stakeholders and defining the strategies and partnerships for achieving the SDGs as well as monitoring and ensuring accountability of the Goals. Indeed, most of the challenges identified throughout the research pertain to the

adoption of systemic integration principles and the 'silo' approach to management, which is persistently identified by countries as an obstacle to the effective implementation of the Agenda and with agreed national development priorities.

(iv)   Notwithstanding the positive findings above, six years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Caribbean countries continue to grapple with maintaining adequate institutional mechanisms and capacities for integrated and coherent multi-stakeholder approaches to policy design and reporting on the SDGs. These challenges have now been exacerbated in a context of widened socioeconomic inequities resulting from the pandemic. While gender and youth mainstreaming is widely incorporated across planning and programmatic activities, countries recognise the need to strengthen inclusive governance to allow for genuine citizen engagement and participation in the development and decision-making process. Good leadership and good quality institutions must work with an effective national strategy with clearly articulated objectives and action plan, as well as adequate financial resources. For a national strategy to be successful, the programme of work must be incorporated in the national budget process.

(v)   Understanding the underlying risk factors will allow for evidence-based decision-making and will in turn impact sound development planning and risk reduction. GIS offers the potential to develop highly integrative and localised analysis which can be effective in assisting decision makers to better understand comprehensive risk and, consequently, to design more effective, integrated and spatially-targeted policies to increase capacity and resilience. In that regard, some countries have developed elaborate GIS, while others are using GIS as a basic mapping exercise, not fully linked to integrated planning or used as a decision-making tool, in its potential to support foresight. To that end, strengthening subregional collaborative initiatives and developing national and local capacities to utilise these resources is an important area of work, enabling Caribbean countries and territories to embrace technology and advance in the greater use and sharing of geospatial data.

(vi)   Caribbean countries unanimously recognise the need to invest in the reinforcement of M&E systems that can assess the performance of national development plans and national progress towards the SDGs. Developing skills in data collection and generation of multidimensional analysis is seen as a gap and priority area of work. Only five of the eight governments had data and systems in place to track the implementation of national plans and strategies.

(vii)   VNRs have proven to be an effective opportunity to build multi-stakeholder review and engagement for the goals. By 2021, five focus countries had presented their VNR at the HLPF, promoting wide civil society engagement. A greater partnership with the private sector, academia, and civil society could be introduced in the process.

Whereas each country has made progress on specific areas and faces specific challenges, in continuing to build institutional capacity in the Caribbean by enhancing resilient institutions for sustainable development, the results from the analysis highlight the following key areas of opportunity for strengthened institutional mechanisms for integrated decision-making:

- **Integrated and evidence-based sustainable development planning.** Countries should move toward integrated systems by promoting policy coherence, enhancing diagnosis, foresight and risk-informed planning and improving action-oriented results-based management. This includes promoting systemic multidimensional analysis and a multisectoral approach in sustainable development planning. Countries need to review how increasingly complex and interrelated systemic risks are being addressed in order to preserve development gains and promote inclusive growth. Countries must ensure that DRR policies, strategies and plans address spatial and territorial vulnerabilities, with focus not only on natural but also on

biological and anthropogenic hazards. In addition, further to Environmental Assessment, which is widely practiced in the subregion, a better approach at strategic environmental assessments is required, to ensure integration and mainstreaming of SDGs into policy and planning at all levels. Anticipatory, long-term thinking is required to address complex challenges, such as those represented by the SDGs, promoting awareness of and capability in strategic foresight.

Since the national sustainable development planning process in alignment with the SDGs is now a well-established practice in the Caribbean, the VNR may serve as the multi-stakeholder, multi-level and multi-sector review process both for development planning and Agenda 2030 implementation at national and sub-national level, promoting national accountability.

- **Increased vertical decentralisation and horizontal integration**. Many Caribbean countries have established high-level interagency committees, hosted by a high-ranking ministry, or the centre of government. However, cutting across silos to promote policy coherence and systemic approaches to decision-making requires strong leadership and a sense of urgency, such as was experienced during the pandemic, when governments demonstrated political commitment at the highest level. Clarifying roles and mandates of coordination mechanisms and responsibilities of the different MDAs in specific SDG implementation will raise ambition and accountability for the goals. The regular high-level process of monitoring with the support from an independent agency such as the National Statistical Office, will help review and promote performance.

