

Project brief and results matrix “*Promoting the implementation of a regional biodiversity strategy to ensure the protection and sustainable use of the Caribbean habitats of small island and coastal states*”

Project title	Promoting the implementation of a regional biodiversity strategy to ensure the protection and sustainable use of the Caribbean habitats of small island and coastal states (original title as per Note Verbale, new proposed title: <i>Promotion of regionally harmonised approaches to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in CARICOM member states, Caribbean</i>)
Outcome	The implementation of regionally harmonised approaches to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Caribbean has improved in selected CARICOM member states.
Budget	Up to 3,000,000 EUR
Duration	From 07/2025 - 06/2028 (3 years)
Geographical focus	All CARICOM countries, Guyana as location for CARICOM Secretariat, for Output 2: St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines (TBC)
Lead executing entity	CARICOM
Project approach	The project intends to improve the institutional framework governing cooperation between the CARICOM Secretariat and member countries, thereby helping to create conditions that are essential for the implementation and mainstreaming of regionally harmonised approaches to biodiversity conservation. It aims to strengthen the CARICOM Secretariat in coordinating activities with member countries. To this end, the coordination skills of EIID staff will be strengthened through strategic capacity development and they will be advised on creating a multi-stakeholder working group on biodiversity. The involvement of civil society and CARICOM sub-organisations in the working group, combined with capacity development, will strengthen skills at EIID enabling the Directorate to draw up a gender-sensitive action plan for implementing specific elements of the biodiversity strategy and to draft guidelines for biodiversity-related legislation.

	Furthermore, the project aims to encourage the use of the socio-economic ecosystem assessments (NEA) in government planning and to promote biodiversity mainstreaming in policies, strategies, and regulations. To this end, the project will cooperate closely with the NEA Initiative to develop the capacities of key actors from state and non-state environmental institutions and organisations for conducting NEAs. The assessment report will be supplemented by a summary for policymakers with policy recommendations and a guide for civil society, which will include strategic recommendations by civil society for incorporating the NEA findings into public planning processes. Lessons learned will be fed into the multi-stakeholder biodiversity working group. Best practices will be presented on the PANORAMA digital exchange platform and through the NEA Initiative's Sub-Global Assessment Network (SGAN), for use by other stakeholders. Economic efficiency and effectiveness will be enhanced when the lessons learned from the NEA process in Grenada are actively used during the planning process itself. The project also aims to expand ABS-related mechanisms of the Caribbean biodiversity strategy and promote the development of a regional IT system for ABS approval. To achieve this, the capacities of the staff responsible for setting up, operating (e.g. ABS Focal Points) and maintaining the IT system will be developed. This will allow incoming research requests for genetic resources to be centrally managed and approved, to ensure they follow a standard format when submitted to the ABS Clearing-House (Internationally Recognized Certificate of Compliance). To complement the IT system, capacity development will also extend to strengthening the expertise of technical staff in ABS contract negotiations and to providing legal advice to the competent authorities on drafting ABS legislation. The output builds on the preliminary work of the ABS initiative in the Bahamas and on the skills of OECS office staff in St. Lucia, some of whom have already received training, thereby enhancing efficiency.
Target group	As intermediaries, the project addresses the employees of the CARICOM Secretariat, particularly those working in the Directorate of Economic Integration, Innovation and Development (EIID); specialist personnel and decision-makers in the environment ministries and departments for sustainable development in relevant line ministries; and policymakers at national and regional levels. Beyond this, the target groups include employees in the ministries responsible for agriculture, forestry and fisheries in the 15 CARICOM member states; the staff of CARICOM's sectoral bodies; and relevant actors and organisations from civil society, the private sector, research and academia that work in the environment sector. Through the intermediaries, the project will reach the local population, approximately 19 million people in the CARICOM region, including indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in individual member states, who benefit indirectly from biodiversity conservation measures. The CARICOM member states were colonised and ultimately settled by people of African, Asian and European descent. The indigenous population was virtually wiped out. Today, the region is characterised by rich cultural diversity, which is also reflected in its traditional knowledge. This diversity plays a particularly important role in the NEAs (Output 2), with the inclusion of communities, especially the traditional knowledge, as well as the livelihoods of women, young men and vulnerable, indigenous, and under-represented groups, in line with the principle of 'leaving no one behind'.

