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The Member States comprising the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) have experienced substantial social improvement in the last two decades of the 20th century. This for the most part continued apace into the first decade of the 21st century. Improvements in education and health were especially pronounced. Secondary school enrollment increased from about 50% in 1980 to 100% since 2010. In health, infant mortality rates have more than halved to about 12 deaths per 1000 live births and life expectancy has increase by 7 years to just under 75 years. These gains were bolstered by robust economic growth which averaged over 4% per annum, considerably raising living standards and consequently jettisoning thousands of households from poverty and economic vulnerability.

At this juncture of history, real and imminent risks of reversal in these gains confront Member States and their citizens. These emanate from multiple threats that can be broadly classified as: Economic, Social and Environmental. Vulnerabilities: intrinsic in island geography and small size; inherited from a colonial legacy; as well as those fostered by sociocultural practices- provide the interface through which these threats can adversely affect citizens’ wellbeing. A partial overview of some the major themes in this regard follows:

**ECONOMIC** - A secular decline in growth occasioned in part by falling rates of growth in the exports of goods and services as well as deceleration in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) represent the major economic threat confronting the OECS region. This underscores the region’s high dependence on externally driven growth, a vulnerability inherent to all Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The consequence has been elevated levels of unemployment and other forms of economic dislocation. Fiscal challenges further exacerbate these risk (consequences) as governments’ ability to appropriately respond is stymied by binding resource constraints.

**SOCIAL** - The illicit drug trade is a scourge to which Caribbean islands are especially exposed. Their island geography and strategic location between major sources of supply and demand have been exploited by entities of nefarious character for decades. The inevitable consequence, has been high incidences of crack-cocaine abuse (as increasingly these drugs are being used as currency for facilitating such trans-shipment). A further consequence has been elevated levels of criminality and other forms of socially destructive behaviour. In the OECS intentional homicides average 16 per 100,000 persons annually, while this is 25% below the CARICOM average, it is uncomfortably high and poses a significant tax to citizens’ sense of security and wellbeing.

**ENVIRONMENTAL** - Rising global temperatures resulting from human influenced climate change represents another substantial threat. Among the major consequences of these increasing temperatures are: rising sea levels and increased frequency and severity of tropical cyclones. With as much as 12% of the population in OECS Member States living in areas below 5 meters above sea level, the region is especially vulnerable to the first of these phenomena. Second, its geographic coordinates make the region highly exposed to hurricanes and other adverse tropical weather systems. The risk associated with climate change related phenomena is further exacerbated by the coastal location of critical economic assets - hotels and airports being prime examples. The cost (mitigation and recovery) associated with these phenomena will certainly exert financial strain on private and public entities.
It reaffirms the commitment of the OECS Member States to achieving sustainable development for all. It takes cognisance of the different levels of national development among Member States as well as the need for Member States to individualise policies and strategies. Consequently, the responses it advances require action at both the national and regional level. In this regard the ODS neither will replace nor supersede national development plans. Therefore many items of strategy will be associated with complimentary national and regional actions.

The ODS covers the 10-year period to 2028 and is complimented by an Action Plan, prepared separately, that will be reviewed and updated in 2022. While the strategy is firmly situated in the realities of the OECS, it is aligned to various multilateral development agenda, including especially the UNDP’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Finally, a strategy is among other things a statement of intent with a broad outline of how intended outcomes are to be arrived at. Strategies and action plans in and of themselves do not achieve anything. Achievement of these outcomes require the systematic coordinated attention and efforts of the parties involved-among them:

- Member Governments;
- Regional Institution;
- International Development Partners;
- Private Sector; and
- Citizens and Civil Society

I commend this document for your reading and urge your participation in this process of *Shaping our Shared Prosperity.*
The Revised Treaty of Basseterre, the economic recession in our region caused by the 2008 global financial crisis and the catastrophic storms of 2017, all compel the Member States and institutions of the OECS to accelerate functional cooperation for the good of the people of the OECS.

The OECS Development Strategy provides a welcomed and unique opportunity for a coherent and coordinated approach to growth acceleration and resilience building of our region. The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) shares the vision encapsulated within this Strategy.

In October 2017, the ECCB launched its Strategic Plan 2017-2021 styled, “Transforming the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union Together”. The Plan articulates a vision for socio-economic transformation of the region. The purposes of the ECCB goes beyond the promotion of a sound financial system for the ECCU.

Indeed, Article 4(4) of the ECCB Agreement stipulates a mandate “to actively promote through means consistent with its other objectives, the economic development of the territories of the Participating Governments”. With this mandate, top of mind, the ECCB and the OECS Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2016. Through advocacy on key economic and social issues, the Bank and the OECS Commission are working with member governments, affiliated institutions and strategic partners of the Currency Union to identify key drivers of economic growth and social progress and recommend policies and programmes for enhancing growth, competitiveness and job creation in these economies.

Collaboration has already been recorded on several regional initiatives such as the Regional Partnership Strategy, the Annual Growth and Resilience Dialogue, the Thirty under Thirty Programme, the Student Programme for Innovation in Science and Engineering (SPISE) Awards, regional transportation and logistics initiatives and the launch of this development strategy inclusive of regional sector strategies.

We are now engaged in joint consultations in all Member States to drive action for the implementation of reforms in key priority areas.
The ECCB has lead responsibility for the execution of the financial sector component of the Strategy. Our efforts will help expand access to financing for the private sector (particularly Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises - MSMEs); and diversify the financial sector resulting in a stronger and more resilient sector.

Other joint strategies to drive growth and development and reduce unemployment at national levels include:

1. Continued provision of policy advice to Member States on opportunities to increase employment and economic growth;
2. Advocacy and technical support to Member States to invest a proportion of revenues and/or Citizenship By Investment (CIB) inflows into a growth and resilience fund;
3. Establishment of a Partial Credit Guarantee Corporation for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to improve the flow of credit to the MSMEs;
4. Promotion of pilots and eventual rollout (if deemed feasible) of disruptive technologies that have the potential to transform the region; and
5. Successful collaboration with the World Bank and the FIRST Initiative as well as with the Savings Bank for International Cooperation (SBFIC) on the financial and capacity building needs of the real sector.

It is our fervent hope that this Development Strategy will be a rallying cry in our collective efforts at building a smart and climate resilient region.

Let us ever be forever mindful of the old African proverb “if you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to far, go together”.