  While the silo approach has been repeatedly identified as the main cause of ineffective inter-ministerial collaboration and a threat to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, it became apparent during the pandemic how agile and flexible Caribbean countries can be in adopting intersectoral approaches. This is because the sense of urgency and accountability positively influenced the inclination and capacity of decisionmakers to collaborate across silos, surpassing communication and cooperation challenges at political, institutional and individual levels. The recognition of common goals and the need to act beyond the limits of circumscribed areas of responsibility to promote multi-sector, multi-level and multi-stakeholder coordinated interaction is a positive lesson learned to be adopted also in long-term sustainable development planning. To pursue inter-ministerial collaboration and break down the silos of specialised knowledge, this sense of urgency for the greater good should be perpetuated, investing in global citizenship education, capacity development and communication for the goals, while at the same time demanding the accountability of governments. Introducing more flexibility through a matrix organization, avoiding, for example, the establishment of specialised units and instead promoting area-based approaches, and thereby benefitting from integrated multidimensional analysis, policies, plans and programmes.

  Decentralization, that is the transfer of authority to subnational levels, is a major challenge of public administration reform that, if successfully implemented, can benefit the most isolated communities in multi-island States, twin islands, rural and indigenous populations. The aim is to target more directly the local communities, delivering public services more effectively at local level.

- **Multi-sector and multi-stakeholder collaboration for the goals.** In establishing coordinated institutional mechanisms, it is important to promote formal or semiformal partnerships and processes for sharing and learning across ministries and for engagement with the private sector, academia and civil society organisations. Arranging multi-stakeholder and multi-level

consultation forums is fundamental to progress in leaving no one behind. Hearing the voices of those who are most vulnerable, and addressing the needs of marginalized communities, is particularly relevant for multi-island states and twin islands, as well as rural and indigenous communities. The capacity to influence and raise the stakes, leveraging untapped resources from the private sector and civil society engagement relies on the relative success in ensuring that the SDGs are visible and effectively communicated in mainstream media and educational curricula, in partnership with school communities and youth organisations.

Encouraging the participation of multiple actors, including the private sector, in disaster response and recovery plans is a key area of opportunity. COVID-19 response requires multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder participation and coordination. To ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are fully taken into account, community participation should be encouraged in all phases of disaster risk management, from preparation, response and recovery, to the design and development of activities and programmes for mitigation and prevention. To alleviate the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic and promote an effective recovery, the response effort should include greater involvement of the private sector. Recovery plans should therefore be designed in coordination with the private sector, paying particular attention to the needs of SMEs. For example, partnerships with universities and research centres in areas that are considered critical for local sustainable development, may open new opportunities and act as an engine for transformational sustainability. The Sustainability Network of Caribbean Civil Society Organisations is a good example of how civil society mechanisms, at subregional level, are gradually being integrated into policy debate, in the effort to leave no one behind in the Caribbean.

- **Research, innovation and capacity development.** A learning agenda should be fostered by promoting debate and research on potential areas for multisectoral approaches that may support a larger degree of vertical decentralisation and horizontal integration. Activating innovation labs in priority areas such as the blue economy can help unleash the creative potential of local communities, promoting next generation ideas, partnering with a full range of stakeholders as well as investors and foundations to promote talent, innovation and community development.

Integrated sustainable development planning agencies and GIS units should be strengthened by ensuring the right political, technical, coordination, and budgetary capabilities. Efficiency may be enhanced by implementing measures to improve the management of talent in the public sector and strengthening capacities of national policy makers in the area of policy integration, and use of goal-oriented, evidence-based, and participatory frameworks to formulate, implement and review integrated policies and strategies for sustainable development, understanding that to be sustainable they must be gradually and consistently implemented over time.

An innovative mindset is important, to be able to "hack" the policy cycle and achieve integration. To embrace policy coherence, government departments may use staff transfers and allow experts to complete short-term assignments with other units, using "area-based" approaches. Small changes can facilitate interaction and build a new generation of policy makers who are more open to systems thinking, interacting through information, knowledge and data sharing. E-government capacity development is an important element to ensure that data and information can flow seamlessly between different departments and levels of government. One-stop-shops, including making use of technological innovation, have the power to catalyse integration, and simplify procedures, creating efficiencies in meeting different areas of government and improving access to service delivery. Antigua and Barbuda offers a good example of a one-stop centre for survivors of gender-based violence. The

Support and Referral Center (SARC) helps promote timely and coordinated gender response to ensure victims of gender-based violence have access to justice, coordinating inter-sectoral protocols with an intersectional, intercultural, gender and human-rights-based approach. The SARC also introduced a gender-sensitive system for the collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data, the first of its kind within the country. It incorporates various service providers across Government and civil society inputting information in a centralized data management system specific to gender-based violence (GoAB, 2021).

M&E, performance indicators are areas often mentioned by countries as critical capacity development priorities. Other key areas include institutionalisation of capacity to both detect and integrate signals about the future into policymaking. As a good practice, Dominica has developed a broad organizational review to address capacity constraints and develop a clear plan as to how to build on the shortages or gaps that have been identified.

