




The Green Economy Barometer 2018

Eastern Caribbean



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Eastern Caribbean

Green Economy Barometer 2018

McHale Andrew, 2018

This barometer is a shortened policy briefing for an international audience, developed from Andrew, M. 2018.
Exploring opportunities for transformation to inclusive, sustainable and resilient in the Eastern Caribbean.
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About the organisations

This report has been produced for the Green Economy Coalition by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI).

CANARI is a highly regarded, regional technical institute with over thirty years experience of research, policy influence and capacity building for participatory natural resource governance in the Caribbean. Established in 1989, CANARI's mission is promoting and facilitating equitable participation and effective collaboration in the management of natural resources critical to development in the Caribbean islands, so that people will have a better quality of life and natural resources will be conserved, through action learning and research, capacity building, communication and fostering partnerships.

CANARI leads the Green Economy Coalition Caribbean hub, an ongoing initiative to accelerate a regional transition to a green economy. For more information, please see www.canari.org.

The Green Economy Coalition (GEC) is the world's largest civil society movement for green and fair economies. Our 50+ members represent poor people, workers, environmental organisations, faith groups and small businesses as well as international institutions. Together, we are inspiring a movement for change from the ground.

For more information, please see greeneconomycoalition.org, or contact **Stuart Worsley**: stuart.worsley@greeneconomycoalition.org

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Introduction

In search of a Caribbean green economy

The **Eastern Caribbean Green Economy Barometer 2018** provides a snapshot of the transition to an inclusive green economy. It is drawn from evidence of policy progress as well as the insights of civil society organisations who are tracking the transition on the ground.

The concept of green economy (GE) is becoming increasingly influential on the way national governments and international institutions design sustainable economic policies.

This report focuses on the varied greening experiences of Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) members, the conception of GE that is beginning to emerge there, and the successes – and failures – of OECS members to implement GE-informed policies. It is a shortened

policy briefing for an international audience, developed from Andrew, M. 2018, *Exploring opportunities for transformation to inclusive, sustainable and resilient in the Eastern Caribbean*. Technical Report No. 404. Port of Spain: CANARI.

The Eastern Caribbean region

This report is focused on countries belonging to the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, OECS.

Founded in 1981, the OECS is formed of ten members: the independent countries of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines; as well as the overseas territories of Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Martinique and Montserrat.

As of 2016, OECS members have a total population of around 950,000, and a combined GDP of \$19.7 billion. It should be noted that there is wide variation in wealth between members, with Martinique alone making up well over half of the total GDP figure, but Anguilla's share standing at less than 0.5% of the total.

“OECS members have a total population of around 950,000, and a combined GDP of \$19.7 billion.”

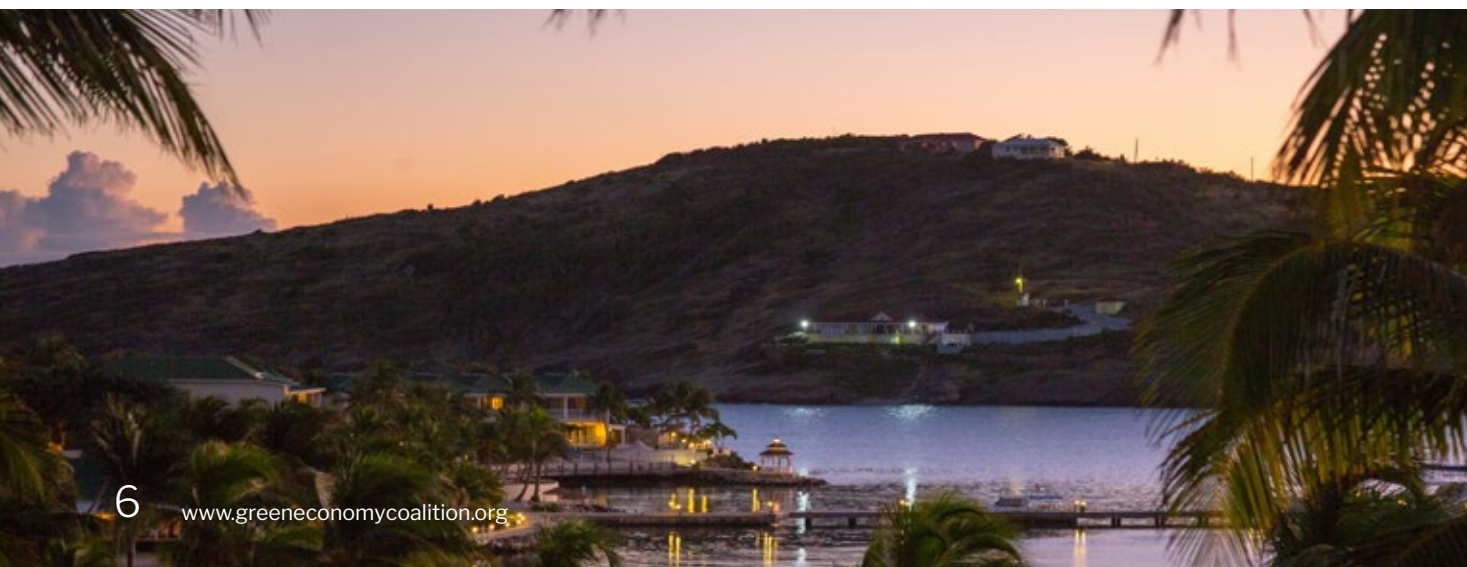


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“Rising sea levels, increasingly frequent and severe tropical storms, and deteriorating ocean ecosystems are all predicted to have a major impact on the Eastern Caribbean.”