### SELECT COUNTRY (ISO3C) CODES

| ISO3C | Country                      | HTI     | JAM    | KNA | LCA | MAF | MEX   | MSR  | MTQ | NIC | PAN | PER | PRI | PRY   | SLV  | SUR  | SXM | TCA | TTO | URY | VCT | VEN | VGB | VIR |
|-------|------------------------------|---------|--------|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ABW   | Aruba                        | Haiti   | Jamaica| St. Kitts and Nevis | St. Lucia | St. Martin (French) | Mexico | Montserrat | Martinique | Nicaragua | Panama | Peru | Puerto Rico | Paraguay | El Salvador | Suriname | Sint Maarten (Dutch) | Turks and Caicos Islands | Trinidad and Tobago | Uruguay | St. Vincent and the Grenadines | Venezuela, RB | British Virgin Islands | Virgin Islands (U.S.) |
| AIA   | Anguilla                     |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| ARG   | Argentina                    |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| ATG   | Antigua and Barbuda          |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| BHS   | Bahamas, The                 |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| BLZ   | Belize                       |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| BOL   | Bolivia                      |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| BRA   | Brazil                       |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| BRB   | Barbados                     |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| CHL   | Chile                        |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| COL   | Colombia                     |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| CRI   | Costa Rica                   |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| CUB   | Cuba                         |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| CUW   | Curacao                      |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| CYM   | Cayman Islands               |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| DMA   | Dominica                     |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| DOM   | Dominican Republic           |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| ECU   | Ecuador                      |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| GRD   | Grenada                      |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| GTM   | Guatemala                    |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| GUY   | Guyana                       |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| HND   | Honduras                     |         |        |     |     |     |       |      |     |     |     |     |     |       |      |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |

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In 2010 seven (7) OECS Member States established the Eastern Caribbean Economic Union (OECS Economic Union) with the aim of, among other things: creating a single economic and financial space and; promoting economic growth, development and international competitiveness by the convergence and coordination of economic policies. Article 13 of the Protocol of Eastern Caribbean Economic Union in the Revised Treaty of Basseterre recognises the OECS Development Strategy (ODS) as an important framework for advancing action towards realising these objectives. It (Article 13) also obligates participating Member States to setting both general and specific developmental objectives arising from the ODS.

This document represents a critical step towards fuller compliance with the provisions of Article 13. In preparing the OECS Development Strategy (ODS), the Commission of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS Commission) engaged in extensive dialogue with stakeholders across the OECS. Stakeholders’ viewpoints (problem assessments) were corroborated by robust data analysis. Strategies were developed taking due cognisance of the same as well as stated national policies and strategies as outlined in national development strategies, budget statements and other national policy/strategy documents.

Earlier drafts of this document have been reviewed by policy makers as well as senior technical officers at the national and regional levels. Recommendations emanating from these officials have been duly incorporated in the current text.

The ODS exists within the symbiotic intervention framework of the Economic Union and the governance apparatus that supports its operation. Consequently, there is a non-hierarchical relationship between national development strategies and the ODS. The ODS outlines common calculated actions that Members States will jointly and/or individually undertake with the aim of achieving mutually desired outcomes.
This document is an explicit articulation of common strategies (and strategic commitments) that OECS Economic Union Member States intend to pursue (realise) in the ten-year period ending 2028. The ODS has been developed around three mutually reinforcing Pillars:

1. **Generating Economic Growth;**
2. **Promoting Human and Social Wellbeing;**
3. **Sustainable Use of Natural Endowments.**
In respect of Pillar 1, Member States have agreed that the economic growth to be generated should be at a level that allows for a meaningful reduction to the persistently high rates of unemployment that continues to fatigue Member States. A targeted reduction in the rate of unemployment by one-quarter was agreed to by the Economic Affairs Council. To achieve this, economic growth of 3 to 5% annually is required across the Economic Union.

The main objective of Pillar 2 is to improve the quality of life of every citizen of the OECS territory through equitable and easy access to quality social services, including health, education and social protection services. The focus of engagement will be on the specific lived experiences of vulnerable groups especially, through wide-ranging measures that address the identified gaps in the existing human development systems and policies.

Pillar 3 is founded on a vision of inclusive and sustainable socio-economic growth that supports the livelihoods and aspirations of present and future generations of OECS citizens. It seeks to promote and maintain environmental integrity while supporting enhanced growth, productivity, social equity, resilience and adaptive capacity. The focus of intervention will be on integrating environmental sustainability into social and economic development and realizing fuller stakeholder ownership of, and participation in, environmental management.

A document of this nature is applicable to and indeed meant for the consumption of every person residing and/or working for the region. It is essential reading to policy makers and senior technical officials in the public sector; and presents international development partners with a framework around which (sub-)regional programming can be developed. Business persons, professionals and persons with keen interest in any of the sectors covered will find it to be one of the sources of policy information; while for academics and students, it may, among other things, represent an implicit research agenda. For each person reading, in addition to being a source of information that guides current and future action, it is hoped that this document will also serve as a basis for active discussion (even debate) on the challenges and developmental options faced by the Economic Union.
Key Challenges

The OECS Member States like many other Caribbean states are characterised by persistently high levels of unemployment. In some Member States over one-fifth of their labour force is unemployed, with this statistic being even higher amongst youth. Slowing rates of economic growth further compounds this problem.

There has been a sustained declining trend in GDP growth since the 1990s, occasioned by falling rates of growth in the exports of goods and services (until the early 2000s) as well as decreasing Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) post 2000. Generally public sector debt to GDP in OECS States are considered high, though there has been some reduction in this ratio since 2010. This high level of indebtedness has stymied governments’ ability to adequately respond to the deceleration in growth.

The economies of the OECS remain highly concentrated, with the tourism sector accounting for nearly 60% of their exports. Agriculture’s contribution to economic output has fallen steadily and significantly since the 1990s. The sector now accounts for about 10% of exports. The manufacturing sector has suffered a similar fate, with exports of that sector now accounting for about 9% of total good and services exported. Concentration has led to increased structural unemployment further compounding extant labour market challenges.

While there has been modest growth in tourist arrivals, the OECS’ share of arrivals to Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) remains low (1.3% in total). Further, growth in arrivals have lagged significantly behind most LAC countries, implying that OECS is losing market share to other countries. Competitiveness therefore is a key challenge for this vital economic sector.

Policy Context and Constraints

There are two broad sets of economic policies that may be pursued, namely: demand-side management and supply-side management policies. Demand-side policies seek to influence total economic output through manipulating aggregate demand. In so doing, demand-side policies do not (seek to) alter structural characteristics of the economy. Supply-side or structural policies on the other hand aim to increase aggregate output through market-based efficiency improvements; that is, making the economy more efficient at producing a given level of aggregate output by addressing impediments to market clearing outcomes.

In the current context demand-side management policies, for the most part, cannot be employed in a growth enhancing manner. The reason for this is two-fold. First the Member States of the ECCU jointly operate a currency board arrangement with their common currency the XCD being pegged to the USD. This effectively removes the monetary policy option. Second the mounting levels of public sector debt and the financing dynamic that it spawns (it has spawned), leaves no policy space for pursuing expansionary fiscal policy in the short to medium term.

Therefore, in seeking growth of 3 to 5%, OECS Member States are constrained to adopt supply-side policies. These policies in addition to being less fast-acting, may require considerable socio-political capital in their implementation.

Supply-side interventions are needed to address structural impediments to growth, economic concentration and downside risks in the Economic Union.
Figure 1: Key Economic Trends and Averages

**Growth Trends**

- Exports
- FDI
- GDP

**Debt to GDP**

**Export Concentration**

- Agriculture: 10%
- Tourism: 57%
- Manufacturing: 9%

**Tourism Indicators Averages (2000–17)**

- Average Yearly Growth in Arrivals
- Tourism Receipts as % Total Exports

Data: World Bank  Estimation: OECS Commission
1. Create a supportive environment conducive for the attainment of Targets 1: growth of 3% to 5% annually; and Target 2: reduce unemployment by one-quarter within 10 years;

2. Promote more socially optimal outturns in key growth enabling sectors thereby enhancing opportunities for growth and improving general societal welfare;

3. Complement national level efforts at addressing issues of destination competitiveness. In doing so it is hoped that these efforts will contribute to an environment that maximally leverage in a sustainable manner the tourism sector for generating output and creating jobs;

4. Increase real output (value added) in agriculture by 48% in ten years. Sustain growth of about 3.0% per annum in fisheries over the 10-year planning horizon;

5. Increase the rate of growth in the manufacturing sector.
Strategy Summary

PILLAR 1- GENERATING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Strategic Objectives

Create a supportive economic environment

**Specific Objective**
Reduce Downside Risk to Growth
Ensure the Health of the Financial System

Ensure the Health of the Financial System

**Intervention**
Attain and maintain in the short run (up to three years) primary balances equivalent to interest commitments on outstanding debt.

