



Caribbean Natural Resources Institute

A Trinidad and Tobago Civil Society Report



Spotlight on Sustainable Development Goal 13 Climate Action

March 2020



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Caribbean Natural Resources Institute

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Spotlight on Sustainable Development Goal 13 Climate Action



This report was produced in collaboration with CANARI's partners under the **CSOs For Good Governance: Enhancing Civil Society's contribution to governance and development processes in Trinidad and Tobago (CSOs4GoodGov)** project (CSO-LA/2016/382-815).



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Preface and Acknowledgements

This report was developed by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) in collaboration with the [SDGs Catalysts Network](#) in Trinidad and Tobago. This network brings together 21 leading civil society organisations (CSOs) that work across various sectors in Trinidad and Tobago to support their effective participation and engagement in national and local implementation of the [2030 Sustainable Development Agenda](#) and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs). Working in partnership with the Government and other stakeholders, the network seeks to break down traditional sectoral silos and to demonstrate how civil society can work together through integrated thinking and action.

The SDGs Catalysts Network is supported under the European Union funded project [CSOs For Good Governance: Enhancing Civil Society's contribution to governance and development processes in Trinidad & Tobago \(CSOs4GoodGov\)](#). The aim of the project is to catalyse transformation to a more environmentally sustainable, socially just, inclusive, accountable and resilient model of development and governance through supporting the effective involvement of CSOs in implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in Trinidad and Tobago. The project was implemented from April 2017 to March 2020 by a consortium of seven leading CSOs¹ in Trinidad and Tobago.

CANARI led the preparation of the report as the coordinator and convener of the SDGs Catalysts Network under the [CSOs4GoodGov](#) project.

The report was prepared to support the [Voluntary National Review \(VNR\)](#) at the 2020 United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

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Acronyms

CANARI	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
CC4FISH	Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector project
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
EMA	Environmental Management Authority
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IFPAMTT	Improving Forest and Protected Area Management in Trinidad and Tobago project
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IWEco	Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States project
LED	Light-emitting diode
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution (to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions under the UNFCCC Paris Agreement)
ODPM	Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management
P3DM	Participatory 3D Modelling
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SMEs	Small and micro-enterprises
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-HLPF	United Nations High-level Political Forum
VNR	Voluntary National Review

Executive Summary



The Trinidad and Tobago Civil Society Report: Spotlight on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 Climate Action was prepared to support the [Voluntary National Review \(VNR\)](#) at the 2020 United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. It aims to support knowledge sharing and advocacy on priorities and recommendations from civil society to accelerate implementation of SDG 13 Climate Action in Trinidad and Tobago.

This report was developed under the European Union funded project [CSOs For Good Governance: Enhancing Civil Society's contribution to governance and development processes in Trinidad and Tobago \(CSOs4GoodGov\) \(2017-2020\)](#) which aims to support effective involvement of civil society organisations (CSOs)² in implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in Trinidad and Tobago. The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) led the preparation of the report as the coordinator and convenor of the SDGs Catalysts Network, which includes 21 leading CSOs³ that work across various sectors in Trinidad and Tobago, under the *CSOs4GoodGov* project.

A cross-cutting approach was used to engage CSOs working across various sectors in analysing progress in implementing SDG 13 in Trinidad and Tobago. Priority actions and recommendations for improvement were identified under five SDG clusters:

1. Gender & equality
2. Sustainable cities & communities
3. Energy & responsible consumption & production
4. Biodiversity
5. Health, water & food security

CSOs identified and mapped overarching as well as more specific priorities and actions under the five SDG clusters to address climate change and ranked the level of progress in meeting these priorities. Thirty key priorities were identified by civil society for addressing or accelerating action on climate change across sectors in Trinidad and Tobago. A summary scorecard is shown in Table 1 which outlines the 30 priorities, and the level of progress in meeting each priority as assessed by civil society.

² The term "Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)", as used in this report, refers to non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), faith-based organisations (FBOs), associations and academia in Trinidad and Tobago.

³ See the full list of CSOs in the Acknowledgements section.

Table 1: Scorecard - 30 civil society priorities for action on climate change in Trinidad & Tobago

● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress
Cross-cutting climate change priorities	1. Enable coordinated national level efforts and partnerships to address the SDGs, including SDG 13 Climate Action, across sectors	●
	2. Strengthen linkages to and action on SDG 13 Climate Action within various sectors and with other SDGs	●
	3. Establish adequate spaces and mechanisms for supporting civil society participation in climate action and broader national governance and development processes	●
	4. Increase transparency, reporting and accountability on actions being taken by Government and other actors at the national level	●
	5. Ensure efforts to address climate change and other development issues are focused on the poorest and most vulnerable	●
Climate change, gender & equality	6. Enhance capacity across the public, private and civil society sectors for gender sensitive, equitable and just climate change responses	●
	7. Collect and use gender and sex-disaggregated data for mainstreaming gender into climate change responses	●
	8. Facilitate meaningful collaboration of all stakeholders, including the most vulnerable, in decision-making and planning for joint action	●
	9. Include gender and equity considerations in assessments of climate actions across sectors	●
	10. Align, harmonise and enforce policies and conventions to promote gender sensitivity and equity	●
Climate change, sustainable cities & communities	11. Integrate climate change into the agenda of local government	●
	12. Institutionalise community voices in decision-making	●
	13. Promote entrepreneurial opportunities for sustainable and integrated waste management	●
	14. Adopt best practices and models for sustainable cities and communities	●
	15. Support sustainable community livelihoods and community co-management	●
	16. Build the capacity of community groups for climate change adaptation and mitigation	●
Climate change, energy & responsible consumption & production	17. Transform financing, including access and diversification, to support climate action and green business	●
	18. Strengthen laws and policies for sustainable energy and waste management	●
	19. Apply triple bottom line approaches which incorporate social and environmental concerns in economic decision-making	●
	20. Open economic spaces for diversification and green business	●
	21. Educate consumers to promote responsible and sustainable behaviours	●
Climate change & biodiversity	22. Improve access to/transparency of environmental data and information to inform decisions	●
	23. Enhance research and monitoring to support policy implementation	●
	24. Support development of a long-term environmental manifesto (10-15 years) by civil society	●
	25. Improve functionality of the Green Fund to support civil society action on climate change	●
	26. Increase public awareness and engagement in climate change decisions and actions	●
Climate change, health, water & food security	27. Encourage CSOs to work multi-sectorally to address health, water and food security	●
	28. Promote climate-smart agriculture and sustainable food production, storage and distribution	●
	29. Enhance research and monitoring on climate change impacts on food, water and air quality	●
	30. Improve water management systems to ensure access to clean drinking water	●



Figure 1:

CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago call for accelerated climate action.

Photo: CANARI

The analysis across the five SDG clusters revealed several overarching challenges to effectively implementing action on climate change including:

- poor access to funding;
- lack of information for decision-making and a clear understanding of the scale of the threat;
- weak policies, legislation and political will;
- limited coordination within Government and with civil society and the private sector; and
- limited awareness, education and knowledge dissemination to the populace to enable behaviour change.

Overall, CSOs felt that the response to the climate crisis is not being treated as urgently as it should be. Based on CSOs' knowledge and experiences, they made 10 overarching key recommendations for accelerating and integrating action on climate change in Trinidad and Tobago:

- 1. Review and update national development performance priorities, targets and indicators in line with the global SDGs framework to ensure better coverage and linkages across sectors.** This could better ensure that there is an enabling environment for climate action and more effective tracking of progress.
- 2. Strengthen the legislative and policy environment around climate action,** including updating the National Climate Change Policy (2011), developing a National Adaptation Plan and mainstreaming climate action in all key sectoral policies and plans for a more comprehensive and inclusive climate response.
- 3. Sign and ratify the Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement),** which can enhance the enabling environment for climate action.
- 4. Ensure climate change and disaster responses target the most vulnerable and disempowered.**
- 5. Increase focus on climate change adaptation actions and building local adaptive capacity.** In particular, ecosystem-based adaptation should be promoted, given the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services to key areas such as agriculture, water, the coastal zone and tourism.

6. **Strengthen understanding of the economic impact of climate change**, including on businesses and livelihoods, in order to develop effective strategies to address related issues such as climate financing and economic diversification that encourage green enterprise.
7. **Improve the functionality of the Green Fund of Trinidad and Tobago** as a priority for addressing needed climate finance and enhancing civil society's access to the fund, including but not limited to improvements to the application process and reducing delays in approvals.
8. **Strengthen or develop mechanisms for improved inter-sectoral coordination**, including of civil society, in climate change and SDGs decision-making.
9. **Strengthen mechanisms to support effective civil society and public engagement** in decision-making, development of enabling legislation and regulations, and improving access to information and participation; formalise the engagement of CSOs in decision-making mechanisms (e.g. as part of national committees and working groups)
10. **Recognise and support civil society as partners in implementation of responses** that will achieve on the ground change and long-term transformation. Specifically:
 - a) Engage civil society actors in public and private sector partnerships to develop and execute sustainable projects on the ground.
 - b) Support development of a civil society agenda on climate change that identifies collective priorities for actions and link these to the Green Fund.



Based on priorities and recommendations outlined in this report, civil society delivers the following call to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for accelerated action on climate change:

Box 1: Call for accelerated climate action

To accelerate action on climate change, the SDGs Catalysts Network and wider civil society calls on the Government of Trinidad and Tobago:

1 To consider the 30 priorities and actions identified by civil society in addressing climate change and tracking progress on implementing SDG 13 Climate Action.

2 To practice more participatory approaches to implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and Vision 2030 by partnering with civil society.

3 To ensure that civil society is guaranteed an active role in national decision-making on climate change issues, including a role in deciding on priorities and monitoring implementation.

4 To recognise the contribution being made by civil society to delivering results on SDG 13 Climate Action.

5 To offer the support civil society needs including access to information, finances, partnerships and formalised roles in decision-making so that it can serve as a critical partner in climate action and sustainable development in Trinidad and Tobago.

6 To ensure that a multi-sectoral, integrated approach is taken to effectively address climate change and SDGs in Trinidad and Tobago and that the poor and most vulnerable are recognised and included in decision-making.

7 To put in place an adequate monitoring framework to effectively track progress on SDG 13 Climate Action.

8 To practice good governance and prioritise access to information, transparency and accountability in all actions taken to address climate action and sustainable development in Trinidad and Tobago.

Section 1. Introduction



1.1 Opportunity to develop a civil society report

Trinidad and Tobago will present its first VNR covering local progress in implementing the SDGs at the 2020 United Nation’s High-level Political Forum⁴ (UN-HLPF) on Sustainable Development. The VNR represents an opportunity for countries to showcase what steps they have taken to implement the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), including the 17 SDGs, and provides an assessment of the results on the ground.

Trinidad and Tobago is one of 51 countries expected to present their report in 2020, and one of 28 presenting for the first time. The SDGs selected by the Government for reporting in the VNR 2020 were:



While Government is leading the development and delivery of the national VNR report, **civil society also mobilised to develop its own report on Trinidad and Tobago’s implementation of the SDGs, with the spotlight on SDG 13 Climate Action as a cross-cutting issue.** This action is being viewed as an opportunity for a more participatory and inclusive process to ensure that civil society voices are heard on national development issues. It is also a way of keeping Government accountable in terms of performance on achieving SDG commitments.

⁴ The UN-HLPF is the main United Nations platform on sustainable development and it has a central role in the follow-up and review of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) at the global level. (Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>)

VNRs seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and mobilise multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the SDGs and, by extension, national development strategies including Trinidad and Tobago's [Vision 2030](#). As such, civil society inputs via this spotlight report are expected to enhance the VNR and subsequent development efforts. It is hoped that the findings of the report will inform and supplement the Government's report and be a key tool for enhanced awareness, advocacy, action and partnerships needed to accelerate climate action in Trinidad and Tobago.