As a group of small islands situated in the Lesser Antilles, the countries and territories in the OECS are in many ways at the frontlines of climate change. Rising sea levels, increasingly frequent and severe tropical storms, and deteriorating ecosystems are all predicted to have a major impact on the economies and societies of the Eastern Caribbean. The region also faces unique sociocultural challenges around inequality.



Source: OECS / Wikipedia

The green economy concept

One starting point for understanding the concept of GE is the definition provided by United Nations Environment (UNE), which defines a green economy as “one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. In its simplest expression, a green economy can be thought of as one which is low carbon, resource-use efficient and socially inclusive.”

The Green Economy Coalition (GEC), the world's largest movement for fair and green economies, defines green economy as one which provides “prosperity for all within one planet limits”, and offers five thematic areas for policy interventions towards that end:

- 1. Measurement and Governance** – re-wiring the institutions of economics and government to better measure, understand, and act upon the opportunities and risks of the future.
- 2. Sustainable Finance** – diversifying capital markets for productive investment rather than high-risk speculation; bringing environmental and social incentives into finance.
- 3. Green and Inclusive Sectors** – championing the new industrial revolution in food, energy, transport and infrastructure – with a focus on small & medium green enterprises.
- 4. Is Green Fair?** – ensuring the transition is just and fair for poor people, informal workers and marginalised communities.
- 5. Economics for Nature** – helping companies and governments understand our dependence on healthy natural ecosystems and value our environment beyond mere commodification.

These five themes are a useful classification scheme for comparing and contrasting different approaches to green economy, and have informed the structure of this barometer.

“A green economy is one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. It is low carbon, resource-use efficient and socially inclusive.”



“CANARI’s work has stressed the importance of forging close connections between Caribbean GE practices and blue economy approaches related to use of coastal and marine resources in key sectors and for local livelihoods.

Green economy in the Caribbean

However, it is important to recognise that green economies must be appropriate and adaptive to local economic structures, social norms, and environmental conditions.

In other words, a green economy for Kazakhstan would look and operate very differently than a green economy for the Caribbean, and we must adapt our definitions and understanding of what GE is based on local context.

In this regard, the work of the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) has been vital in generating knowledge and understanding on how GE operates in a Caribbean context.

A CANARI-organised regional Caribbean dialogue in 2011 and 2012 asserted that the vision and key characteristics of a Caribbean GE is one that seeks “long-term prosperity through equitable distribution of economic benefits and effective management of ecological resources and is economically viable and resilient, self-directed, self-reliant, and pro-poor. Important foundations are a sense of shared Caribbean identity and commitment to pan-Caribbean cooperation, human security, good governance, a strong information base for decision-making, and a well-educated and involved citizenry.”

In addition, CANARI’s work has stressed the importance of forging close connections between Caribbean GE practices and blue economy approaches related to use

of coastal and marine resources in key sectors and for local livelihoods.

Indeed, a GE is simply a novel, enlightened economic and social development pathway that is based on environmentally friendly values and strategies that support sustainable livelihood activities and socio-economic development at community, countrywide and regional levels.

The GE concept can thus be succinctly captured as an economy that (i) embraces a “triple bottom line” approach, which is characterised by economic viability/economic wellbeing, social inclusion/equity and environmental sustainability; (ii) pursues a climate resilient, low carbon development; and (iii) is managed within a framework of good economic and political governance.



Photo credit: Cedric Frixon / Unsplash



Assessing green economy in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States

Building on the emerging GE concept described above, the assessment framework used in this briefing is based on the five themes framework of the GE prescribed by the GEC and used by their partners around the world to monitor national activities and achievements.

These themes are supplemented by short country level overviews covering the priority given to GE initiatives by each OECS country or territory, which can be found in the appendix.

The findings below are based on questionnaire responses by OECS government officials and civil society, consultation with the OECS Commission, the input of stakeholders attending two webinars, and the author’s own desk research. In combination, these data aim to provide sufficient information to allow a reasonable assessment of GE transition progress in the sub-region.

Overall, the status of the transition to a truly green and fair green economy in the Eastern Caribbean can be classified as below average.

The transition to a GE is indeed acknowledged as an issue by almost all OECS member governments



“Overall, the status of the transition to a truly green and fair green economy in the Eastern Caribbean can be classified as below average.

and a handful of public and private stakeholders. However, in almost every case, the definitions of GE used are narrow, with almost no consideration of equity and inclusion. Some environmental limits are being considered by governments for adoption as policy, but there are still very few legislative proposals for policies in national GE priority sectors and the role of small & medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and informal

actors is generally not factored into the official approaches. There is also a severely limited embrace of natural capital valuation by public and private actors, which has resulted in continuing poor protection for ecosystem health and biophysical assets.