Over the medium to long term contain growth in debt stock to at most one percentage point less than GDP growth to attain by 2024 debt to GDP ratios that are at least five (5) percentage points lower than those of 2019.

Assess the capital adequacy of the banking sector in the ECCU.

If and where necessary, devise mechanisms to ensure appropriate adjustments are undertaken.

Establish the ECCU Partial Credit Guarantee for small enterprises.

Develop and implement ‘a doing business’ reform agenda, particularly addressing ease of start-up, issues related to resolving insolvency and administrative related delays in construction.

Review Incentive frameworks across the Economic Union with a view to establish a harmonized /coordinated framework of incentives that are at least the most competitive in the English Speaking Caribbean.

Establish in each Member State seamless (one-stop) processes for business registration, application for incentives etc.

Conduct regular (at least twice annually) labour force surveys to enable calculation of labour productivity.

Establish and/or formalise national tripartite based consultative committees comprising representatives from labour, private employers and government to advise on and advocate for mechanisms for enhancing productivity and for the harmonious movement of wages and prices.

Create Opportunity for Greater Private Sector Investment

**Intervention**
Establish the ECCU Partial Credit Guarantee for small enterprises.

Develop and implement ‘a doing business’ reform agenda, particularly addressing ease of start-up, issues related to resolving insolvency and administrative related delays in construction.

Review Incentive frameworks across the Economic Union with a view to establish a harmonized /coordinated framework of incentives that are at least the most competitive in the English Speaking Caribbean.

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Establish and/or formalise national tripartite based consultative committees comprising representatives from labour, private employers and government to advise on and advocate for mechanisms for enhancing productivity and for the harmonious movement of wages and prices.

Contain Real Wage Increases to be two (2) or more Percentage Points Less than Average National Productivity Growth in the Previous Three (3) Years.
Fully Implement the Economic Union as means of widening and deepening the economic and financial space as well as attaining greater economies of scale and scope

Fully implement the customs union and free circulation provisions of the Treaty as means of achieving more competitive outcomes in the goods market.

Examine legal and other mechanism for the portability of collateral across the Economic Union to facilitate Pan-OECS business activity.

Formulate and/or update policy, regulatory and accreditation frameworks for service providers to allow for freedom of trade in services and greater effective competition among providers in the Economic Union.

Fast-track the implementation of the CARICOM Regional Strategy for Implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement among the OECS-WTO Members

Develop and execute enhanced trade facilitation measures for the importation of raw material, intermediary goods and other resources required to produce sustainably competitive products for the domestic and international market.

Implement Market Intelligence System for identifying and engaging suppliers, shippers and buyers/importers in the region.

Establish a framework for policing and regulating competition (anti-competitive practices) and protect consumers in Member States as well as across the Economic Union.

Establish a dynamic mechanism to negotiate, develop, analyse and implement trade policy and procedures to secure access to new markets and to maintain and enhance access to existing markets.

Analyse and formulate strategies related to domestic regulation and market access in targeted services sectors with a view to strengthening competitiveness as well as establishing new opportunities to attract investment.

Improve and harmonise legislation as well as create mechanisms to enable enforcement to ensure increase protection of intellectual property rights.

Develop and implement a framework for appropriately dealing with technical barriers to export trade and sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

Review existing tax structures within the OECS with a view to determine aspects that may be recalibrated to become more growth enhancing.
Strategy Summary

Strategic Objectives

Promote more socially optimal outturns in key growth enabling sectors thereby enhancing opportunities for growth and improving general societal welfare

Specific Objective

Improve outturns in the Electricity Sector

Intervention

Conduct a technical and economic feasibility study of developing microgrids and an interconnection of electricity grids within the OECS with inclusion of renewable energy.

Conduct a review of existing pricing mechanisms to determine incentive compatibility of these pricing regimes with the objective of employing most cost-effective technologies that will ultimately lead to lower prices to consumers. The accepted recommendations of this study will be considered as part of the strategic framework in this regard.

Improve outturns in ICT

Intervention

Ensure Universal Service.

Improve the affordability of ICT services through strengthening telecommunication regulatory framework to provide a better mechanism to among other things treat with competition related matters.

Create and enabling environment for e-business development

Intervention

Improving the legislative framework for e-Commerce & e-Business by reviewing, updating and enacting the suite of harmonised legislation developed by the E-Government for Regional Integration Project (EGRIP).

Supporting SMEs in developing and implementing e-business strategy as well as provide support in confronting common challenges especially in the area of e-payments.

Complement national level efforts at addressing issues of destination competitiveness

Implement a system of hassle free travel within the OECS Economic Union

Facilitate application of full clearance procedures at visitors’ initial port of entry only.

Establish measures for effective sharing of information and intelligence, and standardize risk management systems with a view to ensuring that border security is not compromised.

Improve Access and Transportation

Simplify and standardise marine clearance procedures throughout the OECS and implement the SailClear system for visiting yachts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Action Plan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve framework for joint marketing and product development</td>
<td>Harmonize customs, immigration procedures and visa policies. Conduct research on factors inhibiting intra-regional travel, with emphasis on the air services needs of the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify, launch and establish collaborative marketing initiatives for niche tourism</td>
<td>Work with Member States to attract international airlines to the OECS region, through a joint approach, including sharing market intelligence and transparency on marketing support and incentives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand Community Participation in tourism</td>
<td>Support liberalisation of regional civil aviation regulations.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Promote Environmental and Cultural Sustainability</td>
<td>Regional cooperation in various areas including head taxes and exploration of inter-island ferry services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop inter-sectoral business linkages</td>
<td>Conduct brand position and destination awareness and perception benchmarking exercise. Design a tourism marketing strategy based on a modular platform aimed at achieving economies of scale while allowing Member States flexibility in participation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assess the competitiveness of the OECS tourism product</td>
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<td>Joint promotion of niche tourism products (e.g. dive, sailing, health &amp; wellness, sports and events)</td>
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<td>Develop a Community-based Tourism Support Framework that can be implemented by Member States.</td>
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<td>Review regulatory and support mechanisms that apply to micro and small businesses in tourism and ancillary sectors and reduce red tape.</td>
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<td>Support the development of an agri-tourism policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage an OECS tourism linkages business networking event (to include creative industries and youth entrepreneurs) which facilitates sharing lessons and good practices.</td>
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Investment and Product Development

Promote Human Resource Development

Increase real output (value added) in agriculture by 48% in ten years. Sustain growth of about 3.0% per annum in fisheries over the 10-year planning horizon.