- **Subregional cooperation.** The systemic nature of sustainable development requires coordinated efforts at multiple levels to reduce the inherent vulnerabilities of each country and its exposure to this biological hazard, as well as to other multi-risk scenarios that could emerge in the context of COVID-19. A multisectoral, coherent, comprehensive and coordinated response among countries would make it possible to address risk in an effective and timely manner, taking advantage of the capacities that each country can provide. In this regard, sharing information on national risk analyses and collaborating in the production of subregional information systems can facilitate the coordination of responses (especially in cases of expected cross-border effects).

  Caribbean coordination mechanisms may fill gaps, for example in providing GIS services, benefitting from shared databases and by outsourcing some of the technical outputs to subregional agencies. As mentioned earlier in this report, strengthening the existing CARIGEO and other subregional collaborative initiatives and developing national and local capacities to utilise these resources is seen as a way forward for countries and territories of the Caribbean to compensate for their small scale by sharing knowledge and resources, advancing technical capacities in critical areas.

  Caribbean countries, grappling with the challenges of small size and multidimensional vulnerability, would benefit from a fuller embrace of regional cooperation including peer learning on integrated action and policy coherence. The annual Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on sustainable development is recognized as an excellent regional platform for peer-learning in the search for solutions to the challenges to sustainable development. Through the VNRs, submitted annually to the High-level Political Forum, countries share lessons and information about institutional mechanisms for coherent policymaking. The VNR submissions have increased their analysis on PCSD and integrated approaches Caribbean countries are putting in place. ECLAC has established peer to peer learning and exchange of good practices in support to VNR processes in the subregion. ECLAC has also developed online a Caribbean Development Portal to aggregate and compare development policies and strategies for the countries of the subregion.

The current pandemic highlights longstanding vulnerabilities linked to poverty and inequality, and resulting from limited investment in essential services. It has also emphasized the need for integrated systemic approaches in addressing sustainable development, in order to effectively inform decision-making and policy measures, while transforming behaviours at all levels of government and society. The COVID-19 crisis and its cascading and unprecedented effects have impacted all countries across the subregion. However, Caribbean countries are resilient and despite of the numerous set-backs in their development trajectories, remain committed to their long-term development ambitions.

The COVID-19 pandemic is the first to occur in a data-driven era. In a very short period of time, the pandemic generated a massive volume of data, allowing for the formulation of evidence-based policies as a basis for health and sanitary control measures. The role of information is crucial in the identification of who and where the most vulnerable are in order to respond effectively and in a timely manner to their needs. But discussion should also be made on the limits of use of data, privacy, and on transparency and accountability of the State as data custodian (ECLAC, 2021).

Communication processes have been an important element in the response and should also facilitate discussion and informed decision-making through specific scenarios and options, leading to increased resources and investment. The different information systems at both the national and subregional levels to monitor this crisis provide a concrete example of the importance of data and monitoring systems. There is need to understand the multidimensional nature of risk, increasing accountability for the use of data in decision-making and collectively identifying interdependent solutions that may not only mitigate risk and enable the prevention of new risks, but that may also support the implementation of decisive action towards the SDGs and other commonly agreed goals.

Overcoming this crisis called for unparalleled actions and Caribbean countries have been very agile in learning from past experience in emergency management, making use of the knowledge and mechanisms used in emergency response and in implementing the SDGs to address the socio-economic consequences of the pandemic. For the Caribbean subregion, building forward stronger will depend on risk-informed decision-making, strengthening resilience at all levels. Caribbean SIDs now have a real opportunity to use the experience gained in the pandemic response to re-imagine their sustainable development frameworks, seeking practical and peer learning and exchange to improve their governance capacity to implement Agenda 2030 and other global and regional commitments.

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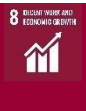GoG (Government of Grenada) (2019a), National Sustainable Development Plan, p. xix.