1.2 Focus on climate change – a cross-cutting sustainable development issue

The climate emergency is the defining issue of our time and there have been calls for ambitious action on climate change.

Climate change is a cross-cutting development issue that has impacts on multiple sectors and dimensions of society – our food security, health, gender and social equality, livelihoods and forests, oceans and other natural ecosystems. The theme of the HLPF, “Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”, reflects the focus on interlinkages between SDGs and acknowledges SDG 13 Climate Action as a key area intrinsically linked to all 16 of the other Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Climate change is especially pertinent to Trinidad and Tobago as a small island developing state (SIDS) where impacts are already being felt in various sectors. Examples of this are higher temperatures causing health impacts on humans and animals, extreme weather contributing to major flooding and coastal erosion, and changes to our wet and dry seasons affecting water supply for households, businesses and agriculture.

The Government has taken strides to address climate change. Trinidad and Tobago is a ratified signatory to the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) and its [Kyoto Protocol](#), and a signatory to the [Paris Agreement](#). The Government's current emphasis on 'Placing the Environment at the Centre of Social and Economic Development' of Vision 2030 - Trinidad and Tobago's National Development Strategy, further reflects short, medium, and long-term aspirations to reduce our national carbon footprint and improve resilience to climate change. Accordingly, the Government has identified SDG 13 Climate Action as a priority area to report on as part of the VNR.

1.3 Purpose and objectives of the report

The purpose of this civil society report is to support knowledge sharing and advocacy on civil society priorities and recommendations for Trinidad and Tobago's implementation of the SDGs, specifically [SDG 13 Climate Action](#).

The report aims to:

- share specific civil society perspectives on implementation of SDG 13;
- highlight civil society's role and contributions to SDG 13 implementation; and
- identify priorities and recommendations from civil society to accelerate SDG 13 implementation.

A cross-cutting approach was used to engage CSOs working across sectors in Trinidad and Tobago, in analysing local progress in implementing SDG 13 and distilling priority actions and recommendations for improvement.

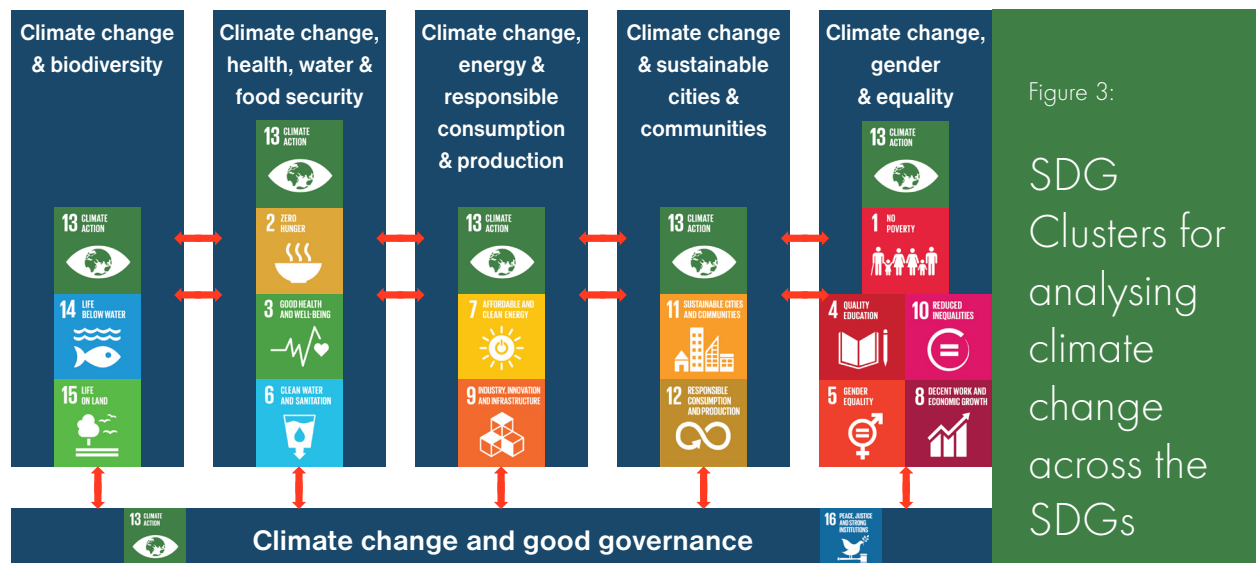
Section 2. Approach to developing the report



In keeping with the interlinked nature of the SDGs, and the fact that climate change impacts on various sectors, there was a focus on applying a cross-cutting, cross-sectoral approach to engage CSOs to assess progress on addressing climate change and identify gaps and recommendations for needed improvements and accelerating action. CSOs working on a number of development areas were engaged to analyse climate change impacts and identify actions needed in relation to 5 themes:

1. Gender & equality
2. Sustainable cities & communities
3. Energy & responsible consumption & production
4. Biodiversity
5. Health, water & food security

These five themes each have relevance to several SDGs (shown in Figure 3) and are referred to as SDG clusters throughout this report.



These five SDG clusters were utilised as a way to coordinate analysis across the various sectors, to engage CSOs in dialogue and integrated analysis of climate change across the SDGs, and to work on drafting the civil society report in a more cohesive and organised manner.

Mobilising and bringing CSOs together

The SDGs Catalysts Network played an instrumental role in catalysing participation of their extended CSO networks in the development of this report. For example, CANARI in its role as an SDGs Catalyst, mobilised and leveraged its own extensive network of environmental CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago to be part of the process and input into the report. CSOs were also involved in reviews of the draft report before it was finalised. A total of 53 CSOs participated in the process of preparing this report.



Figure 4: Civil society members of the SDGs Catalysts Network and the European Union Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago at the launch of the Network in Trinidad, September 2017. Photo: CANARI

As part of the process to gain inputs and draft the report, CANARI facilitated a one-day write-shop on December 3, 2019, where participants from 22 national CSOs worked in five small groups representing the SDG clusters to:

- assess climate impacts relevant to the cluster;
- map priorities and actions to address climate change impacts; and
- assess progress in addressing priorities due to climate change impacts.

In addition, each group contributed lessons and recommendations for integrated action on climate change.

The intent of the write-shop was to: build an understanding of what is happening locally in terms of actions and priorities for climate change in different sectors; identify and assess any achievements, gaps, challenges and best practices; and enable shared learning and identification of recommendations for accelerating action on climate change in Trinidad and Tobago. The following key questions were considered as part of exercises designed to capture the information for the report.

Box 2: Key questions for assessing progress on climate action in Trinidad and Tobago

1. What priorities and targets for SDG 13 have been defined in national and sectoral policies and plans for Trinidad and Tobago?
2. What are civil society's priorities for SDG 13 and how it can best be addressed in Trinidad and Tobago?
3. What actions are being implemented to address climate change by government, civil society and private sector stakeholders in Trinidad and Tobago?
4. What are the achievements or progress made in addressing the priorities?
5. What are the key gaps and challenges for implementation?
6. What are the lessons and best practices?

From January to February 2020, additional efforts were made to solicit CSOs' views and inputs to the civil society report through a survey and targeted interviews with key CSOs working on climate change and sustainable development. Further desk review and research was conducted to add detail and validate CSO inputs where needed.

Reflecting on the process, CSOs were receptive to and supportive of the participatory approach taken to engaging them and developing the report and felt it was reflective of core SDG principles (See Box 3).

“ There is such a diversity of civil society groups, (each with) a very specific perspective on climate change and what climate change action means to them. That, to me, was quite interesting and encouraging because climate change action is something that needs a diversity of perspectives.” - Omar Mohammed, Chief Executive Officer of The Cropper Foundation

Figure 5
CSO representatives
working in different
SDG areas discuss
how climate change
affects their sectors and
priorities for action.

Photo: CANARI



Box 3: Process highlights demonstrating core SDG principles

- **Interconnectedness and indivisibility:** Approach to climate change as a cross-cutting development issue and assessing its impacts and relevance across other SDG thematic areas
- **Inclusiveness:** Participatory process engaging many CSOs across Trinidad and Tobago to share perspectives and recommendations around a common issue.
- **Leaving no one behind:** Focus on engaging CSOs including those who do not traditionally work in environment or climate change fields. Building **awareness, understanding** and **advocacy capacity** of a wide array of CSOs to support climate action.

Section 3. Climate change as a cross-cutting issue



“ Climate change presents the single biggest threat to sustainable development everywhere and its widespread, unprecedented impacts disproportionately burden the poorest and most vulnerable. Urgent action to halt climate change and deal with its impacts is integral to successfully achieving all Sustainable Development Goals.” - United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2016.

3.1 Climate change and linkages with the SDGs

Climate change is a cross-cutting development issue that affects every aspect of sustainable development and the entire 2030 Agenda. The Paris Climate Agreement, along with the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs, form the most comprehensive blueprint to date for eliminating extreme poverty, reducing inequality and protecting the planet. Sustainable development and climate action are deeply interconnected and interdependent. Table 2 below highlights some of the well-known linkages, especially in terms of impacts, between climate change and the SDGs.




















Table 2: Climate change linkages with the SDGs						
Gender & equality	1 NO POVERTY 	4 QUALITY EDUCATION 	5 GENDER EQUALITY 	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	13 CLIMATE ACTION 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are disproportionately vulnerable to the effects of climate change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is an increased burden on women as homemakers for accessing safe or scarce food and water, and as caregivers for taking care of the young, sick or elderly. - There is potential for increased domestic and gender-based violence in affected households and shelters. • Livelihoods are affected due to loss of income, jobs, property, assets, etc. as a result of climate change impacts, with the poor and disenfranchised often the worst affected. • Economic impacts include decline in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and productivity, 'brain drain' and debt burden. There are also economic opportunities to invest in technologies and processes that address drivers and impacts of climate change. 						

Table 2 (continued) : Climate change linkages with the SDGs

<h2>Sustainable cities & communities</h2>	<p>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> 	<p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> 	<p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities and cities, especially in low-lying coastal areas, are vulnerable to climate change impacts (e.g. storms and storm surge, sea level rise, drought, flash flooding and heatwaves). • Cities account for up to 60% of greenhouse gas emissions globally. • There is an increased need for financial and other resources to support climate proofing and greening infrastructure. 				
<h2>Energy & responsible consumption & production</h2>	<p>7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p> 	<p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> 	<p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a demand for renewable energy and increased energy efficiency for energy security and sustainability, and climate change mitigation. • Damage to energy infrastructure and supply disruptions may occur due to extreme weather events. • Climate change impacts on value chains of private enterprises, including small and micro-enterprises (SMEs); there is a need for 'climate proofing' of SMEs and adoption of sustainable practices. 				
<h2>Biodiversity</h2>	<p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p> 	<p>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</p> 	<p>15 LIFE ON LAND</p> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to key coastal, marine and forest ecosystems, including coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass, impairs ecosystem services. • Biodiversity loss occurs due to habitat loss and degradation, rising incidence of pests, diseases and invasive species and extreme weather events. • Changes in distribution of populations, migration patterns and productivity levels occur due to shifting rainfall, temperature and other environmental conditions. 				
<h2>Health, water & food security</h2>	<p>2 ZERO HUNGER</p> 	<p>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p> 	<p>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p> 	<p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an increasing incidence of heat stress and rising incidence of vector borne diseases (e.g. dengue, chikungunya and zika). • Water access and quality is affected and impacts on sanitation and hygiene. • Food insecurity is caused by unpredictable weather, changes to soil conditions (e.g. increased aridity), crop and livestock damage from extreme weather and rise in pests and diseases adding to disruptions in food supply and markets. • Psychological impacts occur from loss of human life, well-being, livelihoods and our cultural and natural heritage. 				