- Assess the possible introduction of a common tourism product quality scheme (which may be a tourism classification system) across the OECS.

- Implement the OECS Health & Tourism Programme in collaboration with the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA).

- Strengthen the competitiveness of the OECS Tourism Sector through the introduction of Member States to the principles and practices of SMART Tourism Destinations more reliant on information and communication technologies.

- Establishment of the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Tourism which includes areas of specialization in each Member State.

Organise small farmers and fishers for better market participation

- Conduct capacity audit of farmer/fisher organisations and implement recommendations for future agribusiness development.

- Establish farmer group training and exchange visit models.

- Establish farmer association (cooperative) development portfolio in Ministries of Agriculture.

- Provide specialised training of farmers in production planning and agri-business principles to mitigate the effects of seasonality and stability of output and prices.

- Establish demonstration facilities in conjunction with small farmer associations, other stakeholders and interest groups.

- Launch targeted educational campaigns on the use of technology in agriculture

- Secure financing window for farmers seeking to implement new technologies.

- Upgrade and retool extension services to better support technology introduction at the farm level.

- Support/collaborate with R&D agencies to strengthen productivity of farmers through the use of greenhouse technologies, artificial insemination technologies and the usage of climate resistant varieties and encourage wider use of soil fertility innovation.

- Promote the use of small scale water technologies and water management solutions.
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<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reduce seasonal and other types of price volatility</td>
<td>Conduct regular agricultural (ex-ante) supply and demand surveys for select agricultural crops. Establish appropriate channels to disseminate survey findings to farmers associations. Promote mechanisms that allow farmers to maintain production of (highly weather sensitive) crops all year round, among these will be inter alia: (1) small irrigation systems including water harvesting; and (2) greenhouse technologies. Appropriate incentives will be devised for promoting these and others where appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve land tenure</td>
<td>Review the suitability of the existing land tenure framework. Develop a more facilitative framework (legal, institutional and technical) for regularising land tenure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeguard Long term production</td>
<td>Establish appropriate plans and legislative framework for land use at the national level. Develop frameworks for more effective utilization and administration of arable land through the mechanisms such as land banks. Establish enhanced mechanisms to safeguard livelihoods of farmers and fishers. These mechanisms may include among others: (i) agriculture/fisheries insurance; (ii) methods for improved participation in social security systems; (iii) development self-financing investment profiles/handbook for agriculture and fisheries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving production and productivity in fisheries</td>
<td>Restoration of near shore fishing stock to maximize fish landings in the medium term, through: greater monitoring, control and surveillance of marine reserves and marine protected areas; improvement in the capacity to predict, identify and control invasive alien species. Promote investment in deep-sea and off-shore pelagic fishing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leverage opportunities in the tourism sector for increasing agricultural output demand</td>
<td>Conduct agro-tourism market demand study and opportunity analysis to establish basket of commodities and services required by the tourism and hospitality sector and disseminate results of study to farmers. Investigate the requisite supporting mechanisms needed to facilitate greater linkages with the tourism sector. Promote joint regional strategy for agro-tourism trade.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Promote intra-OECS agricultural trade

Design a comprehensive OECS air and sea transport solution that meets the future needs of agriculture.

Identify the needs/demands by intra-OECS consumers, hoteliers, supermarkets through research and development of a database.

Expand extra-regional market opportunities

Enhance legislative framework for agriculture health and food safety through a programme of amending /enacting new legislation.

Upgrade testing facilities and surveillance systems to meet international standards.

Enhance training and support to farmers and agro-processors in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) certification.

Conduct research on new markets, demand for new products by collaboration and participation with international stakeholders (sustained market intelligence system).

Increase the rate of growth in the manufacturing sector

Evaluate the adequacy of the existing export financing facilities.

Evaluate the adequacy of existing arrangements for working capital support for SMEs, especially as it relates to financing support for working capital to assist client firms undertake remedial works necessary for meeting Occupational Health and Safety and HACCP requirements, and other productivity and quality enhancing interventions and investments.

Where necessary and fiscally feasible, boost financing support.

Ensure adequate financing support for exports and working capital needs

Continue to work with manufacturers and industry support organisations to upgrade Occupational Health and Safety (OSH) systems in keeping with requirements nationally as well as international best practices. Effort will be made to secure suitable financing arrangements for smaller establishments to undertake remedial works as identified in OSH audits.

Improve Occupational Health and Safety compliance

Roll out programme focused on development and commissioning of new packaging and labelling for products.

Roll out a programme providing support in the areas of: financial and operations management; product pricing and costing; and e-marketing.

Provide a concentrated programme of support on product development techniques for the furniture and craft sector.

Enhance general business support to SME and Craft sub-sectors

Roll out programme providing support in the areas of: financial and operations management; product pricing and costing; and e-marketing.
Accelerate Programme for HAACP and other certification in the Food and Beverage (F&B) Sector

Position OECS manufactures as high value-high spend products targeted at the growing number of socio-ecological and health conscious consumers

Leverage the OECS economic space as a means of boosting sector exports

Leverage the CSME to boost sector exports

Lay a platform for entry into Global Innovation for Local Market (GILM) Industries

Maintain support to Business Support Organizations (BSOs) for the manufacturing sector in capacity building areas such as administrative, personnel, equipment resources and for activities aimed at strengthening these BSOs to become stronger advocacy agents for their membership.

Instituting tax relief for certification and validation related expenditures for previously uncertified F&B manufacturers.

Establishment of a soft loan facility for certification and validation related expenditures for previously uncertified F&B manufacturers, to allow for capitalisation of such expenses.

Upgrade the level of Skill and Know-how in-keeping with value proposition.

Enhance SMEs access to Market Research.

Develop and Launch an Assurance Label to encapsulate value proposition and brand position.

Launch a sustained “Buy OECS” media campaign highlighting the importance of OECS manufactures to job creation, the development of inter-sectoral linkages and the overall health of the economic system.

Execute a series of intra-OECS tradeshows.

Boost exports in select CSME markets by launching targeted Business to Business (B2B) road shows featuring export ready products. These road shows will be conducted annually for at least the first three (3) years of this strategy and thereafter their success will be reviewed by the Economic Affairs Council (EAC) to determine if they should be continued.

Conduct markets study of select GILM industries to identify possible industries and technologies of strategic focus for the OECS.

Based on market study results develop long-term development plan for these industries.
Key Challenges

While human development is relatively high, the OECS have experienced slippage in ranking in the United Nations’ Human Development Index (HDI). The region continues to be hamstrung by several development challenges, among them are: relatively high rates poverty; increased levels of public insecurity evidenced by rising levels of crime and violence; and apathy among youth in national development processes.

Mortality rates have been falling steadily in the OECS because of reduced deaths from communicable diseases. Death rates from non-communicable diseases (NCD) have however remained steadily high. For some NCD, Diabetes for example, the OECS incidence is typically higher than other comparator regions.

In education Gender disparities in performance are evident at all levels of the school system with declining participation of males at the upper secondary and tertiary levels. Approximately 42% Learners complete secondary schooling with sufficient formal qualifications to proceed to the next level of education or to enter the job market.

Social exclusion and inequities in the education systems are evident. In general, children from lower socio-economic backgrounds attend the lower performing schools and there is a hierarchy of schools at primary and secondary levels.