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Annex

Table A1: Matrix of institutional mechanisms

	Antigua and Barbuda			British Virgin Islands			Dominica			Grenada		
	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages
COORDINATION MECHANISM	National SDG Committee	Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) 2016-2020	Statistical Office	SDGs National Coordinating Committee	• National Sustainable Development Plan (in preparation) • Medium Term Fiscal Plan (MTFP) 2020-2022 • Recovery to Development Plan		Ministry of Economic Affairs, Planning, Resilience and Sustainable Development, Telecommunications and Broadcasting	• National Resilience Development Strategy (NRDS) 2030 • Dominica Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan (CRRP) 2020-2030	Central Statistics Office	Sustainable Development Institute (SDI) of Grenada (in establishment)	• Grenada National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) 2020-2035 • Medium Term Fiscal Framework (MTFF) 2021-2023	Central Statistics Office
1 NO POVERTY	Ministry of Social Transformation, and the Blue Economy	• The Board of Guardians Scheme • Peoples Benefit Programme • Social Security Scheme	• MTDS Enhanced Social Cohesion • MTDS Optimal Generation of National Wealth.	Ministry of Health and Social Development		MTFP SEED Direction/ Governance Result Area	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Planning, Resilience and Sustainable Development, Telecommunications and Broadcasting	Medium Term Growth and Social Protection Strategy 2014-2018	Strong communities; Robust economy; and Enhanced collective consciousness outcomes of the CRRP	Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment	Growth and Social Protection Strategy (GSPS) 2014 – 2018	NSDP Outcome 3
2 ZERO HUNGER	`Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs	• National Food and Nutrition Policy • National Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan.	• MTDS Enhanced Social Cohesion • MTDS Optimal Generation of National Wealth	Ministry of Health and Social Development		• MTFP SEED Social Result Area • MTFP SEED Environment Result Area	Ministry of Blue and Green Economy, Agriculture and National Food Security		CRRP outcomes: Strong communities; Robust economy; Enhanced collective consciousness; and Protected and sustainably leveraged natural and other unique assets	Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment		NSDP Outcome 4
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment	National Strategic Plan for Health	The MTDS Enhanced Social Cohesion sustainable development dimension	Ministry of Health and Social Development		• MTFP SEED Social Result Area • MTFP SEED Environment Result Area • MTFP SEED Direction/Governance Result Area	Ministry of Health, Wellness and New Health Investment		Strong communities; Robust economy; and Enhanced collective consciousness outcomes of the CRRP	Ministry of Health, Social Security and International Business. .		NSDP Outcome 1
4 QUALITY EDUCATION	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	Education Act of 2008	• MTDS Enhanced Social Cohesion • MTDS Optimal Generation of National Wealth	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture		MTFP SEED Social Result Area	Ministry of Education, Human Resource Planning, Vocational Training and National Excellence		Strong communities outcome of the CRRP	Ministry of Education, Human Resources Development Religious Affairs and Information	Strategic Plan for Educational Enhancement and Development	NSDP Outcome 2
5 GENDER EQUALITY	Ministry of Social Transformation, and the Blue Economy, Directorate of Gender Affairs (DoGA)	National Gender Action Plan and Policy	MTDS Enhanced Social Cohesion sustainable development dimension	Ministry of Health and Social Development - Office of Gender Affairs		MTFP SEED Social Result Area	Ministry of Youth Development and Empowerment, Youth at Risk, Gender Affairs, Seniors Security and Dominicans with Disabilities	National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equality – updated 2014	Strong communities; and Enhanced collective consciousness outcomes of the CRRP	Division of Gender and Family Affairs of the Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment	Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan 2014-2024	NSDP Outcome 3
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	Ministry of Public Utilities, Civil Aviation and Energy	Integrated Water Resources Management Road Map	• MTDS Optimal Generation of National Wealth • MTDS Improved Health of the National Environment and Sustained Historical and Cultural Assets	Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities		MTFP SEED Environment Result Area	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Planning, Resilience and Sustainable Development, Telecommunications and Broadcasting		CRRP outcomes: Strong communities; Robust economy; Well-planned and durable infrastructure; and Strengthened institutional systems	National Water and Sewerage Agency.		NSDP Outcome 6