Given these interlinkages, climate change is widely considered a threat multiplier that can impact many dimensions of society. The World Economic Forum's [2019 Global Risks Report](#) lists climate change among the top three risks to political, economic and social stability in the decade ahead. According to

the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\) Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5°C](#), with 1.5°C warming, there will be significant climate change impacts, especially for low-lying coastal areas, human health and oceans. The impacts will hit the poor and most vulnerable the hardest due to loss of livelihoods, food insecurity, population displacement, health effects and more.

3.2 Climate change projections and impacts in Trinidad and Tobago

Based on the 2019 Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment study⁵, key climate change trends and projections for Trinidad and Tobago include:

- increasing air and sea surface temperatures
- decreasing annual precipitation resulting in increased risk of drought
- greater rainfall variability and extremes
- more intense tropical storms and hurricanes
- rising sea levels
- ocean acidification

Figure 6 below summarises outputs from climate modelling⁶ work recently conducted for Trinidad and Tobago, outlining some of the possible changes that can be expected for the local climate.






AIR TEMPERATURE	ANNUAL RAINFALL	MONTHLY RAINFALL	SEA SURFACE TEMPERATURE	SEA LEVEL RISE
 2.4 - 3.6°C	 22% - 30%	+ 7mm  - 40mm	 0.9°C - 3.1°C	 75 - 126cm

Figure 6: Key Climate Projections for 2100 for Trinidad and Tobago.

Source: European Union Technical Assistance for the environment programme: Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Report, Trinidad and Tobago, 2019

The most recent and notable climate-related impacts have come in the form of more extreme weather and related floods experienced in the last five years. In both 2018 and 2019, the country faced major flooding events, requiring evacuation of communities that remained under water for days after prolonged rainfall. In 2010, and more recently in 2019, months of dry spells and drought-like conditions resulted in severe water restrictions countrywide, as dam levels dropped. Both businesses and residents suffered, and dry conditions led to bush fires that destroyed citrus and cocoa harvests⁷ (IDB, 2018).

5 With the support of the European Union under the Technical Assistance to the Environment Programme in Trinidad and Tobago, the Ministry of Planning and Development undertook [climate change vulnerability and capacity assessments](#) from 2016-2019. The assessments targeted 7 priority sectors: Agriculture and food security, Water resources, Human health, Coastal resources and fisheries, Human settlements and infrastructure, Biodiversity and Finance (including insurance)

6 Modelling for Trinidad and Tobago done using General Circulation Models and Regional Climate Models.

7 Inter-American Development Bank. 2018. Analysis of Agricultural Policies in Trinidad and Tobago. Inter-American Development Bank. IDB Monograph; 576.



Figure 7:

Aerial shot of major countrywide flooding in October 2018 as a result of an extreme rainfall event. *Credit: Loop TT.*

These impacts have all come at significant environmental and socio-economic costs and required extensive resources for recovery. For example, the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility paid out a total of US\$2,534,550 (about TT\$17 million) to the Trinidad and Tobago Government after heavy flooding in October 2018⁸.

On a day to day basis, citizens consistently note higher day and night-time air temperatures and hot spell warnings have become increasingly frequent. Coral bleaching outlooks in August 2019 also made reference to higher than average sea surface temperatures, with a 60% chance of widespread coral bleaching and coral mortality⁹.

8 Source: <https://www.looptt.com/content/tt-receives-tt17m-payout-flood-insurance>

9 Source: www.coralreefwatch.noaa.gov Daily 5km product — 04 August 2019

Section 4. Mapping priorities & actions across SDGs to address climate change



Addressing SDG 13 Climate Action is a priority for Trinidad and Tobago. Trinidad and Tobago is a ratified signatory to the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) and its [Kyoto Protocol](#), and a signatory to the [Paris Agreement](#) on climate change. Accordingly, the Government has defined needed policies and strategies and made strides to implement climate actions. In addition to these Government initiatives, civil society and the private sector in Trinidad and Tobago have also contributed to climate action and building overall climate resilience.

This Government developed the Vision 2030 National Performance Framework 2017-2020, which provides key targets and indicators for measuring progress in implementing the National Development Strategy and SDGs in Trinidad and Tobago. Theme 5 on 'Placing the Environment at the Centre of Social and Economic Development' of Vision 2030 includes specific targets for SDG 13 Climate Action focused on reduced fossil fuel use, improved energy efficiency and increased climate resilience in vulnerable sectors. However, there are limitations in the National Performance Framework in enabling an integrated and comprehensive approach to track progress on SDG 13 Climate Action across sectors. The framework does not take into account the various linkages between SDG 13 and the other 16 SDGs and needs to be strengthened to include a broader range of targets and indicators that reflect government, civil society and private sector interests. A more comprehensive approach to monitoring and evaluation of progress towards Vision 2030 and the SDGs, including SDG 13 Climate Action, is needed.

4.1 Addressing SDG 13 Climate Action

4.1.1 National climate change commitments and priorities

The Vision 2030 – National Development Strategy recognises the need for climate resilience and a commitment to support international efforts to tackle shared environmental challenges such as climate change. Actions include: a specific focus on reducing our carbon footprint; strengthening environmental governance and management systems, including to support climate mainstreaming and action; and assessing climate vulnerability to determine areas of greatest climate risk and support adaptation actions for vulnerable sectors.

Box 4: Vision 2030 Priorities (relevant to SDG 13 Climate Action)

Reduced Fossil Fuel Use:

- Increased use of alternative fuels in the transportation sector
- Increased use of clean and renewable energy technologies

Improved Energy Efficiency:

- Energy efficiency measures implemented in industries

Increased resilience of climate vulnerable sectors:

- Climate change vulnerability and risk assessment developed
- Adaptation actions for vulnerable sectors implemented
- Improved integrated disaster risk management

These priorities reflect our global commitments as a signatory to the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement, where Trinidad and Tobago has committed to reducing cumulative greenhouse gas emissions by 15% by 2030 from business as usual in three sectors - power generation, transportation and the industrial sector¹⁰. These commitments form the basis of Trinidad and Tobago's intended Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)¹¹. Sectoral Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs)¹² for these sectors have been developed and finalised as part of the NDC Implementation Plan. The Government also committed to unconditionally reduce emissions in the public transportation sector by 30% by 2030¹³.

Accordingly, the Government has defined the policy framework for a low carbon development plan through the [National Climate Change Policy](#) (2011) and developed a [Carbon Reduction Strategy](#) (2015) which offers a roadmap for national greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction measures alongside the NDC. Notably, there is as yet no National Adaptation Plan to guide adaptation actions.

The Vision 2030 priorities are also aligned with the [National Environmental Policy](#) (2018), which provides the overarching framework for environmental management in Trinidad and Tobago. The National Environmental Policy identifies climate change as a priority, and outlines specific national actions to be taken in the areas of:

- climate change mitigation, including energy efficiency and conservation and renewable energy; and
- climate change adaptation, including conducting assessments, strengthening institutions, implementing early warning systems, protecting ecosystems and promoting better land use/management, and supporting community-based adaptation.

10 Source: <https://www.ndcs.undp.org/content/ndc-support-programme/en/home/our-work/geographic/latin-america-and-caribbean/trinidad-tobago.html>

11 Energy, transport and industrial activity, which are highly dependent on fossil fuels, account for over 75% of T&T's greenhouse gas emissions

12 Four NAMAs were developed — 2 for the Industry Sector — Oil and Gas Production and Heavy and Petrochemical Industry, and one for the Power Sector and Transport Sector. (Source: Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) Unit, email communication. 27.03.2020.)

13 Information from recent public consultations suggest possible revision to a more ambitious NDC; to be confirmed.

4.1.2 Civil society priorities

CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago identified 30 priorities for addressing SDG 13 Climate Action that expand on the national priorities within the Vision 2030 (see Box 4). Recognising climate change as a cross-cutting development issue, these priorities focus not only on overarching actions on climate change that benefit all sectors, but actions in specific sectors that contribute to SDG 13. There was specific consideration of integrated actions on climate change and related SDGs across the five SDG clusters - gender and equality, sustainable cities and communities, energy and responsible production and consumption, health, water and food security, and biodiversity.

Based on these priorities, CSOs assessed progress on SDG 13 Climate Action in terms of overarching national actions (Section 4.2) and integrated actions related to the five SDG clusters (Sections 4.3-4.7).

Table 3: CSO priorities for addressing SDG 13 Climate Action

Cross-cutting priorities for addressing climate change:

- Enable coordinated national level efforts and partnerships to address the SDGs, including SDG 13 Climate Action, across sectors
- Strengthen linkages to and action on SDG 13 Climate Action within various sectors and with other SDGs
- Establish adequate spaces and mechanisms for supporting civil society participation in climate action and broader national governance and development processes
- Increase transparency, reporting and accountability on actions being taken by the Government and other actors at the national level
- Ensure efforts to address climate change and other development issues are focused on the poorest and most vulnerable

Priorities for addressing climate change, gender & equality:

- Enhance capacity across the public, private and civil society sectors for gender sensitive, equitable and just climate change responses
- Collect and use gender and sex-disaggregated data for mainstreaming gender into climate change responses
- Facilitate meaningful collaboration of all stakeholders, including the most vulnerable, in decision-making and planning for joint action
- Include gender and equity considerations in assessments of climate actions across sectors
- Align, harmonise and enforce policies and conventions to promote gender sensitivity and equity

Priorities for addressing climate change and sustainable cities & communities:

- Integrate climate change into the agenda of local government
- Institutionalise community voices in decision-making
- Promote entrepreneurial opportunities for sustainable and integrated waste management
- Adopt best practices and models for sustainable cities and communities
- Support sustainable community livelihoods and community co-management
- Build the capacity of community groups for climate change adaptation and mitigation

Table 3 (continued): CSO priorities for addressing SDG 13 Climate Action

Priorities for addressing climate change, energy and responsible consumption & production:

- Transform financing, including access and diversification, to support climate action and green business
- Strengthen laws and policies for sustainable energy and waste management
- Apply triple bottom line approaches which incorporate environmental and social concerns in economic decision-making
- Open economic spaces for diversification and green business
- Educate consumers to promote responsible and sustainable behaviours

Priorities for addressing climate change & biodiversity:

- Improve access to and transparency of environmental data and information to inform decisions
- Enhance research and monitoring to support policy implementation
- Support development of a long-term environmental manifesto (10-15 years) by civil society
- Improve functionality of the Green Fund to support civil society action on climate change
- Increase public awareness and engagement in climate change decisions and actions

Priorities for addressing climate change, health, water & food security:

- Encourage CSOs to work multi-sectorally to address health, water and food security
- Promote climate-smart agriculture and sustainable food production, storage and distribution
- Enhance research and monitoring on climate change impacts on food, water and air quality
- Improve water management systems to ensure access to clean drinking water

4.2 Actions on climate change

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 13

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

13 CLIMATE ACTION



Coordination: National actions on climate change are coordinated and implemented through the Ministry of Planning and Development, which is the UNFCCC Focal Point, SDGs Focal Point and National Designated Authority to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF) for Trinidad and Tobago.