The overall situation is nevertheless a work in progress, and there are several encouraging signs.

Photo credit: Cedric Frison / Unsplash



consonant with achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and would set the OECS members firmly along the GE implementation path. What is quite clear, however, is that those commendable principles and detailed sustainable development commitments, albeit captured in several national documents, plans and written strategies, have not yet been fully integrated into implemented policy and action at the national level.

This lack of concrete commitment to specific policies is mirrored by a relative dearth of specific studies, research and assessments on the state of GE and its potential within OECS members. This does not necessarily signal a lack of commitment or interest but may be a good indication of the volume of work still to be undertaken in the sub-region's path towards implementation.

Of course, given the limited administrative and technical capacity along with a paucity of financial resources, much of the process would entail attracting the required assistance to embark on this daunting but much-needed work.

However, a key concern is whether countries could obtain the kind of support to allow them to embark on their own chosen pathways towards GE, given current fiscal constraints. While the private sector is driving some GE initiatives, the public sector needs to facilitate through, for instance, the provision of effective fiscal incentives. A conducive policy framework is critical to drive private sector initiatives if the transition to GE is to gather significant momentum.

“Achieving a vision of sustainable development requires a concerted effort on the part of all the governments of the Member States.

For instance, at the sub-regional level, the St. George's Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability (SGD) was developed through extensive consultation with key stakeholders and signed/ ratified by all OECS members states and territories in 2001.

It was further revised in 2006 and lists twenty-one key principles that support the key tenets of GE transitioning including inclusion, legislative reforms and setting environmental limits. However, neither the SGD principles nor a GE development plan have yet been factored into national development policies.

The overall aim of the SGD is to, “... foster equitable and sustainable improvement in the quality of life in the OECS region”. The SGD goes to state that, “... Member States of the

OECS share a vision of development that is based on the principles of sustainability, stakeholder participation, equity and justice; that protects and enhances livelihoods; that reduces vulnerability to risks, stresses and shocks; that brings people out of poverty; and that results in improvement in the quality of life for all.”

Achieving such a vision of sustainable development requires a concerted effort on the part of all the governments of the OECS members, in partnership with individuals, civil society, the private sector, and regional and international institutions, to improve environmental management and protect the region's precious natural resource base.

Certainly, attainment of most of those objectives would be

Valuing nature

To what extent do key domestic/ sub-regional public and private sector stakeholders embrace the importance of natural capital approaches for the GE transition and represent this in their public positioning and some activities?

This review has found that on average, less than three major public and private national stakeholders in each OECS member formally recognise natural capital approaches as pertinent to the GE transition and publicly promote this approach.

No known natural capital policies valuing ecological systems and biodiversity have been proposed and there appears to be limited opportunities for civil society and stakeholder groups to contribute towards the process.

In that context, formal GE implementation is unlikely to succeed, and even if it does, it is likely to exclude key social groups and thus would receive very limited support from government, private sector and civil society groups. The score here is therefore poor.

In terms of measurement, there is a solitary example of the Central Statistics Office in Saint Lucia that has begun collecting environmental statistics, which is a start, but there is not a widespread, concerted move



Photo credit: Johnny Chen / Unsplash

“There is no widespread, concerted move towards valuing ecological assets or embracing the importance of natural capital approaches

towards valuing ecological assets or embracing the importance of natural capital approaches for GE transition.

As indicated in the appendix to the study's TOR, “...to date, the efforts towards green economy development in the Caribbean have been largely confined to national efforts but have not significantly impacted economic growth.”

Given the continued global call to carve out a new economic trajectory that provides new job opportunities and creates a higher standard of living whilst providing a solid natural resource base for future generations, strong consideration must be given to a greater attempt towards transforming to inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic development in the OECS.

Green must be fair



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What is the level of understanding of key public and private national/sub-regional stakeholders of the importance of an inclusive and fair GE transition?

The need for a socially inclusive approach is certainly not an ostensible aspect of the nascent GE transitioning process in the sub-region. Neither the questionnaire responses received, nor desk research and consultations revealed an acknowledgement of the importance of attempting an inclusive and fair GE transition, nor any determined efforts or public stances that promote greater equality and access to green jobs. In accordance with the GE assessment framework, this indicator of GE transitioning in the OECS sub-region therefore must receive a poor grade.

This said, there are two points of relative optimism and positive intent on

inclusion and fairness from Antigua and Barbuda, and St. Kitts & Nevis (see Appendix for further details).

In its 2015 Medium-Term Development Strategy (MTDS) document, Antigua and Barbuda commits to initiate "... a harmonious, prosperous and modern Antigua and Barbuda founded on the principles of sustainability and inclusive growth; where equality of opportunity, peace, and justice prevail for all citizens and residents." It further specifies 'Enhanced Social Cohesion' as one of four Sustainable Development Dimensions (SDDs) that form the overarching goal of the strategy - alongside wealth

“There is little acknowledgement of the importance of attempting an inclusive and fair GE transition, nor any determined efforts or public stances that promote greater equality.

generation, environmental/cultural protection, and citizen security.