	Jamaica			Saint Lucia			Saint Vincent and the Grenadines			Trinidad and Tobago		
	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages
COORDINATION MECHANISM	• Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) • National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee (NAOC) • Jamaica 2030 Agenda SDGs Core Group	• Jamaica Vision 2030 • Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF) 2018-2021 • Roadmap for SDG Implementation in Jamaica	• Thematic Working Groups of Vision 2030 • Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN)	National Coordinating Mechanism for Implementing the 2030 Agenda	• National Development Plan (in preparation) • Medium Term Development Strategy 2020-2023	National Statistical System (NSS)	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Information Technology	• National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP) 2013-2025 • Medium Term Debt Strategy 2019-2021	Statistical Office	High Level Ministerial Sub-Committee of Cabinet on Vision 2030 and SDGs	• Vision 2030 • Medium Term Policy Framework 2011-2014	Central Statistical Office
1 NO POVERTY	Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation	• National Poverty Policy • National Poverty Reduction Programme	Vision 2030 Outcomes 1.c, 4.b and 4.c	Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, Empowerment, Youth Development, Sports and Local Government		NDP Pillars 4 and 5	Ministry of National Mobilization, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Youth, Housing and Informal Human Settlements	Country Poverty Assessment (to be completed)	NESDP Goal Reengineering Economic Growth	Ministry of Social Development and Family Services	• National Social Mitigation Plan • Social Sector Investment Programme 2020	Vision 2030 Theme I
2 ZERO HUNGER	Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries.	• National Food and Nutrition Security Policy • Food Safety Policy • Agriculture & Fisheries Strategic Business Plan	Vision 2030 Outcomes 1.a, 1.c. and 3.f	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives.	• Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Agriculture Sector (SASAP) 2018-2028 • Fisheries SASAP 2018-2028 • Food and Nutrition SASAP	NDP Pillars 4, 5 and 7	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour	• COVID-19 Food Security and Impact Mitigation Plan (in development) • National Agriculture and Fisheries Sector Development Plan (2017-2025) • Strategic Plan for Agricultural Development 2012-2018 (draft) • Strategic Plan for Rural Development (in development)	NESDP Goal Reengineering Economic Growth	Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government.	National Social Mitigation Plan	Vision 2030 Theme I
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	Ministry of Health.	10-Year Strategic Plan for the health sector (under development)	Vision 2030 Outcomes 1.a, 2.a, 3.c and 3.f	Ministry of Health and Wellness		NDP Pillar 7	Ministry of Health, Wellness and Environment.		NESDP Goal Enabling Increased Human and Social Development	Ministry of Health	• National Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs (2017-2021) • National Social Mitigation Plan	Vision 2030 Theme I and Theme V
4 QUALITY EDUCATION	Ministry of Education, Youth and Information.		Vision 2030 Outcomes 1.a, 1.b. and 3.f	Ministry of Education, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development	2015-2020 Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP)	NDP Pillars 5 and 6	Ministry of Education and National Reconciliation.	Education For All (EFA) strategy	NDP Goal Enabling Increased Human and Social Development	Ministry of Education	• Education Policy Paper (2017-2022) • National Literacy Plan (2016–2020)	Vision 2030 Theme I
5 GENDER EQUALITY	Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport	• National Policy for Gender Equality 2011 • National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence 2016-2026	Vision 2030 Outcomes 1.a and 2.b	Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development		NDP Pillar 5	Ministry of National Mobilization, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Youth, Housing and Informal Human Settlements (Gender Affairs Division)	National Multi-Sectoral Action Plan against Gender-Based Violence	NESDP Goal Enabling Increased Human and Social Development	Ministry of Social Development and Family Services.	National Policy on Gender and Development	Vision 2030 Theme I
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	The Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation	Water Sector Policy	Vision 2030 Outcomes 3.c and 4.a	Ministry of Infrastructure, Ports, Energy and Labour	Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Water Sector 2018-2028	NDP Pillar 3	Central Water and Sewerage Authority (CVSA)	Groundwater Management Programme and Water Safety Plan	NESDP Goal Improving Physical Infrastructure and Preserving the Environment	Ministry of Public Utilities		Vision 2030 Theme I, Theme III and Theme V