Key initiatives: To date, the main initiatives that have a direct impact on climate change mitigation and GHG emissions in Trinidad and Tobago include the *United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Low Emission Capacity Building Programme*, the *UNDP NDC Support Programme*, the *Initiative for Climate Action Transparency Project*, and the *Third National Communication and Biennial Update Report Project*¹⁴. Notably, a Financial Investment Plan for the NDC is being developed and seeks to, among other things,

¹⁴ More information on these projects can be found here: <https://planning.gov.tt/sites/default/files/Climate%20Change%20Mitigation%20Initiatives%20Trinidad%20and%20Tobago.pdf>

identify key actions such as investment strategies, recommendations for improving institutional capacity for accessing climate finance, and ways and means to engage the private sector for finance mobilisation, including through partnerships. Under the *NDC Support Programme*, a Monitoring, Reporting and Verification system has been piloted and is currently being operationalised to track progress towards NDC implementation, and capacities are continuously being built for its operation and use. The updating of the draft Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory is another key initiative, with consultations held in January 2020 to identify shared priorities for reducing emissions.

National climate change vulnerability and capacity assessment: An assessment was completed and published in 2019 in order to provide a comprehensive picture of projected climate change impacts for key sectors in Trinidad and Tobago and to inform the design and implementation of adaptation measures. The assessment includes up-to-date identification of risks and vulnerabilities as well as recommended adaptation actions for key sectors including agriculture and food security, water resources, human health, coastal resources and fisheries, human settlements and infrastructure, biodiversity and finance (including insurance). Further action is now required, including channelling findings from the assessments to update the National Climate Change Policy (2011) and develop a National Adaptation Plan¹⁵ to officially guide and coordinate actions on the ground. Aligning the Green Fund¹⁶ of Trinidad and Tobago (Green Fund) to support the priority needs identified from the vulnerability and capacity assessment is also key.

Sectoral policies, plans and action: In addition, the process and timeline for integration of recommendations into specific sectoral action plans, or development of plans where they do not currently exist, needs to be clearly articulated. There is limited up-to-date information on how well climate change considerations are mainstreamed in plans, policies and strategies across sectors, or how these sectoral policies and plans will contribute to achieving SDG 13 targets and indicators. In many cases, sectoral policies and plans are in draft and/or there were no clear policy objectives or measures targeted at climate change. For example, while the National Integrated Water Resources Management Policy (revised draft 2017) and the National Policy on Gender and Development (draft 2018) include policy measures on climate change, they are still in draft. The National Policy on Sustainable Community Development (2020) does not include any clear climate change policy objective or measures.

Integrated disaster risk management: The results of the vulnerability and risk assessments were also intended to help guide an integrated system for disaster risk management. Even though this was identified as a priority, no clear national indicators or targets were set for such a system in the Vision 2030 National Performance Framework 2017-2020. There is a clear need for strengthening the institutional, policy and regulatory framework for integrated disaster risk management. The lead entity for national disaster risk management – the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) – promotes comprehensive disaster management nationally, in line with regional and global disaster frameworks¹⁷. However, the ODPM currently has no legal authority and existing disaster legislation is very outdated. Most recently, a [National Disaster Preparedness Baseline Assessment](#) was launched in 2019 to support

15 The National Adaptation Plan process helps countries conduct comprehensive medium- and long-term climate adaptation planning. It is a flexible process that builds on each country's existing adaptation activities and helps integrate climate change into national decision-making - World Resources Institute

16 The Green Fund is the national environmental fund of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. It is a grant facility that is available to eligible organisations who wish to engage in environmental activities and/or projects that are related to the key focal areas - Remediation, Reforestation, Environmental education and public awareness of environmental issues, Conservation of the environment

17 [The Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management \(CDM\) Strategy \(2014-2024\)](#) and the global [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction \(2015-2030\)](#).

action planning. Despite current challenges, there is still a fairly well-coordinated approach to disaster management with decentralised, on-the-ground support provided by the disaster management units at the municipal level and the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society.

Government initiatives: Overall, there is a great need to amplify and increase the pace of implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation on-the-ground. In 2019, the Ministry of Planning and Development received US\$ 959,000 (estimated TT\$7 million) funding approval from the GCF – a global fund under the UNFCCC – for the development of projects for building climate resilience. The capacity building to strengthen the Ministry of Planning and Development’s institutional and technical capability to undertake GCF funded projects is one of two initiatives that will be the focus of funding. Under the project there will be an expected revision of the National Climate Change Policy (2011), the development of a communication and action plan for stakeholders, and cost benefit analyses of risk and adaptation measures to ensure that national programs and funded projects effectively respond to the adaptation and mitigation needs of Trinidad and Tobago. This will be done in collaboration with the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre.

Financing: While access to global climate finance provides an important opportunity to support actions, public sector budget allocations and expenditures to address climate change and environmental priorities have been significantly lower than for other national development priorities included in Vision 2030. In 2019, climate change and environmental priorities (under Theme 5 on Environment in Vision 2030) were allocated only 1% of the budget for the Public Sector Investment Programme (see Figure 8 below).

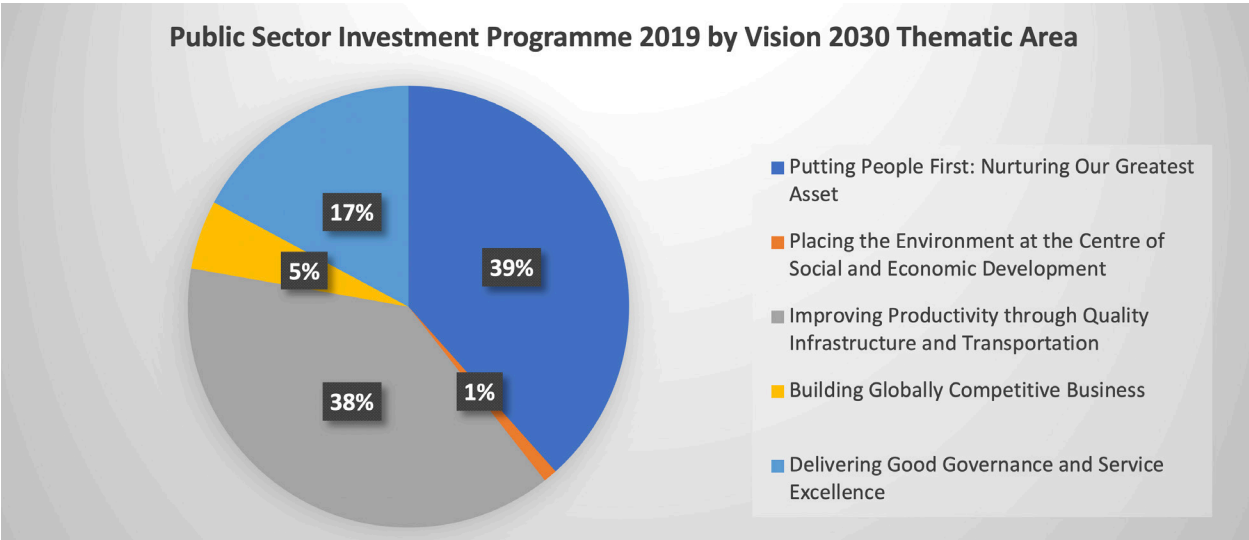


Figure 8: Public Sector Investment Programme by Vision 2030 Thematic Area (re-constructed).
Source: Ministry of Planning and Development. 2018. Public Sector Investment Programme 2019 “Turnaround”. Available at: <https://www.finance.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/PSIP-Trinidad-and-Tobago.pdf>

Building awareness of climate change issues and ensuring wide stakeholder engagement in climate change initiatives is also key for effective implementation of SDG 13 nationally. A 2017 environmental literacy report by the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) indicated that climate change ranked very low in the national consciousness, but in the last few years there has been a commendable level of

effort made to increase public awareness on climate change and related issues. A few notable initiatives include a 2018 public lecture series on “Oceans and Climate Change – What does it mean for Small Island States” by the Institute of Marine Affairs, and an ongoing public awareness campaign by the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries around the theme, “My Energy, My Responsibility”. Despite these, there are no wide-ranging national education initiatives focused on climate change.

Civil society action: In addition to these initiatives on climate change led by Government, CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago are contributing to climate action, in both the spheres of climate change adaptation and mitigation and building overall climate resilience. CSO priorities and notable initiatives addressing climate change for specific sectors are shared below in Sections 4.3-4.7. The plethora of areas in which CSOs are working are highlighted, including biodiversity conservation, renewable energy, environmental awareness, education and advocacy, promoting climate-gender integration, advocating for good environmental governance, engaging in initiatives for climate-smart agriculture and water management. Civil society has also been active in terms of national climate awareness and advocacy. For example, IAMovement’s *Climate Talk* initiative and *REthinking Energy* video campaign and The Carbon Zero Initiative of Trinidad and Tobago’s annual signature event, the *National Secondary Schools Climate Quiz*.

Private sector action: The private sector has further played a key role in actions and awareness-raising related to climate change and energy, which is a key sector for the country’s economy. Businesses, including SMEs, have been making attempts to green their operations and business practices via promoting energy efficiency, greening their supply chains or offering green products/services. Many are involved in education and awareness on climate change issues through their various corporate social responsibility programmes, or participation in social movements and campaigns which promote green lifestyles and sustainable living.

Progress assessment: Overall, CSOs felt there has been intermediate progress in meeting national commitments and the priorities identified by CSOs for overarching and integrated action on climate change in Trinidad and Tobago (see Table 4).

Table 4: CSO assessment of overarching and integrated action on climate change		
Little progress	Intermediate progress	Significant progress
Priorities	Score	
Enable coordinated national level efforts and partnerships to address the SDGs, including SDG 13 Climate Action, across sectors		
Strengthen linkages to and action on SDG 13 Climate Action within various sectors and with other SDGs		
Establish adequate spaces and mechanisms for supporting civil society participation in climate action and broader national governance and development processes		
Increase transparency, reporting and accountability on actions being taken by Government and other actors at the national level		
Ensure efforts to address climate change and other development issues are focused on the poorest and most vulnerable		

In assessing overarching climate change actions at the national level, CSOs noted the following:

- Linkages were being made across sectors to address climate change, but these efforts are ad-hoc and partnerships being formed are not being effectively leveraged. For example, a Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) Focal Point Network¹⁸ has been established

and is convened by the MEA Unit of the Ministry of Planning and Development to facilitate multi-stakeholder engagement in climate change and environmental decision making, but requires improvements in the engagement strategy with civil society and other groups of stakeholders¹⁹. Notably, a meeting has not been convened in the last two years. A recent 2019 study²⁰ also highlighted gaps in CSO engagement and awareness of the MEA Focal Point Network.

- There is a growing awareness of interlinkages in areas such as climate change, gender and equality, however these need to be factored in more strategically in climate change policies and plans for a comprehensive and inclusive climate response.
- Very little is being done to include the poorest and most vulnerable in climate action. Current efforts to address climate change are focused on climate change mitigation and addressing the capacity of institutions to respond, and not on building local adaptive capacity of the poorest and most vulnerable or engaging them in decision-making and implementing concrete actions.
- There is as yet no clear coordination or governance mechanism which engages all sectors of society around planning, implementation and monitoring performance on Vision 2030 and the SDGs.

4.3 Assessing progress on climate change, gender & equality



Policies and plans: Although the National Gender and Development Policy (2018) is still in draft, there has been an effort to integrate gender and climate concerns at the national level and to strengthen capacity for mainstreaming gender issues in key sectors and line ministries by appointing gender focal points. There are several key national and sectoral policies and plans in relation to gender and equality, which vary in their linkages to SDG 13 Climate Action and define priorities and targets for addressing climate change (see Table 5). Notably, Under the Vision 2030 – National Development Strategy, there are no specific targets and indicators identified for gender equality and sensitivity or enabling an equitable response to climate change.

Government initiatives: Under the UNDP NDC Support Programme for Trinidad and Tobago, consultation sessions were held by the Ministry of Planning and Development and the UNDP on gender mainstreaming for NDC development²¹. This included gender analysis questions identified for NDC sectors – power generation, transport and industry. See Table 6 for further details on Government-led initiatives.