For St. Kitts and Nevis, the former Prime Minister was quoted during the 2012 Rio+20 conference in Brazil recognising important social challenges involved to the transition to a green economy:

"We all agree that the development of a low carbon development pathway is essential for nations large and small, as we all strive to eradicate poverty, increase employment, enhance food security, manage freshwater resources, and increase energy efficiency on behalf of our respective peoples... the transition to a green economy will, however, produce its own challenges, and so appropriate allowances will also have to be made to small nations that do decide to venture down this path."

Whether these warm words un support of a fair GE can be made concrete in action and policy remains to be seen. Development of an inclusive, people-centred GE model that is meaningful for the Caribbean is arguably the area where OECS countries and territories still have most progress to make.

Greening economic sectors

Have policies in support of greening in priority GE sectors been proposed, developed and implemented?

A green economy is not just about wind turbines or solar farms. It is the next industrial revolution. Homes will be powered by new energy systems; food will be produced in alternative ways; buildings will be made from different materials. Greening priority sectors such as energy, transport, construction and manufacturing will require new legislation, financing, and private sector innovation.

In the OECS, progress towards greening priority sectors remains uneven. Most sector 'greening' proposals reference renewable energy, green tourism and biological diversity use, particularly in agriculture and manufacturing, but there is little evidence of a determined green policy push.

Energy

Several renewable energy investments have been implemented over the past few years in the OECS sub-region and many others are ongoing or planned. However, there is still a disproportionate reliance on traditional fossil fuel based energy generation and distribution.

Some OECS member countries, such as Dominica and Antigua and Barbu-



“Progress towards greening priority sectors remains uneven, and there is little evidence of a determined green policy push.

da, have already indicated a desire to be more than 50% powered by renewable energy in the next 5-10 years, while Saint Lucia has committed to a 35% threshold by 2020.

St. Kitts and Nevis is also focused on developing its geothermal energy to industrial scale. There should therefore be no problem in the sub-region stepping up its efforts to be a leading renewable energy region.

While these commitments in themselves are laudable, new policy instruments will be required to meet them. The provision of more targeted fiscal incentives for spurring new investments in green energy technology, distributed energy delivery, and low-carbon efficient production could all have a considerable impact on the ability of the region to power its green economy transition with clean energy.



“Foreign investment is vital to small, relatively resource-poor island states, but such investment must be circumscribed by clear developmental guidelines.



Land

Nowhere is there greater evidence of the deleterious effects of unplanned developments on the environment of OECS members than on the land, which includes both terrestrial and marine spaces. The land involves all a country's natural attributes including its natural environment, physical beauty, and the patrimony of its people, particularly the issue of land ownership.

There is something to be said for the need to attract high levels of foreign investment to maintain and enhance existing standards of living. However, there must be a balance between that need and the imperative of protecting the patrimony of OECS nationals. While one fully appreciates the importance of foreign investment to small, relatively resource-poor island states, such investment must

be circumscribed by clear developmental guidelines that protect the sub-region's social and ecological integrity.

The countries must be properly zoned and appropriate development planning guidelines prescribed and strictly enforced for safeguarding the patrimony and sustainable livelihoods of OECS nationals while allowing for reasonable investments by responsible foreign investors.

There is a well acknowledged need to significantly upgrade the sub-region's level of infrastructure to: (1) optimise spatial planning and utilisation; (2) maximise the countries'

natural beauty and mostly pristine environment while facilitating the populace's easy access to modern roads, telecommunications, public utilities and basic social and economic services; (3) minimise the rural/urban divide; (4) lower the general cost of doing business; (5) ensure all investments are circumscribed by clear developmental guidelines that protect the natural heritage as well as the respective countries' social and ecological integrity; and (6) facilitate a more orderly land zoning and utilisation process.

Waste Management

Waste management is a particular challenge in the small countries and territories of the OECS and requires a quantum leap in effort and strategies to reverse some of the environmental degradation and aesthetic decline that has been witnessed over recent years. This could start simply by introducing practices and legislation to separate household garbage into biodegradable and non-biodegradable receptacles. Plastics can then be cleaned and recycled for use as water bottles, liquid soap containers, plant holders etc.

One of the most pernicious issues in small countries like those of the OECS is the poor disposal of old vehicles, tyres and non-biodegradable waste. This should be a priority policy issue at both the domestic and sub-regional levels. New waste disposal policies that separate plastics, bottles, chemicals/ hazardous waste and metal should be instituted

“Waste management is a particular challenge, and requires a quantum leap in effort and strategy to reverse recent environmental degradation and aesthetic decline.



and even policies on importation of vehicles and incentives for scrap metal and new waste management and recycling enterprises should be promoted.