SDG	Antigua and Barbuda			British Virgin Islands			Dominica			Grenada		
	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	Ministry of Public Utilities, Civil Aviation and Energy.	• National Energy Policy • Sustainable Energy Action Plan • Renewable Energy Roadmap	MTDS Optimal Generation of National Wealth sustainable development dimension	Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities - Water and Sewerage Department		MTFP SEED Economic Result Area	Electrical Division of the Ministry of Public Works and Digital Economy		Strong communities; and Robust economy outcomes of the CRRP	Ministry of Infrastructure Development, Public Utilities, Energy, Transport and Implementation	Grenada Smart Small State 2020	NSDP Outcome 8
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Immigration	• Medium-Term Debt Strategy 2016 – 2020 • Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy	• MTDS Enhanced Social Cohesion sustainable development dimension • MTDS Optimal Generation of National Wealth sustainable development dimension	Ministry of Finance - Department of Human Resources		MTFP SEED Economic Result Area	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Planning, Resilience and Sustainable Development, Telecommunications and Broadcasting	Public Sector Investment Program	CRRP outcomes: Robust economy; Strengthened institutional systems; Enhanced collective consciousness; and Protected and sustainably leveraged natural and other unique assets	Ministry of Finance, Planning, Economic Development and Physical Development.	Grenada Smart Small State 2020	NSDP Outcomes 2, 4 and 5
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance	.	MTDS Optimal Generation of National Wealth sustainable development dimension	Ministry of Finance - Department of Information Technology and Department of Trade, Investment Promotion and Consumer Affairs		MTFP SEED Economic Result Area	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Planning, Resilience and Sustainable Development, Telecommunications and Broadcasting	Public Sector Investment Program	Robust economy outcome of the CRRP	Ministry of Trade, Industry, Co-Operatives and CARICOM Affairs and the Ministry of Finance, Planning, Economic Development and Physical Development		NSDP Outcomes 5 and 6
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	Ministry of Social Transformation and the Blue Economy		MTDS Enhanced Social Cohesion sustainable development dimension	Ministry of Health and Social Development		MTFP SEED Economic Result Area	Ministry of Governance, Public Service Reform, Citizen Empowerment, Social Justice, and Ecclesiastical Affairs		Strong communities; and Enhanced collective consciousness outcomes of the CRRP	Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment		NSDP Outcome 3
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	Ministry of Housing Lands and Urban Renewal	National Physical Development Plan (NPDP)	• MTDS Enhanced Social Cohesion • MTDS Optimal Generation of National Wealth • MTDS Improved Health of the National Environment and Sustained Historical and Cultural Assets	Town and Country Planning Department under the portfolio of the Premier's Office	National Physical Development Plan adopted in 2019	• MTFP SEED Social Result Area • MTFP SEED Economic Result Area • MTFP SEED Environment Result Area • MTFP SEED Direction/Governance Result Area	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Planning, Resilience and Sustainable Development, Telecom. and Broadcasting - Physical Planning and Town and Country Planning portfolio with the Ministry of Housing & Urban Development	• National Land Use Policy • National Physical Development Plan	Strong communities; Robust economy; Well-planned and durable infrastructure; and Strengthened institutional systems outcomes of the CRRP	Physical Development Authority of the Ministry of Finance, Planning, Economic Development and Physical Development	National Urban Policy	NSDP Outcome 6
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	Ministry of Health and Environment	• Green Tourism Initiative • Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund (SIRF Fund) • Environmental Protection and Management Act	• MTDS Optimal Generation of National Wealth • MTDS Improved Health of the National Environment and Sustained Historical and Cultural Assets	Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration		• MTFP SEED Social Result Area • MTFP SEED Environment Result Area	Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment		Strong communities; and Robust economy outcomes of the CRRP	Ministry of Finance, Planning, Economic Development and Physical Development		NSDP Outcome 4

SDG	Jamaica — Institutional Setup	Jamaica — Strategic Framework	Jamaica — SDG Linkages	Saint Lucia — Institutional Setup	Saint Lucia — Strategic Framework	Saint Lucia — SDG Linkages	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines — Institutional Setup	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines — Strategic Framework	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines — SDG Linkages	Trinidad and Tobago — Institutional Setup	Trinidad and Tobago — Strategic Framework	Trinidad and Tobago — SDG Linkages
7 Affordable and clean energy	Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology and Telecommunications	National Energy Policy 2009-2030	Vision 2030 Outcomes 3.d, 3.f and 4.b	Ministry of Infrastructure, Ports, Energy and Labour	National Energy Transition Strategy	NDP Pillar 3	Ministry of Transport Works, Lands and Surveys, and Physical Planning	National Energy Action Plan (NEAP) 2009-2030 developed in 2010.	NESDP Goal Improving Physical Infrastructure and Preserving the Environment	Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries and the Ministry of Public Utilities		Vision 2030 Theme III and Theme V
8 Decent work and economic growth	Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation		Vision 2030 Outcomes 1.a, 1.b, 1.c, 3.a, 3.b and 3.f	Ministry of Infrastructure, Ports, Energy and Labour and Ministry of Finance, Economic Growth, Job Creation, External Affairs and the Public Service		NDP Pillars 1 and 6	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Information Technology.		NESDP Goal Reengineering Economic Growth	Ministry of Planning and Development	• National Energy Policy Green paper (under development) • Trinidad and Tobago Gas master Plan (2015)	Vision 2030 Theme IV
9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure	Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation		Vision 2030 Outcomes 3.b, 3.c, 3.e, and 3.f	Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development		NDP Pillars 1 and 3	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Information Technology		NESDP Goal Reengineering Economic Growth and NESDP Goal Improving Physical Infrastructure and Preserving the Environment	Ministry of Trade and Industry	• Trinidad and Tobago Trade Policy 2019- 2023 • Special Economic Zones Policy	Vision 2030 Theme IV and Theme V
10 Reduced inequalities	Ministry of Labour and Social Security and Ministry of Local Government and Community Development	• Social Protection Strategy • National Financial Inclusion Strategy • Social Enterprise Boost Initiative • National Squatter Management Policy and Implementation Plan • National Resettlement Strategy (in development)	Vision 2030 Outcomes 1.a, 1.c, 2.a, 2.b, 3.a and 3.b	Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, Empowerment, Youth Development, Sports and Local Government.		NDP Pillar 6	Ministry of National Mobilization, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Youth, Housing and Informal Human Settlements		NESDP Goal Reengineering Economic Growth	Ministry of Social Development and Family Services		Vision 2030 Theme I and Theme II
11 Sustainable cities and communities	Department on Land, Environment and Climate Change of the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation	• National Squatter Management Policy and Implementation Plan • National Resettlement Strategy (in development) • National Waste Management Policy and Strategy (in development)	Vision 2030 Outcomes 1.d, 3.c, 3.f, 4.b and 4.c	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives and the Ministry of Physical Development	National Land Policy (in revision)	NDP Pillars 3 and 4	Ministry of Housing, Informal Human Settlements, Land and Surveys and Physical Planning together with the Ministry of Transport, Works, Lands and Surveys, and Physical Planning	• National Disaster Management Programme (NDM) • National land use policy and land-use zoning plans (to be finalised)	NESDP Goal Promoting Good Governance, Citizen Security and Increasing the Effectiveness of Public Administration and NESDP Goal Improving Physical Infrastructure and Preserving the Environment	Town and Country Planning Division of the Ministry of Planning and Development.		Vision 2030 Theme I, Theme II and Theme V
12 Responsible consumption and production	Department on Land, Environment and Climate Change of the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation		Vision 2030 Outcomes 3.a, 3.f, 4.a and 4. b	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives	National Environment Policy (NEP) and National Environmental Management Strategy (revised in 2014)	NDP Pillar 4	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Information Technology, with the Ministry of Health, Wellness and Environment		NESDP Goal Reengineering Economic Growth	Environmental Policy and Planning Division of the Ministry of Planning and Development		Vision 2030 Theme IV and Theme V