Policy Context and Constraints

Education is given priority in the OECS. With universal secondary education achieved in the mid 2000s, emphasis has now shifted to: (1) Providing equitable access to educational opportunities at all levels of the system; (2) Improving the quality of education; (3) Creating an education product that is more relevant; and (4) Strengthening governance arrangements within the education system. Reforms in the sector however, are to some extent stymied by the unavailability of additional resources for incremental actions as ongoing expenditure in the sector already amounts to approximately 5% of GDP.

Persons 65 and older currently represents over 7.5% of the total population in the typical OECS State. This is high relative to other Small States and represents an increasing share of the population in some OECS countries. Issues such as: sustainability of social security and national health insurance schemes, as well as, age related diseases and disorders have therefore acquired greater prominence in OECS policy spaces. Youth is also a key priority demographic especially in relation to legislative and policy reform for youths who find themselves in conflict with the law.

The paucity of timely and reliable data is a persistent challenge plaguing planners and policy makers in the social sectors. Another critical policy constraint being the limited fiscal space in most OECS Member States which ultimately limits the extent of additional financial resources available from public sources.

Despite past gains, action is needed to address such challenges as high incidence of NCDs, poverty and sub-optimal outcomes in education.
Figure 2: Key Social Trends and Averages

**Students with 5+ CSEC passes incl. English & Mathematics**

- 2010: 20.00%
- 2012: 22.00%
- 2014: 24.00%

**% of Countries with HDI Below OECS Average**

- 2005: 55.00%
- 2007: 50.00%
- 2010: 45.00%
- 2012: 40.00%
- 2015: 35.00%

**Growth Rate & Incidence of Homicides (Averages for 2000–15)**

- AIMS Other Caribbean SIDS OECS Pacific SIDS Non-SIDS
- Growth rate (%)
- Homicides per 100,000

**Prevalence of Diabetes Among 20–79 year olds**

- OECS
- Small States
- Upper Middle Income

Data: World Bank, OECS  Estimation: OECS Commission
Strategy

**Strategic Objectives**

1. Promote social inclusion in the process of socioeconomic development
2. Promote inclusive and equitable quality education and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
3. Enhance the chances of citizens from OECS Member States having longer, healthier and more productive lives
**Strategic Objectives**

**Promote social inclusion in the process of socioeconomic development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Objective</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve Access to (social) services</td>
<td>Strengthen the systematic production and use of measures of multidimensional poverty and vulnerability in policy design and programming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop an advocacy plan for the more disadvantaged and vulnerable in society. Provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas, and information on issues affecting the social development of citizens.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Establish a Community of Learning, which would serve as a platform for collaboration with Member States and development partners.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Improve the life chances of children, youth and persons living with disabilities through a focus on: Enhancing equitable access to health services; Enhancing equitable access to education services; Increasing access to basic services for the poor and most vulnerable population; Creating a protective policy and legal environment for the excluded, the poor and the vulnerable.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Support the modernisation of social development operating systems, including: legal foundation (youth and social policies are developed and/or updated), assessments (to begin and end social support), monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects, financing, and data management.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Increasing the poverty reduction focus of social safety net policy design and programming, with a focus on: Consolidating cash assistance programmes into a unified scheme; Strengthening the safety net for emergency and disaster situations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expand coverage of measures</td>
<td>Develop strategies for improving access to work opportunities for the poor and vulnerable. Support the development of self-sustaining local and national initiatives for meeting nutrition and health needs of the more vulnerable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhance support mechanisms for micro-enterprise development including expanding opportunities for skills development and entrepreneurial training, especially among youth.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Shaping our Shared Prosperity

Improve Citizens’ Safety and Security

• Continue reform of the Juvenile Justice System to reduce emphasis on incarceration (type) measures while improving the success rate of juvenile interventions.

• Support the development, updating and implementation of policies, legislation and programmes which work in the area of gender-based violence, domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual assault.

• Develop mechanisms to identify those most critically “at-risk” of exhibiting violent and criminal behaviour.

• Develop early intervention mechanism specifically targeted at those “at risk” communities and individuals.

• Invest in the modernization of the Police Force across the region in investigating cybercrimes, vigilance at various ports of entry, DNA testing, crime scene investigations;

• Encourage a strong collaboration between the security forces and judiciary in applying legislation that treats with removing the profit out of crime.

Promote inclusive and equitable quality education and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

• Increase participation in Early Childhood Education Services

• Facilitate programs to work with low performing schools to identify families where children are not taking part in ECE.

• Extend outreach of early learning programmes (Roving Care-givers Programme) to children’s homes.

• Create increased opportunities for access to post-secondary and tertiary education

• Facilitate the expansion of access to online and other digital learning options.

• Facilitate the expansion of part-time / after work programmes for specific demand courses / programmes e.g Health Care / Nursing, Engineering.

• Capitalize on bi-lateral relations to prioritise foreign scholarship programs for aspiring students.

• Tailor home-based learning programs for students with special learning requirements.
Strengthen second chance education programmes

Facilitate the expansion of institutions offering second chance learning.

Engage the private sector to widen acceptance and recognition of National and Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (NVQs and CVQs) as well as Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC) among employers.

Improve leadership in schools

Provide increased opportunities for professional development activities for school leaders.

Strengthen accountability and legal frameworks.

Benchmark standards and remuneration frameworks to international best practice.

Improve instructional delivery including assessment practices

Provide differential approaches that actively engage students in their learning.

Use appropriate ICT in instructional practice to engage learner interest, discovery and inquiry skills.

Develop an evaluations framework measuring both institution and student successes.

Upgrade Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers to established minimum standards of practice that are internationally benchmarked.

Improve teacher quality

Adopt more targeted teacher professional development practices.

Strengthen pre-service training for prospective teachers.

Establish regular and systematic teacher appraisal.

Adopt a systematic approach to classroom observation and support for teachers needing assistance.

Review teacher remuneration frameworks and benchmark globally.

Establish an international mentorship scheme with the world’s best educators.

Review entry requirements for school leavers considering a teaching qualification with a view to attracting the best and brightest.

Improve curriculum content and assessment

Use technology to personalise instruction, provide access to open resources, provide problem-based learning and support alternative and comprehensive assessments like student digital portfolios.

Tailor curriculum to be more culturally appropriate.
Develop a comprehensive skills development strategy

- Establish private-public partnerships to inform demand for future skills.
- Review and develop a competency-based curriculum that meets employer needs and are available to learners on both vocational and academic routes.
- Develop a system of Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) that enables applicants from the workforce to gain credit for their relevant work experience to pursue post-secondary/tertiary certification.

Make education more demand driven

- Establish a steering committee (with private sector participation) to inform education policy.

Adopt and promote skills development at all levels of the education system

- Benchmark global best practice in both vocational and tertiary educational streams.
- Devolve greater decision-making to schools.
- Expand and strengthen school management boards.
- Develop appropriate legal, technical, and regulatory framework to support knowledge management and transfer across the region.
- Pursue the establishment of a regional accreditation body.
- Adopt or adapt as necessary, the CARICOM Regional qualifications framework.