Of course, this would be ideally supported by: (1) an effective legislative and enforcement framework for garbage disposal and littering; (2) appropriate public education and awareness programmes; (3) annual cleanest community competitions organised by the Ministries responsible for the environment or for social transformation and generously sponsored by the corporate sector; and (4) an annual environmental award for the OECS corporate sector.

Tourism

There are already many examples of tourism establishments that have utilised greening initiatives such as Green Globe or Earth Check certification to streamline their operations towards both increased ecological responsibility and lower costs.

There is the added incentive of greater marketability to the higher echelons of the market, as the higher spending visitor is often also environmentally conscious. Responsible tourism is thus a “no brainer” for OECS members who do not have the capacity for mass market tourism but could present a much more plausible

proposition to the more discerning segment of the market.

Increasingly, consumers demonstrate a preference for green products whether in food, forestry or tourism. They demand rigorous environmental and social standards in the product and in its production, particularly where certified green standards are the norm. The OECS tourism focus should therefore shift swiftly to that reality and follow best practices in greening the sector. It can build on an already developed base of the OECS Green Tourism Programme enabling environment, which includes the OECS Common Tourism Policy, the Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework, national policies and plans on energy, water, waste and tourism.

“The opportunities for greening the sector could potentially yield huge financial, economic, health and food security dividends.

Agriculture

It is highly unlikely for the Caribbean region, and even more so the OECS, to implement a GE without green agriculture. The OECS continues to have an annual food import bill of

more than US\$500 million while the terms of trade continue to move in favour of the major importer of Caribbean foodstuffs - the USA.

Indeed, over the past 60+ years the sub region has exported what it grows at steeply declining prices whilst importing food products at steadily increasing prices.

This is, of course, not a sustainable approach to any business but seems even more injudicious when one considers the growing clamour about the adverse health effects of many of those imports. The real issue with agriculture's viability in the OECS may not be one of production but rather about marketing and distribution mechanisms. It is encouraging that the OECS Council of Ministers of Agriculture has already acknowledged the problem and is committed to tackling the issue head on.

Nevertheless, the opportunities for greening the sector are not only realistic and manageable but could potentially yield huge financial, economic, health and food security dividends. Opportunities for agricultural investment include organic products, agro-tourism attractions, value added products and health and wellness related products including nutraceuticals and indigenous pharmaceuticals.



Photo: Nicole Leotaud



Reforming Finance

Photo: Ian D. Keating



What is the scope of supportive financial systems, public investments and fiscal policies for GE implementation?

Increasing amounts of private and institutional financing is available for green projects in the OECS, and public investment initiatives are also growing rapidly. However, the overall green finance landscape remains disjointed, with low public awareness and significant gaps in coverage.

In 2012, the OECS Commission hosted a Green Growth Investment Forum in Saint Lucia, which proffered some key proposals including the development of an OECS Green Economy Strategy and Action Plan,

“There is not a structured fiscal policy that supports the transition to a GE in any of the OECS countries.

the integration of GE into private sector initiatives and the facilitation of green investments.

While there appears to have been little structured GE-related financial activity since then, the OECS Commission has been involved in supporting various members in their sustainable development activities where requested.

Some countries (including Dominica, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines) provide fiscal concessions for renewable energy technology and energy efficient fittings, but there is not a structured fiscal policy that supports the transition to a GE in any of the OECS countries.

“The overall green finance landscape remains disjointed, with low public awareness and significant gaps in coverage.



“The main principles that guide microenterprise development as well as the key tenets of green growth, green enterprises and sustainable development must be integrated into all lending policies and programs.

One example of a private ‘green finance’ initiative in the Eastern Caribbean is the Bank of Nova Scotia’s Green Energy Loan Programme that was offered for green energy development or retrofitting in conjunction with tax breaks from participating Governments. The initiative targeted individuals and small businesses and offered an unsecured, low interest loan up to US\$ 5,500 (EC\$15,000). Unfortunately, some countries discontinued those tax breaks after a few years, leading to the end of the programme.

In Dominica, the World Bank financed Disaster Vulnerability Reduction Project is an example of a social impact investment programme that directs financial flows towards people and nature. The extent to which this programme is implemented in other

OECS jurisdictions is unclear, but in the aftermath of major Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, there was a significant leap in the number of such programmes being considered.

Additionally, the OECS Commission in October 2017 signed a US \$6.3 million grant agreement for the Caribbean Regional Oceanscape Project (CROP), which is geared towards helping Eastern Caribbean countries to preserve and strengthen resilience of coastal and marine resources.

CROP will also support the implementation of the OECS’ Eastern Caribbean Regional Ocean Policy (ECROP), “a global best practice in regional co-operation for transitioning to a sustainable ocean economy (a blue economy).” CROP funding would be used for developing coastal and marine spatial plans and national ocean policies and strategies through active citizen engagement; ocean education in conjunction with the private sector; mapping ocean assets and enhancing OECS ocean data coverage and access through collaborative public-private platforms.

Most of the other green financing initiatives within the sub-region are externally generated and include: the Climate Adaptation Financing Facility (CAFF) offered through domestic financial institutions by the World Bank; the Green Climate

“There remains a need for enhanced measures to be put in place to allow smaller island developing states like those in the OECS to access funding.