SDG	Antigua and Barbuda Institutional Setup	Antigua and Barbuda Strategic Framework	Antigua and Barbuda SDG Linkages	British Virgin Islands Institutional Setup	British Virgin Islands Strategic Framework	British Virgin Islands SDG Linkages	Dominica Institutional Setup	Dominica Strategic Framework	Dominica SDG Linkages	Grenada Institutional Setup	Grenada Strategic Framework	Grenada SDG Linkages
13 CLIMATE ACTION	Ministry of Health and Environment.	• National Action Plan to Combat Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought 2015-2020 • Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund (SIRF Fund)	MTDS Improved Health of the National Environment and Sustained Historical and Cultural Assets sustainable development dimension	Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration - Department of Disaster Management	• Recovery to Development • The Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund	• MTFP SEED Social Result Area • MTFP SEED Environment Result Area	Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica (CREAD) of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Planning, Resilience and Sustainable Development, Telecommunications and Broadcasting		Robust economy; and Protected and sustainably leveraged natural and other unique assets outcomes of the CRRP	Ministry of Climate Resilience, the Environment, Forestry, Fisheries & Disaster Management	National Climate Change Policy 2017-202	NSDP Outcomes 6, 7 and 8
14 LIFE BELOW WATER	Ministry of Social Transformation and the Blue Economy	• Fisheries Act of 2006 • Food and Nutrition Security Policy for Antigua and Barbuda • Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing	MTDS Improved Health of the National Environment and Sustained Historical and Cultural Assets sustainable development dimension	Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration	Strategic Blue Economy Roadmap	• MTFP SEED Social Result Area • MTFP SEED Environment Result Area	Ministry of Blue and Green Economy, Agriculture and National Food Security	Dominica National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2020	Robust economy; and Protected and sustainably leveraged natural and other unique assets outcomes of the CRRP	Ministry of Climate Resilience, Environment, Forestry, Fisheries and Disaster Management together with the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation	ICZM Policy for Grenada 2015	NSDP Outcomes 4 and 7
15 LIFE ON LAND	Ministry of Health and Environment	• Environmental Protection and Management Act (EPMA) • National Action Plan to Combat Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought	MTDS Improved Health of the National Environment and Sustained Historical and Cultural Assets sustainable development dimension	Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration		• MTFP SEED Social Result Area • MTFP SEED Economic Result Area • MTFP SEED Environment Result Area	Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment	Dominica National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2020	Robust economy; and Protected and sustainably leveraged natural and other unique assets outcomes of the CRRP	Ministry of Climate Resilience, Environment, Forestry, Fisheries and Disaster Management together with the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation		NSDP Outcomes 4 and 7
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Immigration and Trade	The Freedom of Information Act	MTDS Enhanced Citizen Security sustainable development dimension	Ministry of Finance		MTFP SEED Direction/ Governance Result Area	Ministry of Governance, Public Service Reform, Citizen Empowerment, Social Justice, and Ecclesiastical Affairs, and the Ministry of National Security and Home Affairs		Strong communities; Well-planned and durable infrastructure; Strengthened institutional systems; and Enhanced collective consciousness outcomes of the CRRP	Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment		NSDP Outcome 3
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Immigration and Trade		SDG17 is a self-standing SDG	Ministry of Finance - Department of Information and Public Relations and Department of Information Technology		• MTFP SEED Economic Result Area • MTFP SEED Direction/Governance Result Area	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Planning, Resilience and Sustainable Development, Telecommunications and Broadcasting		Strengthened institutional systems outcome of the CRRP	Ministry of Finance, Planning, Economic Development and Physical Development		NSDP Outcome 5