Improve legislative, management and accountability frameworks

- Enhance the chances of citizens from OECS Member States having longer, healthier and more productive lives

- Review the legal and institutional frameworks for higher education
- Review existing finance mechanisms for tertiary and continuing education

- Introduce a HECS (Higher Education Contribution Scheme) where the State pays tuition which is paid back at reduced interest through the national taxation system on the graduate’s earnings.

Enhance the chances of citizens from OECS Member States having longer, healthier and more productive lives

- Encourage Healthy Environments and Health Empowerment
- Review and strengthen Health Emergency Response plans for manmade and natural emergencies/ disasters Outbreak/ Epidemic/ pathogenic Exposure.

- Targeted ‘Healthy lifestyle choice campaign’ involving schools and workplaces
- Develop programme to empower individuals and communities (with emphasis on socially or economically disadvantaged communities, and the aging population) to engage in healthy behaviours (diet, exercise, reduction in the consumption of alcohol and tobacco) and self-management of chronic disease.
Maintain the gains from and continue to develop primary care access

Improving affordable access to secondary and tertiary diagnostic, therapeutic and curative services while maintaining access to primary care

Promote preventative and early intervention methods to reduce death and disability from non-communicable diseases

Develop programme to empower communities to take great control of aspects of environmental health management such as maintenance of green and community spaces, appropriate accommodation for walking, solid waste reduction strategies, vector (especially the Aedes mosquitoes) reduction strategies.

Renew efforts at Create Smoke Free environments (Tobacco, Marijuana, Air Pollution) and promote Safety (Occupational Safety, School Safety).

Ensure that Health in All Policies is promoted in particular that the health implications of social and economic policies are appropriately understood and managed.

Continued emphasis on immunization, maternal and child health as well as free basic health check-up at health centers.

Comprehensively review rehabilitative and palliative care services with view to improving access with an emphasis on the aging population, socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

Explore regional health financing mechanisms and supporting the development of national financing mechanisms to improve access and ensure sustainable social safety nets for access.

Facilitate efficiency improvements and widening of the range of services offered through functional cooperation among national health systems.

Improve access to affordable medications, medical products and technologies through pooled mechanisms. The success of the OECS PPS is recognized along with the need to ensure the mechanism continues to use innovative approaches to meet the priority needs of Member States.

Employ greater use of technology to improve access. This includes the use of telemedicine to reach beyond the borders and ease the barrier of travel between states as well as improving direct patient access to services through web-based solutions.

Promote increased Cancer Screening - cervical cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer.

Reduce chronic disease complication such as amputation, blindness prevention, through promotion of holistic management of diabetes and hypertension.
Ensuring Accessible Information for the Strategic Governance of Health Systems

Promote better utilization of performance indicators for quality assurance.
Promote better utilization health statistics for strategic planning and policy.
Improve inventory and asset management within health system to ensure reduced wastage of Medicines, Medical Products and Medical Technologies.
Further support the efforts Caribbean Health Public Agency (CARPHA) to ensure the use of health surveillance for appropriate and timely response.
Augment capacity at the OECS level for relevant health systems research.

Promoting Long-term Investment for Resilience

Develop relevant human resources for health.
Maintain safe and sustainable health infrastructure for Resilience.
Encourage investment in the OECS Pooled Procurement System.
Encourage investment in technology to improve efficiency, effectiveness and accessibility.
Explore economic opportunities in health including: Public Private Partnerships in health care services; health professional education and in making the OECS region a healthy destination for tourism.
Shaping our Shared Prosperity

Key Challenges

OECS islands have been identified as being among the most vulnerable in the world, and they are considered disaster hotspots due to geographic location, natural features, topography, size and capacity. Key natural hazards include hurricanes, floods, landslides, earthquakes, volcanoes and tsunamis. Ongoing climate change has increased the frequency and severity of some of these hazards. OECS economies are highly reliant on tourism and agriculture – sectors that are based upon, and can put substantial pressure on, natural resources and ecological systems. Despite concerted efforts at the national and regional levels at improving natural resource management, there is growing evidence of degradation of critical and vulnerable ecosystems.

Key longstanding phenomena affecting the environment in the OECS are: poor land use and land management practices; deforestation and changes in forest cover; increases in extreme events that significantly affect or alter the natural environment. Additionally, other vulnerabilities in the region’s natural environment include, inter alia:

- Poor waste management practices and high levels of pollution on land, in waterways and coastal areas.
- Reductions in levels and quality of freshwater.
- Biodiversity losses due to unsustainable natural resource exploitation, including habitat destruction and alteration.
- Decline in the health of critical coastal and marine ecosystems such as coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds and fisheries.

These vulnerabilities are further compounded by both rapid-onset and temporary events, such as storms and flooding, and slow-onset processes including land erosion and changes in the global water cycle; most of these being further exacerbated by global climate change. Further threats include: marine inundation of low-lying areas, coral bleaching, saline intrusion into terrestrial systems, degrading ecosystems, species shifts in terrestrial systems, habitat loss and the introduction of alien invasive species. Although the region has the potential to develop its own renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, geothermal and hydropower, there continues to be a reliance on imported fossil fuels, resulting in significant leakage of financial resources and energy insecurity.

Policy Context and Constraints

A central challenge for environmental management in the OECS States is to ensure levels of environmental quality that maximise opportunities for economic development without compromising the integrity of the environment and its resources for current and future generations. Accordingly, several key themes relating to gaps, in Member States, for environmental management, have emerged:

i. Improving knowledge and modalities for building resilience of natural systems;
ii. Instituting integrated and participatory approaches to reducing environmental vulnerability;
iii. Raising awareness among and enhancing capacity of stakeholders to implement sustainable environmental practices;
iv. Adopting community and ecosystem-based risk reduction strategies;
v. Strengthening policies and institutional reforms for sustainable environmental and natural resources management;

Greater environmental stewardship is needed to preserve critical eco-systems, as well as to manage vulnerability to natural hazards - exacerbated in part by ongoing climate change.
Figure 3: Key Environmental Trends and Averages


Data: World Bank, HURDAT2, Rocky Mountain Institute, Global Footprint Network

Estimation: OECS Commission
vi. Strengthening existing planning, institutional and regulatory frameworks;

vii. Creating positive economic incentives and investment opportunities;

viii. Improving compliance, monitoring and reporting arrangements; and

ix. Collecting environmental data for decision making; and

x. Identifying and promoting new economic activities, especially projecting greater emphasis on the blue, green and circular economy of the OECS, within the context of sustainable ocean governance, sustainable energy, waste management, et al.

Over the years several policies and programme interventions directed at responding to the issues affecting the environment have been initiated. These include:

i. The establishment of enabling policies to strengthen governance structures for environmental management;

ii. Promoting new governance regimes and reinforcing institutional arrangements especially in ocean;

iii. Developing and implementing education and awareness programmes;

iv. Facilitating sustainable and alternative livelihoods options;

v. Promoting the conservation of biodiversity through the establishment of protected area systems and marine managed areas; and

vi. Facilitating community-based adaptation measures.

In addition, a regional Water Sector Model Policy and Act has been developed and an Energy Policy and Sector Analysis was undertaken in the 6 independent Member States.

There remains however a number of outstanding actions, which include, among others: assessment of living and non-living seabed resources within national jurisdictions; analysis and assessment of the status of fish stocks; and establishment of effective monitoring, reporting and enforcement and control of fishing vessels especially as Flag States to address unreported and unregulated fishing.