Photo: Daniel Hjarlmarrrs / Unsplash





Fund that, like the CAFF, prioritises GE investments; and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Of course, while these financial mechanisms exist, there remains a need for enhanced measures to be put in place to allow smaller island developing states like those in the OECS to access funding.

Similarly, specific actions are required to ensure that the main principles that guide microenterprise development as well as the key tenets of green growth, green enterprises and sustainable development are integrated into all lending policies and programs through microfinance and other financial institutions that serve those more vulnerable small countries such as those in the sub-region.

“Ministries of Finance and Planning and other important government-level economic and financial institutions are largely absent from the GE transition dialogue.

What remains an issue generally in the sub-region is the absence of Ministries of Finance and Planning and other important government-level economic and financial institutions in the GE transition dialogue.

Indeed, even at the OECS decision-making level, most of the discussions and consultations have been confined to environmental

authorities and institutions. This is a major concern, as the success of any GE transition demands that fundamental decisions need to be made to favour sustainable use of natural capital in government and fiscal decisions.

Although economic and financial agencies and Ministries have been tangentially involved in regional and global discussions on international green growth and climate finance initiatives, these do not yet focus on inclusive GE outcomes, on mainstreaming GE into the national economic planning process or on the wider enabling economic environment. This, of course, leaves many aspects of the economic status quo unchanged.



Measuring what matters

Is a GE strategy under consideration or a GE National/ Sub-regional Plan being considered, proposed or implemented by Governments?

While the situation varies across countries and territories, the region as a whole scores poorly on measurement and governance overall.

GE national plans, albeit not always so termed, are being considered by only a few OECS member Governments and not generally with any ostensible links to national implementation of the SDGs and accompanying indicator frameworks.

Although there is no evidence of outright opposition, there are few public and private national stakeholders that are actively supportive of GE national plans, SDG implementation, beyond GDP priorities or a 'well-being agenda'.

“There is an absence of clear proposals for new governance institutions to enable and manage a GE transition.



Photo: Wayne Lee Sing / Unsplash

There is also an absence of clear proposals for new governance institutions to enable and manage a GE transition. The GE concept inherently requires broadening economic metrics to show the true costs/benefits of greening.

A review of available documents from OECS members along with the responses to the questionnaire developed specifically for this study reveals some commitment to sustainable development, if not a GE per se.

Nevertheless, the existence of several GE scoping studies and GE-related activities in the sub-region offers some hope for the GE transition process.



Although some existing comprehensive development frameworks such as national development plans do recognise the need for sustainable development approaches, these are not yet detailed or comprehensive enough to be capable of delivering successful GE outcomes.

Furthermore, these existing development plans make little reference to equity, non-carbon ecological limits, and/or natural resources.

Still some GE scoping studies and other activities have been conducted at the sub-regional and national levels, including the following:

- GE scoping studies in Anguilla (CANARI 2013), the BVI

“ The existence of several GE scoping studies and GE-related activities in the sub-region offers some hope for the GE transition process.

(CANARI 2012), and Saint Lucia (UNEP 2016). These identified some of the issues, challenges and main sectors for transitioning to a GE.

- Blue Economy Master Plan and a Blue Economy Investment Conference in Grenada (2016, Updated in January 2018).
- National Green Economy Committee consultation and meetings in Saint Lucia (2011 and 2014-2016).
- A Caribbean-wide (all Caribbean Development Bank borrowing

member countries inclusive of its OECS members) study to explore renewable energy as a pathway to a green economy (CDB 2016).

- Regional dialogue and publications on GE led by the Caribbean Green Economy Action Learning Group.
- CANARI support for SMEs promoting sustainable use of natural resources (such as ecotourism, craft, sustainable agriculture).



Conclusion

Building blocks for Caribbean green economy

The traditional approach of a one-dimensional focus on development through a narrow profit or GDP only “bottom line” has not worked for the OECS. This is the most salient lesson of the recent international economic crisis.

What we do not yet know is precisely how to spur governments and key development partners within the public and private sectors, civil society and regional/ international institutions to steadfastly embrace that still relatively untested triple bottom line approach to greening the economies of the sub-region and embarking on a truly sustainable, people-centred, climate resilient, low carbon, ecologically friendly development path.

While there is substantial interest and indications of commitment to greening the sub-region, or at the very least to a sustainable development approach, there is little evidence of real economic transformation or mainstreaming of the GE concept.

Conducting more detailed research through action learning and sharing of best practices could possibly



Photo credit: Simon Shim / Unsplash

provide a sound basis for more effective and successful action towards the goal of achieving a truly GE in the sub-region.

Albeit, action learning, research and the political directorate's

expressions of commitment to a GE approach has not thus far resulted in mainstreaming of the GE ideas and approaches, there are many “green shoots” of initiatives and disjointed programmes that can be better coordinated to achieve the required

“ There are many “green shoots” of initiatives and disjointed programmes that can be better coordinated to achieve the required mainstreaming of GE initiatives, policies and practices.