		Jamaica			Saint Lucia			Saint Vincent and the Grenadines			Trinidad and Tobago	
	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages	Institutional Setup	Strategic Framework	SDG Linkages
13 CLIMATE ACTION	**Department on Land, Environment and Climate Change** of the **Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation**	Climate Change Policy Framework for Jamaica	Vision 2030 Outcome 4.b	**National Emergency Management Office (NEMO)**	• National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2018-2028 • Climate Change Communications Strategy • Water Sector Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (SASAP) 2018-28 • Agriculture SASAP 2018-2028 • Fisheries Sector SASAP 2018-2028 • Guidelines for the Development of SASAPs	NDP Pillar 4	**National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO)** with the **Ministry of Health, Wellness and Environment**	• National Climate Change Policy approved in 2019. National Adaptation Plan • Regional Disaster Vulnerability Reduction Project (RDVRP)	NESDP Goal Improving Physical Infrastructure and Preserving the Environment	**Environmental Policy and Planning Division** of the **Ministry of Planning and Development**	• National Climate Change Policy • Carbon Reduction Strategy	Vision 2030 Theme V
14 LIFE BELOW WATER	**Department on Land, Environment and Climate Change** of the **Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation**	• Agriculture & Fisheries Strategic Business Plan • Beach Restoration and Coastal Guidelines. • National Strategy and Action Plan on Biological Diversity 2016-202 • Protected Areas System Master Plan: Jamaica 2013–2017	Vision 2030 Outcome 4.a	**Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives**	• Saint Lucia's Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries Sector (Fisheries SASAP) 2018-2028	NDP Pillar 4	**Ministry of Health, Wellness and Environment** with the **Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour,** and **Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development and Culture**	• National Ocean Policy (NOP) and Strategic Action Plan 2018-2030 • Draft National Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Sector Development Plan (2017- 2025) • Wastewater Management Strategy & Effluent Regulatory Standards (in preparation)	NESDP Goal Improving Physical Infrastructure and Preserving the Environment	**Environmental Policy and Planning Division** of the **Ministry of Planning and Development** with the **Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries** and the **Ministry of Tourism**	• National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (2013) • National Tourism Policy • Integrated Coastal Zone Management Policy Framework	Vision 2030 Theme V
15 LIFE ON LAND	**Department on Land, Environment and Climate Change** of the **Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation**	• Forest Policy for Jamaica • National Strategy and Action Plan on Biological Diversity 2016-2021 • Protected Areas System Master Plan: Jamaica 2013–2017	Vision 2030 Outcomes 3.f and 4.a	**Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives**	Revised Second National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2018-2025)	NDP Pillar 4	**Ministry of Health, Wellness and Environment** and the **Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour,** and **Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development and Culture**	National Biodiversity Action Plan (2015-2020)	NESDP Goal Improving Physical Infrastructure and Preserving the Environment	**Environmental Policy and Planning Division** of the Ministry of Planning and Development with the **Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries** and the **Ministry of Tourism**	• National Wildlife Policy (Draft) • National Tourism Policy • National Protected Areas Policy • National Forest Policy	Vision 2030 Theme V
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	**Ministry of Local Government and Community Development** with the **Ministry of National Security** and **Ministry of Labour and Social Security**		Vision 2030 Outcomes 1.a, 2.a and 2.b	**Ministry of Home Affairs, Justice and National Security**		NDP Pillar 2	**Ministry of National Security, Air and Sea Port Development.**		NESDP Goal Promoting Good Governance, Citizen Security and Increasing the Effectiveness of Public Administration	**Ministry of Social Development and Family Services** and the **Ministry of National Security**	National ICT Plan 2018-2022	Vision 2030 Theme II
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	**Ministry of Finance** and the **Public Service**	Government of Jamaica Public Sector Procurement Policy	Vision 2030 Outcomes 2.b, 3.a, 3.c and 3.f	**Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, Empowerment, Youth Development, Sports and Local Governments**		NDP Pillar 2	**Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Information Technology**		NESDP Goal Promoting Good Governance, Citizen Security and Increasing the Effectiveness of Public Admin. and NESDP Goal Building National Pride, Identity and Culture	**Ministry of Finance**		Vision 2030 Theme II and Theme V

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