Also, monitoring of coastal waters and use of marine resources especially in support of tourism is needed. Furthermore, attention needs to be paid to the application of preventative, precautionary and anticipatory approaches to avoid degradation of the marine environment.

The land management policies in the OECS Economic Union are a common national level constraint that jeopardizes efforts towards sustainable development which is resilient to the impacts of climate change. Notwithstanding previous intentions and efforts, the weak institutional capacity and resource framework has limited progress. Hence despite a willingness so to do, capacity to enforce climate change adaptation policies in relation to land management is lacking.

Strategy

The strategy advanced here is developed around seven (7) objectives, namely:

1. Support the enabling environment and means of implementation
2. Advance ocean governance
3. Improve biodiversity and ecosystem management
4. Foster increased use of sustainable energy
5. Promote further climate change and disaster risk management
6. Support greater sustainable use of land and water resources
7. Promote and facilitate proper chemical, waste and pollution management
## PILLAR 3 - SUSTAINABLE USE OF NATURAL ENDOWMENTS

### Strategic Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Objective</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen Technical Capacity</td>
<td>Develop the institutions, skills, infrastructure, technical support, information management, networks and exchanges required to restore and maintain environmental and ecosystem integrity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen Policy, Legal and Institutional Frameworks</td>
<td>Ensure that appropriate legislation, policies, protocols and procedures are in place and operating, to underpin the effective management of the programmatic interventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase Public Consciousness</td>
<td>Ensure appropriate institutional mechanisms for inter-sectoral and inter-agency coordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote Resource Mobilisation &amp; Sustainable Financing</td>
<td>Raise awareness on citizen participation and engagement in environmental management, the maintenance of ecosystem integrity and the mainstreaming of these in sustainable development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote Research &amp; Systematic Observation</td>
<td>In conjunction with Development Partners determine modalities for adequately supporting critical environmental interventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology development and acquisition</td>
<td>Develop mechanisms to ensure data for decision making is properly captured and managed. Facilitate through various means the necessary research for inter alia: ecosystem-based assessments, spatial mapping and planning of terrestrial and marine resources; high quality climate data for climatic modeling, renewable energy options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Knowledge Management</td>
<td>Identify and utilize appropriate technologies, technology adoption and encourage innovation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance ocean governance</td>
<td>Develop mechanisms to capture, distribute, and effectively use the lessons learned and best practices resulting from the implementation of the various programme interventions.</td>
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</table>

| Support Maritime Boundary Delimitation | Member States establish national legal frameworks that give effect to international and regional obligations and reflect an integrated approach to planning and management of marine space. |
| Promote Multiuse ocean spatial and integrated planning | Promote protection, maintenance or restoration of natural and physical features, processes and biological diversity and the ecologically sustainable use of marine resources. |
| Maintain ecosystem integrity | |
Foster Sustainable use of marine resources

Promote the sustainable use of marine resources, taking into account social, economic and environmental needs, is promoted and incorporated in national development policies and planning; and opportunities from existing, under-utilised resources are optimised while new and emerging opportunities for marine industries and marine-related development are identified and encouraged.

Develop a clear marine research strategy that identifies key data requirements for decision making (including monitoring and evaluation) and supports investment for new and emerging opportunities.

Improve biodiversity and ecosystem management

Formulation and Implementation of a Regional Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

Identify and develop a set of national level activities that can maximise economies of scale, mutual learning and sharing of experiences.

Develop regional agreements, policies and management frameworks for biodiversity.

Protecting biodiversity through sustainable livelihoods

Promote the development of environmentally friendly sustainable livelihood activities within local communities in Member States in order to protect biodiversity, create jobs, generate incomes, and create environmentally friendly sustainable livelihoods.

Support implementation of ecosystem-based approaches for enhancing community resilience to natural hazards and climate change impacts.

Promote Access & Benefit Sharing (ABS) Foster Sustainable production and consumption

Develop a regional Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) framework to enhance the capacity of Member States, including the traditional owners of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge to design and implement practical strategies, legislation, and guidelines on ABS; raise awareness of ABS, especially among rural communities in the OECS; conduct field assessments and document traditional knowledge.

Formulate and implement a regional sustainable consumption and production strategy, including, support for eco-friendly technology for sustainable agriculture and manufacturing through appropriate policy measures and economic instruments and incentives.

Facilitate preparation and dissemination of guidelines on tools for sustainable consumption and production, including environmental management tools such as life-cycle assessment (LCA) and environmental management accounting (EMA).

Coordinate provision of appropriate training and technical assistance to civil society to enhance their capacity for promoting initiatives to change consumer behaviour patterns etc. Initiate a strategic definition, agenda and plan of work for an inclusive Green Economy in the sub-region.
Improve Biosafety
Coordinate the development and establishment of national legislative and institutional biosafety frameworks.
Support the development of national biosafety regulations/guidelines and the establishment of national biosafety focal points and national biosafety committees.

Better Management of Invasive Alien Species (IAS)
Provide a regional framework for invasive species management and develop harmonised policies and legislation for Member States; Strengthen OECS participation, including Member States, in regional and international efforts at invasive species management.

Prevent introduction of further IAS into the OECS and wider Caribbean region.
Prevent the establishment of IAS following incursion.
Reduce the impacts of invasive species already present.
Promote Effective IAS knowledge management within OECS.

Improve Ecosystem Accounting and Reporting
Facilitate the mainstreaming of biodiversity into national accounting, assets and capital through economic valuations of key biological resources and ecosystems goods and services.
Facilitate capacity building in ecosystem valuation, green accounting and ecological assessments including risk assessments at the national and regional level.

Foster increased use of sustainable energy

Encourage Geothermal Energy Development
Develop a regional Geothermal strategy. Resource and implement the strategy, including a platform for sharing information between participating Member States.

Develop incentive regime to stimulate investment in renewable and energy-efficient technologies
Develop a framework for harmonised policy, legal and institutional reforms to overcome key institutional barriers.
Develop a framework for model policy framework for clean energy transformation.

Capacity development on the fundamentals of renewable energy and energy efficiency
Develop guidelines no cost/low cost energy management programme.

Encourage Geothermal Energy Development
Develop a regional approach for sustainable energy in the transportations sector
Develop comprehensive roadmap and for transition to electric vehicles.
Build awareness and capacity for electric vehicles.
Promote synergies between transportation and energy policy development in the region.
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Foster Innovation and Resilience for Sustainable Energy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Support resilience for Renewable Energy Technologies in the region with a focus on measures that address the design, installation, financing and risk management (e.g. insurance packages).</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promote further climate change and disaster risk mitigation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Promote the adoption of new and multidisciplinary approaches to sustainable energy development.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Formulate regional Low Carbon Development Strategy, 2030+</strong></td>
<td><strong>Develop strategic sustainable energy interventions that take account of new and emerging opportunities for energy that address, inter alia: gender (particularly women) empowerment, social development, private sector engagement and energy for climate change adaptation.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assist Member States in the design and implementation of effective clean energy policies through adoption of good practices based on international experience.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Climate Finance Capacity, building, education, training &amp; awareness</strong></td>
<td><strong>Leverage experiences around the world and technology advancement to develop a modern utility business model to support clean energy deployment in the OECS.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formulate an OECS Comprehensive Disaster Management Policy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Develop an OECS Policy Framework that could support Member States in participating in international regimes on greenhouse gas emission reductions and enhanced removals in the forest sector.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support resilience for Renewable Energy Technologies in the region with a focus on measures that address the design, installation, financing and risk management (e.g. insurance packages).</strong></td>
<td><strong>Provide an avenue for donor contributions to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) activities in the region.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formulate and implement a policy, strategy and action plan for the mobilisation of financial and other resources to address climate change.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Leverage experiences around the world and technology advancement to develop a modern utility business model to support clean energy deployment in the OECS.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enhanced support for institutional capacity-building, including building up hydrometeorological network training in the development of specialized tools for planning and implementing adaptation activities.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Provide an avenue for donor contributions to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) activities in the region.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>In collaboration with CDEMA, develop, resource and implement a policy focusing on community-based community disaster risk management interventions.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Leverage experiences around the world and technology advancement to develop a modern utility business model to support clean energy deployment in the OECS.</strong></td>
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Support greater sustainable use of land and water resources