A Caribbean response cannot be simply a reaction to external conditions – the new economy must be based on the region’s innate attributes, indigenous talents and specific contexts.



Photo: Natalie Boodram

mainstreaming of GE initiatives, policies and practices.

The imperative for meaningful, sustainable growth and transformation requires a quantum leap in visioning, administration and implementation modalities in the sub-region for successful transition from the current “brown” economy to the new GE.

There is an urgent imperative to do it efficiently and simply if one expects this new way to be widely and popularly embraced. There are action learning opportunities within enterprises, within countries and within communities that can inspire others towards success.

A Caribbean response cannot be simply a reaction to externally



The imperative for meaningful, sustainable growth and transformation requires a quantum leap in vision, administration and implementation for the successful transition from the current “brown” economy to the new GE.

imposed concepts or models – the new economy needs to be based on the region’s reality, innate attributes, indigenous talents and specific conditions.

Development of a Green Economy Strategy and Action Plan for the sub-region will help to define key principles, objectives, policy needs, pathways and capacity needs for transformation that Member States can pursue with development partners based on their own unique contexts or collectively for the region.

There is already consensus that a new approach is needed to redress the creeping environmental degradation, general economic and social malaise in the OECS.



The current situation demands a rededication of efforts, strategies and plans towards a new way of economic development.

The GE agenda is still very much driven by external agencies such as UN Environment and the World Bank, but it appears that while OECS member countries may be willing to explore application of the key GE principles they may not necessarily have access to the required financial and technical support that would give them the flexibility to choose their own approaches.

Green or sustainable production and consumption should be the pathway to sustainable living and it is opportune, given the destructive effects of recent hurricanes, that the sub-region follow a new, climate



The current challenging economic and social situation in the OECS could be an occasion to usher in a fresh commitment to building a brighter future for the region, its members and the people who live there.

resilient development path, which could be termed the “new economy”.

Too often brilliant ideas and sensible development approaches, even when formally accepted, falter on the platform of implementation. It could reflect general inertia, systemic anti-change biases, or simply a sense of being overwhelmed.

The current situation demands a rededication of efforts, strategies and plans towards that new way of economic development, whatever it is eventually called.

However, it cannot be disputed that the main tenets of a GE are all desirable objectives of the region.

Partnerships for effective implementation across the broad spectrum of governments, domestic, regional and international institutions, civil society and the private sector are critical to success of the new way given the need for policy coherence, pooling of strengths/ resources and effective, sustainable development supporting implementation modalities.

Once a programme of policies for the new economy is agreed, it requires nothing less than an unconditional commitment to genuine sub-regional and national development interests.

Each institution, stakeholder or government must pay on demand

its part of sacrifice if the figure of a strong, vibrant, climate resilient, pro-poor, green growth propelled, well governed, competitive, socially inclusive economy is to take shape.

The current challenging economic and social situation in the OECS could be another opportunity to point fingers, whine incessantly and lay blame for mistakes past and current. Or it could be a veritable watershed – an occasion to usher in a new approach to problem solving, a fresh commitment to building a brighter future for the region, its member countries and territories, and the people who live there.



Photo credit: Earth / Unsplash

Appendix

Individual country profiles

At the country level the situation can be summarised as follows:

Anguilla

CANARI conducted a GE scoping study in Anguilla in 2013, which concluded that: (a) There is an extensive body of knowledge available on natural resource management in Anguilla. However, the data is strewn over multiple scientific studies, consultant reports, regional reports and approved and draft legislation, policies and plans. This makes it extremely difficult to use this information effectively for decision-making. (b) The framework for natural resource management is made up of a range of policy documents and laws and regulations that have been developed in the absence of an approved integrated approach to environmental management.

Antigua & Barbuda

A national sustainable land use framework was developed and approved by Cabinet in 2012, outlining a sustainable spatial development strategy for the country. This project will guide development of a local area sustainable urban areas plan to transition Antigua and Barbuda's urban areas into low-carbon, resilient sustainable communities using sustainable procurement

practices. Additionally, Antigua and Barbuda has, in its 2015 Medium-Term Development Strategy (MTDS) document, committed to initiate actions towards "... a harmonious, prosperous and modern Antigua and Barbuda founded on the principles of sustainability and inclusive growth; where equality of opportunity, peace, and justice prevail for all citizens and residents." It goes on to state that, "The overarching goal (of the MTDS) will be attained on the basis of the following four Sustainable Development Dimensions:

1. Optimal Generation of National Wealth;
2. Enhanced Social Cohesion;
3. Improved Health of the Natural Environment and Sustained Historical and Cultural Assets; and
4. Enhanced Citizen Security.