Implementing partner(s)	For Output 1 and 3: • The Directorate of Economic Integration, Innovation and Development (EIID), CARICOM Secretariat. • Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management Unit, OECS Environmental Sustainability Cluster • CBD Focal Points in the 15 member states and their sectoral ministries and departments For Output 2: • St. Lucia: Sustainable Development and Environment Division, Ministry of Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training • St. Vincent and the Grenadines: Sustainable Development Unit, Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development and Culture • Grenada: Environment Division, Ministry of Climate Resilience, the Environment & Renewable Energy (to learn from their NEA experience)
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Results Matrix: *“Promoting the implementation of a regional biodiversity strategy to ensure the protection and sustainable use of the Caribbean habitats of small island and coastal states”*

Outcome	Indicators	Sources and date of data collection
The implementation of regionally harmonised approaches to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Caribbean has improved in selected CARICOM member states.	Outcome Indicator 1 A regional multi-stakeholder biodiversity working group led by the CARICOM Secretariat has published a gender-sensitive action plan for the coordinated implementation of selected elements of the CARICOM Biodiversity Strategy (CBS). Baseline value: 0 action plans (no action plan because no group yet exists at the project planning phase) Target value: 1 action plan (06/2026).	Evaluation of minutes of working group meetings and of the action plan developed with the CARICOM Secretariat and member states with reference to CBS implementation. Gender sensitivity: considering the guidelines defined under the priority topic ‘Sustainable natural resources management’ in the CARICOM Gender Equality Strategy, which is currently being prepared. The implementation of the regionally harmonised approaches is based on the guidelines specified in the CBS, which has not yet been adopted, and on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF).

Outcome indicator 2 4 findings of 2 additional National Ecosystem Assessments (NEAs) in St. Lucia and in St. Vincent and the Grenadines have been incorporated into the framing of national policies in a gender-sensitive multi-stakeholder process. Baseline value: 0 findings Target value: 4 findings of 2 additional NEAs (06/2028)	Analysis of national policies and strategies, e.g. NBSAPs, with reference to the use of NEA findings and subsequent recommendations at the end of the last phase of implementation. Gender-sensitive multi-stakeholder processes: inclusion of representatives of government institutions (e.g. agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism, environment ministry), the private sector, research, academia, community level, youth groups, traditional knowledge holders, civil society organisations. A working group on women and gender will be created, if there is interest.
Outcome indicator 3 At a regional conference, the CARICOM member states have discussed a harmonised concept for using the newly set up regional IT-based ABS approval system in the long term. Baseline value: 0 regional ABS IT platform conferences (the platform has been piloted as a national instrument only in the Bahamas so far, no Caribbean-wide regional conference held to date). Target value: 1 regional conference on the ABS IT platform (03/2027)	Evaluation of the conference report. ABS approval system: a unified electronic approval system that facilitates the application, review and monitoring of approvals by government authorities, as well as compliance with the conditions laid down in the Nagoya Protocol as regards access, benefit-sharing, compliance and reporting.
Outcome indicator 4 8 of the 15 National Focal Points of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD Focal Points) for the member states consider the regular exchanges with the CARICOM Secretariat to be helpful in the implementation of regionally harmonised approaches to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Caribbean. Baseline value: 0 CBD Focal Points (no survey yet of satisfaction levels), as there was no multi-stakeholder working group. Target value: 8 of 15 CBD Focal Points (06/2028)	Evaluation of levels of satisfaction with the communication between the CARICOM Secretariat and member states through a qualitative survey with list of case studies.