¹⁸ <http://eppd-tt.blogspot.com/p/mea-focal-points.html>

¹⁹ Information based on email communication with the MEA Unit, 27.03.2020.

²⁰ Mapping and Capacity Assessment of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) under the Capacity Development for Improved Management of Multilateral Environmental Agreements for Global Environmental Benefits project UNDP Reimbursable Loan Agreement: RLA 2018/001

²¹ Mainstreaming Gender in Trinidad and Tobago's Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement, 2019. <https://www.undp.org/content/dam/LECB/docs/pubs-reports/undp-ndcsp-gender-mainstreaming-ndc-trinidad-tobago.pdf>

Table 5: Gender & equality - Key policy instruments and linkages to climate change

Gender & equality

- **National Policy on Gender and Development (draft 2018):** This includes a climate change policy objective: “To integrate gender equality goals into strategies aimed at climate change and natural resource development, as a means of facilitating women’s and men’s different and complementary roles in environmental management and the ‘green economy’, and the realisation of the nation’s sustainable development goals.” It proposes specific policy measures to be instituted, including around: awareness and analysis of gender roles for climate/environmental action; ensuring equitable inclusion of men and women in efforts aimed at mitigating climate change; and in developing strategies and mechanisms for adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change.
- **National Policy on Persons with Disabilities (2018):** Climate change considerations are not mainstreamed in the policy (e.g. impacts of climate change on disabled groups is not included) and currently there are no linkages with the National Climate Change Policy or other relevant policies and plans.
- **National Poverty Reduction Strategy:** This has not been developed to date and there is currently no firm policy on multi-dimensional poverty or information on how climate change specifically affects or is expected to affect poor and marginalised groups.

Civil society action: CSOs have contributed to gender responsive climate action in a number of ways, including: raising awareness on the gender-climate intersectionality; empowering women’s participation in climate change adaptation actions and sustainable livelihoods; and developing tools such as gender scorecards which provide opportunities to ensure gender issues filter into national decision-making. Notable CSO initiatives include the following:

- **CANARI** implemented the project *Empowering rural women through improving livelihoods* (2012-2014) which aimed to build the capacity of rural women with natural resource-based enterprises to adapt to challenges of unsustainable resource use and climate change.
- The **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women of Trinidad and Tobago** has advocated for gender equality in all policymaking and implementation efforts and promoted adoption of a gender-based approach to preparedness and response to climate change and environmental disasters on an ongoing basis.
- The **Fondes Amandes Community Restoration Project** has partnered with local gender experts at the University of the West Indies - Institute for Gender and Development Studies in St Augustine, Trinidad, to build awareness and promote dialogue on the intersectionality between climate change and gender, specifically how gender influences one’s ability to adapt to or mitigate the effects of climate change. In February 2020, a climate change and gender youth workshop was held, targeting secondary school children. Additional actions are planned.
- The **Network of Rural Women Producers Trinidad and Tobago** has contributed to climate resilience through activities to empower rural working women and build sustainable livelihoods. Activities included education and awareness for women and girls in rural, coastal and agricultural communities and advocacy for the national gender policy to take into account linkages with natural resources management and climate change and the differing roles of men and women²²

22 <http://www.guardian.co.tt/article-6.2.424191.ebd8b1aeca>



Figure 9:

Environment & gender CSOs* co-facilitate a youth workshop to examine the intersectionality between gender and climate change, February 2020.

Photo: Kurisha Beckles

- The **University of the West Indies - Institute of Gender and Development Studies** has advocated for advancing gender responsive budgeting and established a Gender Justice Scorecard to assess fiscal policymaking in Trinidad and Tobago.

Progress assessment: Overall, the assessment by CSOs suggested additional work needs to be done in addressing climate change and gender in an integrated manner. There is need for capacity building, emphasis on gender sensitive assessments and data collection to support decision-making, and more participatory approaches to engaging stakeholders, especially the most vulnerable.

Table 6 below provides a more in-depth assessment of progress made in addressing the priorities identified by CSOs related to climate change, gender and equality, including key achievements by the Government, civil society and private sector, as well as challenges and gaps. In addition, recommendations for improvement in addressing the specific priorities are outlined.

Table 6: Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, gender & equality				
Key:	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change, gender & equality				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
1. Enhance capacity building across the public, private and civil society sectors for gender sensitive, equitable and just climate responses	●	<p>Appointment of 21 Gender Focal Points in 2018, to help build gender awareness and sensitivity in State Agencies/ sectors</p> <p>Capacity building on gender-responsive budgeting by the University of the West Indies - Institute of Gender and Development Studies and development of a Gender Justice Scorecard (2018) to assess fiscal policymaking in Trinidad and Tobago</p>	<p>The situation: There are weak participatory mechanisms for multi-stakeholder dialogue and engagement on gender-climate issues. In particular, there is poor inclusion of vulnerable groups in decision making and action on climate change.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps: Limited institutional capacities and coordination to support gender mainstreaming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gender Affairs Division lacks adequate staffing and finances to provide technical support and oversight for gender mainstreaming • There is inadequate knowledge or skills of staff in Government ministries to conduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt frameworks for gender analysis and gender impact assessments. • Provide training for key personnel in ministries and government agencies to conduct gender analysis to inform budgeting and other gender responsive decision-making. • Introduce gender budgeting in ministries and ensure that Gender Action Plans are integrated into the

* Workshop co-facilitated by the Fondes Amandes Community Reforestation Project and University of the West Indies - Institute for Gender and Development Studies, February 2020.

Table 6 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, gender & equality

Key:	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change, gender & equality				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
			<p>gender analyses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Focal Points are not yet integrated into strategic planning processes <p>Lack of financing for gender responsive climate change actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender analyses and gender considerations are not included in the budgeting process in key climate change-related ministries and agencies 	<p>budgeting process.</p>
2. Collect and use gender and sex-disaggregated data for mainstreaming gender into climate change responses	●	<p>Under the <i>UNDP NDC Support Programme</i> for Trinidad and Tobago, sessions were held by the Ministry of Planning and Development and the UNDP on gender mainstreaming for NDC development</p>	<p>The situation: Sex-disaggregated data and gender information are not typically collected or used to inform the development of policies, plans, programmes and strategic actions towards climate change adaptation and mitigation.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited research and sharing on gender and climate change impacts and vulnerability in Trinidad and Tobago; limited public awareness of climate-gender impacts including in our local Trinidad and Tobago/ Caribbean context Gender-disaggregated data not collected as part of climate change vulnerability assessments which are then used to inform adaptation options Lack of a central database for sharing information on climate change and relationships to other sectors, to facilitate broader gender impact analysis Inadequate systems for networking and cross-collaboration among climate change ministries and other key stakeholders to facilitate the sharing of gender data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a mandate for the collection, use and analysis of gender-disaggregated data and information toward informing policy and practice on climate change adaptation and mitigation. Encourage more systematic use of gender analysis for an understanding of the different realities, opportunities, needs and interests of men, women, boys and girls as it pertains to climate change. Establish champions and develop a communication strategy/campaign to widely share examples of real situations which demonstrate climate impacts on gender for e.g. highlight different gender experiences in natural disasters, issues of climate justice and impacts on women and girls in rural communities. Focus on male mentorship and fostering of responsibilities in the male community for climate justice and action.

Table 6 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, gender & equality

Key:				
	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change, gender & equality				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
3. Facilitate meaningful collaboration of all stakeholders, including the most vulnerable, in decision making and planning for joint action	●	Appointment of 21 Gender Focal Points in 2018, to help build building gender awareness and sensitivity in State Agencies/sectors	<p>The situation: There are weak participatory mechanisms for multi-stakeholder dialogue and engagement on gender-climate issues. In particular, there is poor inclusion of vulnerable groups in decision making and action on climate change.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak coordination between stakeholders working on gender issues – governmental institutions, social partners and civil society etc. • Limited multi-sectoral engagement, consultation and dialogue on gender and climate and other development issues, including to gain greater insight into the potential impacts of policies, plans and programmes related to climate change • Gender focal points require strengthening and capacity building for communicating on gender-climate issues and engaging specific vulnerable groups • Women and gender-focused CSOs are not included in institutional mechanisms for planning and monitoring of climate change activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and strengthen a gender focal point network as a main mechanism to foster connection and collaboration among stakeholders in different sectors/ministries and at different levels. • Include women and gender-focused CSOs in policy development and governance mechanisms.
4. Include gender and equity in assessments of climate actions across sectors	●	Under the <i>UNDP NDC Support Programme</i> for Trinidad and Tobago, gender analysis questions were identified for NDC sectors – Power generation, Transport, Industry, as well as additional gender considerations for further analysis	<p>The situation: Climate change assessments have not been conducted using a gender and inequality lens. There is no comprehensive assessment by sector of how gender and inequality factor in or shape climate vulnerability in different sectors e.g. agriculture, renewable energy, etc. and what responses are needed.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited identification of gender-differentiated risk and vulnerabilities, including in different sectors due to climate change; will affect the levels and kinds of investments and interventions needed • Limited information on multi-dimensional poverty and climate change in Trinidad and Tobago • Limited information and awareness on men's and women's roles in climate action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise gender-aware approaches and gender-impact assessments in assessing climate change in different sectors in Trinidad and Tobago.

Table 6 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, gender & equality

Key:	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change, gender & equality				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
5. Align, harmonise and enforce policies and conventions to promote gender sensitivity and equity	●	Inclusion of climate change considerations in the 2018 draft National Gender and Development Policy (2018), including a specific policy objective on climate change and policy measures to be instituted Conduct of a Gender Analysis of the policy and institutional framework for mainstreaming gender in the Trinidad and Tobago NDC (January-May 2019)	The situation: There is poor policy coherence and a weak mandate and provisions for mainstreaming gender into the national strategic planning and policy frameworks for climate change. Challenges & gaps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Gender and Development Policy (2018) is still in draft and not actively implemented Gender and inequality perspectives are not included in the National Climate Change Policy (2011); there is a need to address the policy and planning framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalise a strong policy mandate for the mainstreaming of gender in all climate change-related policies and programmes.

4.4 Assessing progress on climate change, sustainable cities & communities



Policies and plans: Key actions by the Government include adoption of a [Green Government Policy](#) and the [National Policy on Sustainable Community Development](#) (2020). Other key national and sectoral policies and plans in relation to sustainable cities and communities are noted in Table 7, along with a brief assessment of whether these make linkages to SDG 13 and define priorities and targets for addressing climate change. Notably, apart from the National Environmental Policy (2018) and the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Policy Framework (draft 2014), climate change considerations are generally not well mainstreamed in sectoral policies. Similarly, while there are priorities and actions identified to improve the housing and transport system and the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery under the Vision 2030 – National Development Strategy, clear cross-cutting linkages to climate change are not integrated. Further, there are no clear national policies on housing, rural development, urban development, industry, immigration or refugees, including climate refugees.

Government initiatives: The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries has begun piloting best practice measures in the areas of energy efficiency e.g. installation of light-emitting diode (LED) street lighting. The [ICARETT](#) project undertaken by the EMA, in conjunction with the Solid Waste Management Company Limited and the various Regional Corporations, has also helped engender a recycling culture and opened up opportunities for others to provide options for waste management.