British Virgin Islands

A similar GE scoping study to Anguilla's was undertaken by CANARI for the BVI in 2012. The overall conclusion of that study was that, "The state of knowledge on biodiversity, management issues, management approaches and livelihood aspects seem to be fairly good among islanders. Residents of the BVI have been involved in a few research initiatives, such as the Island Resources Foundation's drafting of environmental profiles;

participatory planning initiatives, such as the recent formulation of the Climate Change Policy; drafting of the Environmental Management and Conservation of Biodiversity Bill, 2006; and the dated National Integrated Development Plan 1999-2003. Additionally, the popularity of the Beef Island development and Cane Garden Bay issues have contributed to a general sound understanding of environmental issues and management approaches. There is also a "Green Pledge Program" started in 2011/2012 where organisations are invited to pledge to green their operations. In the first year more than 50 organisations, mostly the private sector, signed up. For example, in the tourism sector yachts are interested in using solar and reducing use of plastics. In recovery efforts post-Irma, the BVI is considering how it can rebuild greener overall and not "just back to the same old same."

Dominica

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica in 2009 committed to a Low-Carbon Climate-Resilient Development Strategy, which was designed to support the country's transition to a GE and to mitigate its extreme vulnerability to natural disasters. However, there wasn't any other available documentation on GE in Dominica other than brief online media reports

including a pledge to transform Dominica into the region's first GE. Interestingly, in the aftermath of the recent devastating effects of Hurricane Maria the current Prime Minister has made a similar pledge to transform Dominica into the world's first climate resilient nation.

Grenada

Following a "Blue Growth" investment conference in 2016, the Government of Grenada issued a Blue Growth Coastal Master Plan that proposes to declare certain areas as marine protected areas and earmarks several major tourism developments. The plan however has not involved the expected wider public consultation although it has been further updated in 2018 with an annotated, detailed implementation schematic.

Martinique

There is a general sense that there are initiatives that can provide models with lessons for OECS member states and there is interest in collaboration. Initiatives in waste management/ recycling, energy, biodiversity, and most critically vehicle emissions (EU standards). The country is also working on a financial framework for cooperation between the Government and the private sector; this framework is needed to support greening of sectors and greening the economy in general.

Montserrat

Thus far, no documentation on GE in Montserrat has been identified.

St. Kitts & Nevis

Similarly, no applicable documentation on St. Kitts and Nevis was available although a 2012 online media report quotes the former Prime Minister to have stated at the Rio+20 conference in Brazil that, "we all agree that the development of a low carbon development pathway is essential for nations large and small, as we all strive to eradicate poverty, increase employment, enhance food security, manage freshwater resources, and increase energy efficiency on behalf of our respective peoples... the transition to a green economy will, however, produce its own challenges, and so appropriate allowances will also have to be made to small nations that do decide to venture down this path. St. Kitts and Nevis, for example, would be particularly vulnerable to the associated shocks, and so compensatory provisions would have to be put in place prior to our imposing the associated social hurdles on our population. A green economy is of critical importance to St. Kitts and Nevis, as it is to the CARICOM region, and so St. Kitts and Nevis stands ready to engage in the full sustainable development agenda." It has not thus far been ascertained whether the current Government is committed to a GE agenda.

Saint Lucia

As far back as June 2011, Saint Lucia held a national consultation under the theme "*Walking the path towards a Green Economy*". Further, a GE UNEP scoping study was done for Saint Lucia by three consultants (two local and one regional) in 2016 with a heavy focus on transitioning

to renewable energy sources. An "alternative energy road map" that projected the country's energy needs over the next 30 years and identified that 35% of that need would come from various renewable energy sources and projects was one of the steps taken towards that venture. Additionally, Saint Lucia has both a draft National Development Plan and a draft Medium-Term Development Strategy that both commit to GE principles. However, none of those documents have been completed or formally adopted by the Government.

St. Vincent & the Grenadines

Other than a brief statement by the Ambassador to the USA and Organization of American States (OAS) at the 2012 Rio+20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, no documentation has yet been obtained from St. Vincent & the Grenadines although there is a suggestion that a clear commitment to GE is contained in the country's latest national development plan.



The next frontier

CANARI and the Green Economy Coalition Caribbean hub is part of a network of 50 international organisations championing the role of civil society in the shift to green and fair economies. The Green Economy Coalition is committed to ensuring that the transition leaves no one behind and restores the natural world.

Together, its members champion the voices of marginalised communities, particularly poor groups, small enterprises and informal workers, in national economic policy development.

Our vision of green, fair economies offers a positive agenda for cooperation. It offers hope to communities and sectors that have been left behind by globalisation. The green transition is already happening around the world, but we must ensure it is rooted in local economies, brings real investment to the ground, and is owned and shaped by the people.

The **Green Economy Coalition's** global response to the state of the green economy agenda:

- ✓ **We have launched a 7 year programme - Economics for Nature – to ensure economic policymaking recognises natural capital.**
- ✓ **We are driving new research into natural capital and valuing our ecosystems.**
- ✓ **We are tracking the ongoing transition towards fairer, greener economies, across governments, industries and societies.**
- ✓ **We're looking to expand our base of 7 GEC national hubs across the world, pioneering community action.**
- ✓ **We are stepping up our focus on small and informal green economies.**
- ✓ **We are championing the voices of civil society and communities in the development of green economy national plans.**



www.greeneconomycoalition.org
www.canari.org



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