Objectives	Indicators	Examples of key activities for outputs	Assumptions
Output 1 The CARICOM Secretariat is strengthened in its role as coordinator to support member states in harmonising the implementation of the Caribbean Biodiversity Strategy (CBS).	Output indicator 1.1 A statute for the formation of a regional, gender-sensitive multi-stakeholder biodiversity working group for the coordinated implementation of regionally harmonised approaches to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity the Caribbean in the Caribbean, led by the sustainable development department in the CARICOM Secretariat together with member state representatives has taken effect. Baseline value: 0 statutes (no statutes in place; cooperation between the CARICOM Secretariat and the member states in the area of biodiversity has been based on need; no visible signs of taking on a coordinating role). Target value: 1 statute	Formulating a gender-responsive statute for the creation of regional multi-stakeholder working groups and their steering committees based on existing structures; member states, their institutions, research centres and civil society are represented in the steering committees; including financing and organisation, after the end of the project. Advising the CARICOM Secretariat on leading the process of developing a prioritised, gender-sensitive action plan jointly with the multi-stakeholder biodiversity working group.	The CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) supports the working group. The CBS is adapted to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF). Government employees in the CARICOM member states and CBD Focal Points have the time available to carry out additional activities. Individual member states have the political will for transnational cooperation.
	Output indicator 1.2 In addition to the ABS guidelines issued by the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), a second, regionally harmonised guideline on taking account of one prioritised biodiversity issue in national policy plans has been developed under the aegis of the CARICOM Secretariat. Baseline value: One harmonised guideline for ABS (developed under the OECS, which includes 7 CARICOM member states). Target value: 2 harmonised guidelines	Advising CARICOM on gender-sensitive multi-stakeholder and supra-regional coordination. Advising the CARICOM Secretariat on targeted communication with the member states. Developing capacities for networking among CBD Focal Points for the digital exchange of knowledge on best practices which are then published, e.g. on PANORAMA.	

Objectives	Indicators	<u>Examples</u> of key activities for outputs	Assumptions
Output 2 Policymakers make increasing use of National Ecosystem Assessments (NEAs) as a tool for government development planning.	Output indicator 2.1 National and sub-national NEA priorities have been documented as the outcome of gender-sensitive multi-stakeholder processes in the scoping reports of three countries conducting NEAs. Baseline value: One country Target value: 3 countries	Developing the capacities of public, private and civil society actors to enable them to conduct gender-sensitive NEAs that include marginalised groups. Conducting NEAs in two CARICOM states with reports compiled at the end of each implementation phase. Providing advice on using the Summary for Policy-Makers and incorporating recommendations into national policies. Networking with civil society organisations or the tourism sector to promote the use of citizen science in conducting NEAs and to raise awareness. Organising an ongoing regional knowledge exchange on NEAs (including exchange visits with Grenada) and disseminating the findings with all CARICOM member states and through the Sub-Global Assessment Network (SGAN).	The NEAs include the community level, particularly traditional knowledge and the livelihoods of women, young men, vulnerable, indigenous and under-represented groups (LNOB) (including traditional knowledge at community level is particularly important for the socio-economic assessment of ecosystems).
	Output indicator 2.2 Policymakers in two CARICOM member states have agreed to use the document 'Summary for Policymakers' as a basis for policymaking by the state. Baseline value: 0 countries Target value: 2 countries		

Objectives	Indicators	<u>Examples</u> of key activities for outputs	Assumptions
Output 3 Selected CARICOM member states have expanded the implementation of “Access & Benefit Sharing” (ABS)-related mechanisms of the Caribbean biodiversity.	Output indicator 3.1 A regionally expandable, IT-based ABS approval system is ready for use in three CARICOM member states. Baseline value: 0 approval systems (no common ABS approval system exists). Target value: One approval system	Developing a regional ABS approval system based on the experiences gained in the Bahamas, developing capacities for use and maintenance of the system. Developing the capacities of the ABS Focal Points, other technical employees and users for the negotiation of ABS contracts.	Countries and organisations/ institutions show an interest in hosting the regional ABS platform. The CARICOM member states where the ABS IT tool is being implemented have IT personnel who have been trained and are able to maintain the ABS online approval system. External applications for research of genetic resources are being submitted.
	Output indicator 3.2 The number of ABS-related legislative texts that have been prepared in the CARICOM member states has increased. Baseline value: 2 member states (Antigua and Guyana) Target value: 6 member states	Providing advice on planning and holding a conference for sharing experiences of using and maintaining the digital approval system over the long term. Providing advice on developing research partnerships and creating networks between research institutes and ABS-related institutions. Providing advice on public consultations on ABS legislation as well as legal advice to the competent authorities on preparing texts relating to ABS legislation.	