Table 7: Sustainable cities & communities - Key policy instruments and linkages to climate change

Sustainable cities & communities

- **National Policy on Sustainable Community Development (2020):** This includes promotion of environmental sensitisation in communities, including on climate change, and recognition that cultural change around environmental issues is required, but no clear climate change policy objective or measures are noted.
- **National Spatial Development Strategy and Regional and Local Area Plans (draft 2013):** Climate change is mentioned broadly as an issue in the draft strategy and related issues such as ecosystem services and land use planning discussed, but the strategy has not been passed. Regional and Local Area land use plans are also outdated and only broadly mention environmental issues as considerations.
- **National Physical Development Plan (1984) and National Land Use Policy (1992)** – Both these land use-related plans are outdated, and climate change considerations are not mainstreamed.
- **Integrated Coastal Zone Management Policy Framework (draft 2014):** Climate change leading to or exacerbating coastal vulnerability is identified as an overarching issue spanning all sectors. A specific policy objective is included to plan and manage development in the coastal zone to avoid exposure of people, property and economic activities to impacts from climate change (e.g. coastal flooding).
- **National Environmental Policy (2018):** Under Priority Area 2 Improving the Local Environment, the National Environmental Policy speaks to ensuring planned human settlements are designed to incorporate ‘green spaces’ and withstand and alleviate the impacts of natural disasters and climate change. It also promotes green architecture and infrastructure, including via establishment of national building codes which emphasise energy efficiency and climate resilience, incentives, and development of non-governmental and private sector expertise in the areas of green architecture and design suitable for the Caribbean environment.

In 2012, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) included Port of Spain as one of five cities in its Emerging Sustainable Cities Initiative.²³ Out of the initiative, an [action plan](#) was created, although how much this informed policy and practice is unclear. A study was also conducted later in 2014 by the IDB on, *Understanding the economics of climate change adaptation for Trinidad and Tobago*. The study identified several adaptation measures relevant to sustainable cities and communities, including implementing a national building code; a meteorological alert system linked to the monitoring system; and an institutional training programme. A national building code has not yet been widely implemented however a meteorological alert system was launched for early warning in 2018. Further initiatives have been proposed by some local and municipal Government authorities to make their spaces green and sustainable (e.g. the Borough of Arima aspiring to an eco-friendly space). See Table 8 for further details on Government-led initiatives.

Civil society action: CSOs have contributed to overall climate resilience via actions to pilot and promote green buildings and infrastructure, capacity building for community climate change adaptation, raising public awareness, vulnerability assessments and practical actions to build community resilience on the ground, and initiatives to support sustainable waste management. Notable CSO initiatives include:

- **Autism Spirit** has worked with other like-minded CSOs to promote disability-specific communications around climate change and disasters, including spreading awareness on the risk that climate change and disasters pose to the disabled and neuro-diverse communities and the need for adequate preparations for the disabled community.

²³ The goal of the initiative was to form alliances with cities that wish to develop long-term strategies for sustainability in environmental, fiscal, and urban management, and to plan for the impacts of climate change. Sector experts from the IDB worked with local officials to evaluate challenges that affect sustainability, and supported city officials to use these inputs to prioritise problems and design an action plan to solve them.



Figure 10: CANARI engaged Tobago stakeholders including community groups and resource users such as farmers and fisherfolk, in climate change vulnerability assessments using P3DM, September 2012.

Photo: CANARI

- **CANARI** built the capacity of five CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago²⁴ to internationally accepted levels of best practice under the project, *Climate ACTT: Action by Civil society in Trinidad and Tobago to build resilience to climate change (2016-2017)*. Capacity-building focused on two areas: institutional/organisational strengthening and technical capacity to deliver programmes/projects related to climate change adaptation and resilience. CANARI produced a toolkit that is tailored to support CSOs working in Caribbean SIDS, which includes practical tools for climate change awareness raising and advocacy, conducting vulnerability assessments, adaptation planning and community-based and ecosystem-based actions to build resilience.
- **CANARI** has implemented and tested innovative tools, such as participatory 3D modelling (P3DM), participatory videos and photojournaling, for climate change vulnerability assessments at the community level to support capture of local knowledge and community action on climate change. For example, in 2012, P3DM was used for assessing climate vulnerability in [Tobago](#), and a photo journal used to capture community vulnerability and priorities for adaptation in [Caura](#), Trinidad.
- **Flying Tree Environmental Management** has upcycled plastic bottles into concrete pavers and benches, using the plastic as an aggregate.
- **Habitat for Humanity Trinidad and Tobago** has contributed to overall climate and disaster resilience for communities through a number of initiatives. In 2019, they implemented a public awareness campaign, *Hurricane Resilient Housing Practices and Healthy Housing Habits*, to promote same, including to members of the autistic, deaf and hard of hearing communities. They also partnered with IAMovement to implement practical projects using vetiver grass to reduce physical vulnerability of communities to extreme weather and related flood and landslide hazards (e.g. at the Ramkissoon Trace community in Trinidad, where vetiver was planted to stabilise the land which was eroding after Tropical Storm Karen).
- The **Trinidad and Tobago Green Building Council** has conducted education and advocacy via public seminars to promote green building practices. They have piloted the

²⁴ The five CSOs supported were the [Caribbean Youth Environment Network Trinidad and Tobago Chapter \(CYENTT\)](#), [Environmental Research Institute Charlotteville \(ERIC\)](#), [Environment Tobago \(ET\)](#), the [Fondes Amandes Community Reforestation Project \(FACRP\)](#), and the [Turtle Village Trust \(TVT\)](#).

first green buildings (e.g. Savannah East) in the country as models and launched a basic local rating system for office spaces to help local offices assess performance against known green building standards (e.g. in natural lighting, water cycling, etc.). Plans are currently underway to launch the Smarter Building Network to recognise and promote the use of green, sustainable practices in commercial spaces. The intent of this program is to reward organisations that demonstrate green stewardship.

- The **Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society** has conducted vulnerability and capacity assessments in several local communities and worked with vulnerable communities to create vulnerability and community resilience plans. They are also engaged in education and awareness raising (e.g. live talk sessions on 'Faces of Climate Change' were recently held on social media to start to tell the stories of how people are affected by climate change).

Progress assessment: Overall, the assessment by CSOs revealed key weaknesses in Local Government participation in climate action, as well as the need for more formal mechanisms for community participation in decision-making and action related to their cities and communities. Engaging communities, including via co-management responsibilities for their own spaces and building their capacity for climate change adaptation, requires continued efforts. While green approaches are being explored (e.g. pilot green building and solar street lighting), there remains an overall need for improved town and country planning and expanding options for addressing waste management issues to contribute to overall resilience.

Table 8 below provides a more in-depth assessment of progress made in addressing civil society priorities related to climate change and sustainable cities and communities, including key achievements by the Government, civil society and private sector, as well as challenges and gaps. In addition, recommendations for improvement in addressing the specific priorities are outlined.

Table 8: Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change & sustainable cities & communities				
Key:	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change, sustainable cities & communities				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
1. Integrate climate change into the agenda of local government	●	N/A	The situation: Climate action at the Local Government level is limited however successful climate action requires 'all hands on deck'. Local Government has the potential to connect more closely to communities and can add capacity to climate resilience-building at that level. There is need to strengthen connections between national development initiatives and action needed at the local level – especially through municipal corporations, followed by their engagement of communities on the ground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted campaign and training of local government councillors to better participate in and promote climate action; identify and engage potential champions. • Add climate change and related topics to agenda at local government/village and community council meetings or other community forums.

Table 8 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change & sustainable cities & communities

Climate change, sustainable cities & communities				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
			<p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of understanding of Local Government's role in achieving the SDGs and in climate action • Limited education and awareness of climate change issues and possible actions at local/community level; need to develop a local government agenda on climate change • Limited actions to integrate and utilise already existing systems of local governance to address climate change e.g. streamline role of Disaster Management Units to better include climate change in their programme of work e.g. local level climate change vulnerability assessments, education and awareness campaigns etc. • Some resistance to decentralising efforts aimed at building resilience • Limited capacity – human resources and lack of financing at the local government level to effectively support climate action, including addressing impacts and vulnerabilities e.g. financing for maintenance of drains and minor water courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a public awareness campaign, including to highlight local/community level actions promoting climate resilience.
2. Institutionalise community voices in decision-making	●	N/A	<p>The situation: Ad hoc process and no clear or consistent mechanism for engagement of communities in climate decision-making and actions.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited partnership with civil society, including engagement with village/community councils – no official community liaisons; poorly functioning village and community councils in many cases • Consultations are often not conducted in a participatory manner; voices are heard closer to the end of the decision-making process • Lack of financing for community level action • Limited importance given to local knowledge, as a legitimate source alongside scientific knowledge for climate change decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen forums/spaces for meeting and opportunities for community voices to be heard, within existing systems – ensure village and community councils properly functioning.

Table 8 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change & sustainable cities & communities

Climate change, sustainable cities & communities				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
3. Promote entrepreneurial opportunities for sustainable and integrated waste management	●	<p>ICARETT project undertaken by the EMA in conjunction with the Solid Waste Management Company Limited and the various Regional Corporations, helped engender a recycling culture and opened up opportunities for others to provide options for waste management</p>	<p>The situation: Growth in waste generation, coupled with the inadequacy of collection systems, lack of recycling facilities and incentives for recycling, result in high volumes of waste. There are limited entrepreneurial opportunities to provide additional support for waste management currently.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak legislative and management systems for waste <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Integrated Solid Waste /Resource Management Policy (2013) and a National Waste Recycling Policy (2015) exist but there are implementation gaps related to outdated legislation and limited institutional capacity There are limited landfill capacities coupled with rising costs to deal with high waste volumes being generated Limited research, education and awareness on alternative waste management Lack of incentives for local/community level actions for waste management and addressing pollution; can deter overall resilience building in the face of climate change Limited focus on wastewater management to assist as a drought management measure, especially in dry season Traditional perceptions and cultural attitudes affecting patterns of consumption, waste disposal and recycling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify champions and explore opportunities to privatise waste management; creating an industry and research and development into waste management technology and innovations. Improve collaborative efforts to transform waste management sector; engage the Green Building Council, the Energy Chamber, and manufacturing and waste management sectors.
	●	<p>Piloting of Trinidad and Tobago's first Green building – <u>Savannah East</u>, by the Trinidad and Tobago Green Building Council, based on the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, an internationally recognised green building certification program</p> <p>Installation of energy efficient</p>	<p>The situation: There is a lack of climate-smart town and country planning and development processes, including implementing green or energy efficiency measures. While pilots have been implemented e.g. green building, LED street lighting), no clear strategy is known for supporting or promoting wider implementation and uptake.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of a clear policy framework to guide community development processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use vulnerability assessment results to identify priorities for adaptation and inform town and country planning measures and revision of the national building code. Take immediate steps to improve energy efficiency measures especially in cities; turn off power and air

Table 8 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change & sustainable cities & communities

Key:				
	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change, sustainable cities & communities				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
		<p>solar LED streetlights along major roadways – Rienzi Kirton highway and Manzanilla/Mayaro Road, parts of the Priority Bus Route and the Sir Solomon Hochoy Highway</p> <p>Adoption of a Green Government policy</p> <p>Trinidad and Tobago's participation in the IDB's Emerging Sustainable Cities Initiative, targeting Port of Spain</p> <p>Proposed initiative to promote the Borough of Arima as an eco-friendly, environmentally conscious space in Trinidad and Tobago</p> <p>Launch in 2018 of a new colour-coded Early Warning System for hydro-meteorological hazards in Trinidad and Tobago</p>	<p>and practices, including in context of climate change adaptation and mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of proper planning, or enforcement of development planning and control, including climate sensitive/responsive development – green buildings and infrastructure • Poor enforcement of land use regulations and lack of national building code • Climate change is not actively considered in local area planning – Local Area Development profiles for municipalities do not consider the impacts of climate change on current activities and future plans; are outdated, consider hazards but not in context of climate change • Slow implementation of what is outlined in the NDC, especially as it relates to transport and energy use 	<p>conditioning in government offices/workplaces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and identify opportunities to increase green spaces in cities and communities e.g. additional green roof/garden spaces. • Review potential opportunities to improve inner city transport to reduce congestion and level of emissions. • Implement capacity building/training programme for construction sector on green building principles, including measures for air quality, water and energy efficiency that will help adapt to changing climate.
5. Support sustainable community livelihoods and community co-management	●	<p>Nature Seekers-Forestry Division model of co-management implemented since the 1990's for sea turtle conservation in Matura, Trinidad</p>	<p>The situation: There is very high potential for natural resource-based livelihoods to be affected by climate change, especially in a small island context. There is not enough focus on sustainable livelihood development in the face of climate change.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change assessments need to include livelihoods and poverty assessment for a better understanding of the full impact of climate change on local livelihoods • Poor environmental management and land use practices have led to cases of deteriorating environmental conditions that can undermine livelihoods and capacity to cope with disasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities for community co-management, especially in rural communities where there is higher dependency on natural resource-based livelihoods. • Build local knowledge and capacities for community co-management and sustainable livelihood development.