- Strengthen land and water sector governance, planning, and administrative systems towards increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change.
- Support the completion and adoption of a regional strategic action plan for climate resilience in the water sector.
- Promote the development of model policies, legislation, institutional arrangements and practices for mainstreaming sustainable land management (SLM) in Member States.
- Strengthen Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Resilience in the OECS through the development and adoption of generic methodologies for national and local area physical development planning.
- Support the development of strategic action plans for mainstreaming the OECS Building Code and Guidelines in Member States.

Promote and Facilitate proper chemical, waste and pollution management

- Develop strategic action plans for waste and chemicals management in the OECS.
- Assess the status of waste and chemicals management in OECS Member States to identify recent and on-going initiatives, gaps and priority areas for regional and national action.
- Build collaborative partnerships with development partners, public and private sector for the implementation of a regional integrated waste and chemical management plan.
- Build capacity at the national and regional levels for improved waste and chemicals management at the agency and community level.
- Facilitate development and strengthening of policy and regulatory frameworks to enable efficient waste and sound chemicals management.
- Identification and review of new technologies for waste conversion to determine feasible options for Member States.
- Promote sound chemicals management in line with international Agreements and standards using the most appropriate techniques and environmental practices.
- Support mainstreaming of sound chemicals management into national development planning.
- Facilitate Development of regional guidelines for reducing liquid and solid waste pollution (including plastics) in the region.
- Support implementation of community-based interventions aimed at reducing sources of pollution using a ridge to reef approach.
The successful implementation of this strategy is based on a suite of assumptions. In summary, the successful implementation hinges on the following:

i. Mobilising necessary resources, within reasonable timeframes to allow sufficient time for programmatic interventions;

ii. The political climate remaining stable and favourable for implementation of policies and actions outlined;

iii. There is sufficient absorptive capacity in national and regional agencies (including OECS Commission and the ECCB) to undertake the strategy proposed here;

iv. Development partners remain keen to assist, technically and otherwise, in the various components of the strategy;

v. Geo-political stability and continued growth in the world economy.

Risk mitigation measures should focus on stakeholder engagement including civil society, private sector and public sector entities to ensure commitment and buy in by stakeholders and adherence to principles of transparency and accountability. The Commission will continue to engage stakeholders throughout the implementation of the OECS Development Strategy (ODS) to ensure optimal utilisation of financial and human resources.

Importantly, several actions necessary to give effect to this strategy have to be undertaken simultaneously within regional and national frameworks primarily for purposes of cost effectiveness and to provide necessary backstopping to national activities. Success will depend on funding availability; resource mobilisation and the sourcing of sustainable financing options will therefore have to be an ongoing activity.

The indicative actions identified in this strategy are in no way exhaustive and will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect changing circumstances.

It is anticipated that lead agencies in Member States that will collaborate in the roll out of the strategy will incorporate relevant actions of this strategy into their own annual work plans and budgets. It is also envisaged that the OECS Commission, in collaboration with counterparts in Member States will prepare annual reports on the status of implementation of the Strategy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Economic Affairs Council as well as the Council of Ministers will maintain political oversight of this strategy. The OECS Commission and the ECCB will jointly be responsible for operational oversight. Systems will be established to collate data on key indicators to determine progress against the desired targets and goals. Further, regular sector analyses will be conducted to allow for adjusting the interventions, as necessary. Other key activities envisaged are as follows:

- Establish and validate national measures and targets with the Member States, NGO and Private Sector stakeholders to ensure ownership and operationalisation of the ODS
- Prepare regular reports outlining progress versus agreed targets
- Support the training of resources (within the OECS Commission and Member States) to build monitoring and evaluation capacity.
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY CLUSTER

Building resilience and supporting growth, productivity, social equity and ecosystem integrity in the OECS

Our Mandate: Assist Member States in the sustainable use of natural resources to improve the livelihoods of our people.

PROGRAMME AREAS:
- Chemicals & Pollution Management
- Disaster Risk Management
- Ocean Governance & Fisheries
- Biodiversity & Ecosystems Management
- Climate Change
- Land & Water
- Sustainable Energy

For more information on our current programmes and projects visit us at: www.oecs.int or email OECS Environmental Sustainability Cluster: escluster@oecs.int
OECS/ELP Early Learners Programme (ELP)

The Early Learners Programme is improving the reading achievement of all learners at the early primary level (Grades k to 3) in six member states of the OECS. Here are some achievements under the ELP.

Over 30,000 students

in the six beneficiary countries will directly benefit from improved reading instruction and learning materials developed or procured under the ELP.

The ELP is working to ensure adequate instructional and practice time to reading in and out of school.

Approx. 2,025 teachers

will benefit from in-service training in the teaching of reading and individualized coaching on instructional practices.

This will enable teachers to conduct early assessment of children at risk of low achievement in reading and to develop appropriate intervention strategies to help improve reading levels of these children.

Nearly 350 OECS primary schools

will receive over $1.7 million in teaching and learning materials

Almost 1,500 lessons

have been observed and 1,345 individual coaching sessions with teachers have been completed by the ELP Coordinators.

Under the ELP, teachers are engaging in best practices in reading instruction.

60 schools

across six member states have benefitted from development grants to implement reading enhancement projects.

Almost 28,000 books

have been provided to date with over 6,000 more books on order.
MEMBERS OF THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN ECONOMIC UNION

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DATA IS IMPORTANT...

- to plan & make decisions
- to monitor & measure success
- to be informed
- to drive development

DEVELOP A DATA HABIT...

- use data to inform decisions
- respond to surveys
- collect, store and share data

For more information on the OECS check out: www.oecs.int

DATA DRIVES DEVELOPMENT...
LET'S BE DATA-SMART TOGETHER!
This document is an abridgment of the OECS Development Strategy (ODS). It outlines key strategies that will be pursued by the Member States of the Eastern Caribbean Economic Union (ECEU) over the ten-year period ending 2028.

The strategies are developed around three mutually reinforcing pillars: **Generating Economic Growth; Promoting Human and Social Wellbeing; Sustainable Use of Natural Endowments.** The ODS complements National Development Strategies and neither replaces nor supersedes them. Member States not participating in the ECEU may selectively participate in the initiatives proposed.