Table 8 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change & sustainable cities & communities

Climate change, sustainable cities & communities				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited public awareness of the link between climate-related vulnerability and natural resource/ecosystem management Some resistance to and limited capacities for co-management 	
6. Build the capacity of community groups for climate change adaptation and mitigation	●	<p>Under the project, <i>Climate ACTT: Action by Civil society in Trinidad and Tobago to build resilience to climate change</i>, CANARI built the capacity of five CSOs to internationally accepted levels of best practice in two areas: institutional (organisational) strengthening; and technical capacity to deliver programmes/projects related to climate change adaptation and resilience</p> <p>Training of community members as Quarry Rehabilitation champions under the Trinidad and Tobago <i>Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States</i> (GEF IWeco) project</p>	<p>The situation: The response to climate change has been largely institutional but also requires readiness and capacity of community groups to be able to take adaptive action.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses at community level are often reactive and impact-based e.g. after extreme rainfall/flood event Limited resources/capacity (human, financial) for supporting community adaptation Very often results of assessments are not effectively used to target or inform community adaptation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote technical and organisational capacity-building of community groups for climate change adaptation.

4.5 Assessing progress on climate change, energy & responsible production & consumption



Policies and plans: Key actions by the Government include development of a [Renewable Energy Policy Framework for Trinidad and Tobago](#). Additional national and sectoral policies and plans in relation to energy and responsible consumption and production are noted in Table 9, along with a brief assessment of whether these make linkages to SDG 13 and define priorities and targets for addressing climate change. In general, the link between climate change and clean energy was recognised. This is well aligned with

the Vision 2030 – National Development Strategy, which recognised the need for alternative and clean energy and improved energy efficiency (especially within the transport, power generation and industrial sectors), and a business environment that supports responsible consumption and production through innovation and entrepreneurship including for traditional, emerging and new sectors. However, sectoral policies need to be updated and formalised to better encourage and support measures for renewable energy, as well as sustainable consumption and production practices to reduce waste and our carbon footprint.

Table 9: Energy & responsible consumption & production - Key policy instruments and linkages to climate change

Energy & responsible consumption & production

- **Framework for Development of a Renewable Energy Policy for Trinidad and Tobago (2011):** The framework recognises the importance of developing the country’s renewable energy resources and the complementary role of energy efficiency to achievement of long-term sustainable development and energy security, and as a mitigation strategy to address the issue of climate change.
- **National Integrated Solid Waste/Resource Management Policy (2013) and National Waste Recycling Policy (2015):** Both policies makes close linkages to the National Environmental Policy, but there are no clear linkages or recognition of the role and contribution of waste management practices in climate change mitigation (e.g. via reducing our carbon footprint or environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes) relevant to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.
- **National Environmental Policy (2018):** Priority Area 4, Evolving a Greener Economy, recognises the need for integrating environmental considerations into the way business is conducted to help reduce economic vulnerability and drive economic growth. This includes introduction of new value-added economic activities, increased efficiency across all sectors, reduction of waste, and the generation of green jobs.

Government initiatives: A number of renewable and clean energy initiatives have been piloted (e.g. implementation in 2017 of a programme for the conversion of Government and State Owned Enterprises vehicle fleets to compressed natural gas (CNG), construction of a CNG service station and use of solar power at police bays along major highways). To improve energy efficiency, from 2015-2018 Government engaged in a sustained effort to replace aging transmission infrastructure throughout the country. Renewable energy and energy efficiency fiscal incentives have also been introduced by the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries²⁵ (e.g. tax credits for solar water heaters and import duty exemptions on machinery, equipment, materials and parts for the manufacture or assembly of solar water heaters). See Table 10 for further details on Government-led initiatives.

In the private sector, British Petroleum Trinidad and Tobago drafted a low carbon implementation plan²⁶ which focuses on reducing emissions in its operations in the areas of power generation, energy efficiency, facility design, operational activities and logistics. The plan gives special focus to supporting national emissions reduction efforts to help Trinidad and Tobago achieve its emissions and renewable energy targets. They have also been collaborating with the University of Trinidad and Tobago, the University of the West Indies and the University of Texas to explore opportunities for carbon capture and storage.

²⁵ Fiscal incentives to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency were included in the Finance Act No. 13 of 2010 and came into effect on January 1, 2011

²⁶ Little information available; status of implementation is currently unclear.

Civil Society Action: CSOs are involved in raising awareness and advocacy on climate change and energy issues, including to schools and the general public. They have been leading initiatives (e.g. tree planting) to promote carbon emissions reductions and offsetting, and development of a register to track progress. CSOs have also been developing tools and methodologies for supporting green business practices, particularly for SMEs, and organising social movements and initiatives to promote sustainable, less wasteful lifestyles (e.g. *New Fire Festival* and *Santa Cruz Green Market*). Notable CSO initiatives include:

- **CANARI** developed a self-assessment tool – the [Local Green-Blue Enterprise Radar](#) – under the [#GE4U: Transformation towards an inclusive green economy in the Caribbean project](#) (2016-2019) to help local community SMEs assess where their business is delivering triple bottom line benefits. This analysis can generate ideas on how to improve business performance as well as being ‘green-blue’ i.e. delivering social and environmental benefits. The radar has been applied to six local natural resource-based enterprises in Trinidad and Tobago and is being disseminated to interested CSOs and local enterprises across the Caribbean.
- **CANARI** piloted a methodology and supported two community groups in Brasso Seco, Trinidad to use value chain analysis to address the impacts of climate change under the [Building Climate Resilient Rural Enterprises in Trinidad & Tobago project](#) (2016-2017). The methodology focuses on determining vulnerabilities at each step of the value chain and identifying options to build resilience to climate change within natural resource-based enterprises and delivers SDG results on poverty reduction and climate action. CANARI continues to use the value chain approach to help build resilient local natural resource-based enterprises in Trinidad and Tobago and other Caribbean islands.
- The **Carbon Zero Initiative of Trinidad and Tobago** has been working to promote carbon emissions reduction and offsetting, including through awareness raising and advocacy. Initiatives include the planting of trees for carbon offsetting through projects such as the *Trees of Fame* and *1000 Trees Challenge* and ongoing development of a Carbon Offset Register (CORE) to record major carbon offsetting initiatives and track the country’s progress to carbon neutrality. Other key initiatives include the *National Secondary Schools Climate Quiz* to raise climate awareness and the *Project Zero Initiative* which works with schools to become carbon neutral, including initial audits and follow up measurements of energy and water consumption, as well as waste management and transportation.
- The **Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago** has advocated on energy efficiency through various active national committees made up of volunteers from the membership (e.g. the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Committee) and hosts an annual Energy conference to highlight and address key issues.
- The **Green Market Santa Cruz** – a social enterprise which comprises a for-profit local farmers’ market and farm – has been fostering healthier and more sustainable local production and consumption in Trinidad and Tobago. It currently provides a weekly venue for green and social enterprises and promotes sustainable farming and healthy foods and lifestyles. It has also promoted environmental protection and preservation through

various education and awareness initiatives (e.g. *Edible Talk* and an eco-literacy initiative, called *EcoMinds*, launched in 2017).

- **IAMovement** has been conducting advocacy on climate change and energy issues through their flagship Climate Talk initiative, aimed at taking the climate change conversation forward in the country. In 2019, the *REthinking Energy* video series focused on raising awareness on climate change and energy issues, including the electricity subsidy, natural gas shortage, and opportunities to help reduce our overall carbon emission impacts and contribute to Trinidad and Tobago's NDCs and the Paris Agreement.
- **Trinidad and Tobago Bridge Foundation** has hosted the *New Fire Festival* in Trinidad annually since 2016, which showcases local green businesses and allows people to connect and have fun in the outdoors, while encouraging sustainable activities such as zero-waste.

Progress assessment: Table 10 below gives a more in-depth assessment of progress made in addressing the civil society priorities related to energy and responsible production and consumption, including key achievements by the Government, civil society and the private sector, as well as challenges and gaps. In addition, recommendations for improvement in addressing the specific priorities are outlined. Key areas for action based on the assessment include strengthening policy, incentives and financing options to support local climate change solutions, diversification and green business. Additionally, economic decision-making must factor in social and environmental concerns.



Figure 11: CANARI's Local Green-Blue Enterprise Radar tool being used by the Brasso Seco Paria Tourism Action Committee, an SME in Trinidad and Tobago to assess their operations as a green-blue enterprise, November 2017. Photo: CANARI

Table 10 : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, energy & responsible consumption & production

Climate change, energy & responsible consumption & production				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
1. Transform financing, including access and diversification, to support climate action and green business	●	<p>Provision of renewable energy and energy efficiency fiscal incentives and support mechanisms: tax credits and import duty exemptions e.g. for solar water heaters, 0-Rated Value Added Tax granted for solar water heaters, solar panels and wind turbines, wear and tear allowances with respect to the aforementioned, and incentives for conduct of energy audits²⁷</p> <p>CNG incentives for public transport (CNG buses). Government also removed Customs Duties, the Motor Vehicle Tax, as well as, the Value Added Tax on new or used (up to 2 years) CNG vehicles</p> <p>Establishment of an environmental fund – the Green Fund to support national environmental projects. For example, funding was made available for the <i>Nariva Swamp Restoration, Carbon Sequestration and Livelihoods Project</i>²⁸, managed by the EMA</p> <p>Development of a Financial Investment Plan for the NDC (in progress)</p>	<p>The situation: There is a need for an improved, expanded portfolio of financing options to support local climate change solutions and green business. There are also significant challenges with the Green Fund in terms of its functionality and efficiency, which hinders or limits financial support available for projects.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reformation of Green Fund is needed; it is currently poorly functioning with a difficult application process, limited access to funds and long approval times. • A fiscal strategy is detailed in Vision 2030 but it does not include sustainability or environmental concerns as priorities for informing fiscal policy design. There are some measures noted around vehicle taxation and the energy sector, but no earmarking for natural capital management. • The current energy subsidy is a major challenge to the promotion of renewable energy; subsidised domestic energy product prices makes it difficult for renewable energy (with high upfront costs) to compete in the local scenario. In general, it is difficult to access financing/capital for renewable energy projects. • Currently there is limited investment that takes into account 'climate proofing' and reducing climate impact, and that supports green business • A green infrastructure fund and support for green technologies were proposed in the past, however no sectoral reforms appear to be in train, or planned. • There is limited local research and application of knowledge to properly inform and support greener business, finance, and policy in the local context e.g. on return on investment on renewable energy investments, green bonds, sustainable infrastructure, green standards and regulations, development of a carbon market etc. • Though a proposal was made for carbon pricing by the Energy Chamber, Government's interest in developing such a policy is currently unclear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the functionality and efficiency of the Green Fund, including enhancing access for CSOs – simplify the application process, increase transparency on operation of the Fund, reduce proposal review and response times and consider a tiered or comparative rate structure for different types of applicants. • Create a local investment climate for specific sectors, such as tourism/hotelling, to cost-effectively green their sector e.g. incentives for use of renewable energy systems at hotels, government buildings.

²⁷ <http://www.energy.gov.tt/our-business/alternative-energy/renewable-energy-and-energy-efficiency-fiscal-incentives/>

²⁸ Nariva Swamp Restoration Project documentary <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tL-iHKTraE>

Table 10 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, energy & responsible consumption & production

Climate change, energy & responsible consumption & production				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
2. Strengthen laws and policies for sustainable energy and waste management	●	<p>Development of a National Energy Policy Green Paper which includes recognition of renewable energy, energy efficiency and utilisation of CNG in the transportation sector, as important strategies for the promotion of sustainable development</p> <p>Development of a Renewable Energy Policy Framework for Trinidad and Tobago; approved by Cabinet in late 2010 which has been incorporated in the Draft Policy Green Paper that is currently being finalised</p> <p>The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries has collaborated with the United Nations Environment Programme to develop a framework for policy and legislation to govern feed-in tariffs²⁹</p> <p>An inventory of waste generated in Trinidad and Tobago (2013-2015) was completed in 2016, intended to inform decision-making on waste management. A draft Waste Management (Registration and Permitting) Rules was developed with the intent of engaging in the Public Comment process in accordance with Section 28 of the Environmental Management Act</p>	<p>The situation: There is need for review of the current legislative and regulatory environment; updates are needed to current laws and policies to better encourage and support energy efficiency, renewable energy and other measures for sustainable energy and waste management.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation is needed to incentivise behaviour change required by the private sector. • Legal and regulatory requirements for renewable energy in Trinidad and Tobago requires amendment of the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission Act that currently does not allow for feeding of electricity from independent operators into the grid without consent of the state-owned utility. • Weak legislative systems for waste – the Integrated Solid Waste/Resource Management Policy (2013) and the National Waste Recycling Policy (2015) exist but there are implementation gaps related to outdated legislation and limited institutional capacity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update where necessary and finalise the National Energy Policy. • Review and amend the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission Act and the Regulated Industries Commission Act to better support renewable energy. • Review and update legislative arrangements and finalise national policies for waste management and recycling and ensure coherence with other relevant sectoral policies e.g. energy, water resources management etc.

29 "Feed in Tariff (FIT)" is an energy supply policy that promotes the rapid deployment of renewable energy resources. A FIT offers a guarantee of payments to renewable energy developers for the electricity they produce. These payments are generally awarded as long-term contracts set over a period of 15-20 years. A technical review of the Cabinet approved Feed in Tariff (FIT) Policy 2015 commenced at the end of 2017; intended to inform legislative amendments to the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) Act and the Regulated Industries Commission (RIC) Act. These amendments will allow smaller producers of RE such as, houses with solar Photovoltaics (PV) cells or wind turbines, to connect and be integrated to the national power grid.

Table 10 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, energy & responsible consumption & production

Key:	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change, energy & responsible consumption & production				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
3. Apply triple bottom line approaches which incorporate environmental and social concerns in economic decision making	●	<p>Trinidad and Tobago participated in the Global Environment Fund-sponsored project, <i>Project for Ecosystem Services (ProEcoServ)</i>, which provided capacity building on a number of 'decision support tools' to policy makers with the aim of mainstreaming ecosystem services in development planning - the study piloted the valuation of ecosystem services and incorporation of these values into <u>environmentally adjusted national accounts</u>, with a focus on the Northern Range ecosystem of Trinidad</p> <p>CANARI developed a self-assessment tool – the <u>local Green-Blue Enterprise Radar</u> - under the <u>#GE4U: Transformation towards an inclusive green economy in the Caribbean project</u> to help local community SMEs assess where their business is delivering triple bottom line benefits</p>	<p>The situation: There is high dependency on natural gas and oil to drive and sustain the Trinidad and Tobago economy. Coupled with this is a limited understanding of the economic value of Trinidad and Tobago's natural resources and mainstreaming of ecosystem services in national development planning and decision making, which can contribute to climate resilience.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some development projects still occur without full understanding of costs or risks to the environment; may result in or contribute to reduced environmental/climate resilience • Limited understanding of the economic value of the natural environment; lack of natural capital accounting to distinguish between value of nature to communities, the economy, and in building resilience to climate change • Results from studies such as ProEcoServ not effectively or actively utilised in informing government policy and action • Limited (but growing) research on green technologies which can add value to the economy and reduce the impact of climate change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase education and awareness on the green economy and green economic approaches. • Formalise use of 'decision support tools', such as natural capital accounting, to support economic decision-making and triple bottom line approaches; feed information into national development strategy Vision 2030. • Stronger enforcement of laws supporting environmental protection and seeking to reduce unsustainable developments.
	4. Open economic spaces for diversification and green business	●	<p>Renewable energy and clean energy measures being designed and piloted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Energy Corporation – design of solar manufacturing plant • Installed solar power in small scale, non-grid connected projects locally such as the Solomon Hochoy Highway Police Bays • A subsidiary of the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago, the 	<p>The situation: There is a perception that going green is bad for business; there is need for increased awareness that the green economy is opening up many new opportunities, which requires shift in thinking and innovative solutions that bring in new financing and governance.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <p>Lack of comprehensive government policy on green business - strategic initiatives under Theme 5 of Vision 2030 - Placing the Environment at the Centre of Social and Economic Development provide some limited ambition for sectoral interventions in transport, energy, waste</p> <p>Limited research and information sharing on</p>

Table 10 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, energy & responsible consumption & production

Climate change, energy & responsible consumption & production				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
		<p>CNG Company Limited was mandated by the Government to accelerate and expand the use of CNG as a major, alternative, transportation fuel in the country. Construction was started on a CNG Service Station in Preysal, Trinidad. Solar technology will also be employed at the station, with the installation of solar panels to power the station and to offer electric vehicle charging in the first phase</p> <p>Conduct of research/feasibility studies into alternate energy sources –e.g. Wind resource assessment study³⁰</p> <p>Establishment of the National Enterprise Development Company, and programmes such as the Ideas 2 Innovation Programme, for supporting SMEs and developing entrepreneurship</p>	<p>opportunities for diversification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of incentives for diversification and green business Vision 2030 and sectoral policies and plans lack clarity on actions to support diversification or green business e.g. the National Environmental Policy (2018) vaguely addresses green jobs, but there is no implementation plan or concrete policy measures mentioned. Vision 2030 includes provisions for a green infrastructure fund, but contains little information on how it would be implemented to support businesses and the private sector to contribute towards the SDGs No clear policy or financial support from the Government for social enterprises 	<p>cultural practices e.g. greening of key cultural events such as Carnival.</p>
5. Educate consumers to promote responsible and sustainable behaviours	●	<p>Implementation of education and awareness initiatives by the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a national energy awareness programme, <i>My Energy, My Responsibility</i>, designed to target school children throughout the country education and training around renewable energy and energy efficiency via inclusion in school curricula 	<p>The situation: There are currently low levels of energy awareness and literacy in the general public and across sectors.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness programmes target limited audiences – at present they seem to target mostly schools but this need to be broadened to include awareness for all key sectors. Increased emphasis should be placed on finance and private sector roles Marketing needs to be more strategic, engaging local influencers and drawing on relatable aspects of local culture, to communicate the issues to local audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase advocacy around addressing issues of energy waste and over-consumption. Conduct and share results of cross sectoral analysis on consumption and production practices and patterns e.g. in agriculture/food production, energy, waste sectors.

30 <http://www.energy.gov.tt/our-business/alternative-energy/wind-resource-assessment-programme-wrap/>

Table 10 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, energy & responsible consumption & production

Climate change, energy & responsible consumption & production				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
		<p>and workshops targeting energy sector personnel such as technicians, electricians and the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission inspectorate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a 1-Year Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Education Pilot Project, targeting 25 secondary schools focused on sustainable use of alternative sources of energy • Implementation of LED lights at playfields (2015-2018); used as opportunity to initiate discussions with the public about matters of energy efficiency, pricing and general information regarding renewable energy <p>IAMovement <i>REthinking Energy</i> video series</p>		

4.6 Assessing progress on climate change & biodiversity



Policies and plans: Key actions by the Government include implementation of major environmental projects contributing to climate change awareness, adaptation and mitigation, such as the *Improving Forest and Protected Area Management in Trinidad and Tobago (IFPAMTT) project (2015-2019)*, and the *Nariva Swamp Restoration, Carbon Sequestration and Livelihoods Project* implemented by the EMA from 2010-2018. In cooperation with the Tobago House of Assembly, active mapping of the Tobago Main Ridge Forest Reserve – a principal carbon sink for the country – is currently being undertaken. In addition, the Trinidad and Tobago Government played a leading role in the negotiations of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and

the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement)³¹ and was widely commended for having strong legal, regulatory and policy mechanisms in place to support its implementation. However, the Government has not yet signed or ratified the Escazú Agreement.

Table 11: Biodiversity - Key policy instruments and linkages to climate change

Biodiversity

- **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2017-2022 (revised 2018):** The NBSAP sets out 20 National Biodiversity Targets in keeping with the global Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and which are related to the SDGs. Several national targets (1, 5,7,10,15) support strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters and improving education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Also, the NBSAP introduces ecosystem-based adaptation approaches as mechanisms for consideration in addressing the national response to climate change.
- **National Environmental Policy (2018):** Priority Area 6 of the National Environmental Policy addresses climate change and makes specific reference to SDG 13. Relevant biodiversity related actions to be taken are listed with respect to both climate change mitigation (e.g. conserve and enhance natural ecosystems that serve as sinks or reservoirs of greenhouse gases and adaptation (e.g. maintain and enhance, as appropriate, ecosystems that provide climate resilience services that minimise the adverse impacts of climate change). It also speaks to enhancing ecosystem-based measures to alleviate the impacts of natural disasters and climate change including, but not limited to, the establishment, conservation and/or restoration of forests and coastal ecosystems.
- **National Forest Policy (2011):** Climate change not listed as a driver of change in forests and noted only as a potential area of concern for future forest management in the policy. The policy does however make linkages to the National Climate Change Policy (2011) in terms of its recognition of the role of forests in mitigation and adaptation to climate change and therefore the need for sustainable management.
- **National Protected Area Policy (2011):** Policy noted building resilience to climate change as one of the major reasons for establishing protected areas (PAs) and that designation and effective management of PAs could provide significant ecosystem services that can contribute to climate change adaptation (e.g. by buffering against extreme weather events and protecting water resources in the face of changing weather patterns) and mitigation (e.g. through serving as natural greenhouse gas sinks, particularly protected forests and wetlands). A draft Protected Area System Plan 2018 was developed and is awaiting approval. The system plan promotes the ecosystem-management approach, and the design of PAs is focused on ensuring ecological connectivity and climate resiliency, where historical land-use and current ownerships allow.
- **National Wildlife Policy (2013):** The policy considers potential impacts of climate change on wildlife and notes the country's strategy for adaptation to climate change will have important implications for wildlife conservation. For example, changes in patterns of animal and plant phenology, such as timing of migration, flowering and fruiting, due to changing rainfall patterns and temperature have implications for the resiliency of native wildlife populations and their ecological communities.
- **Integrated Coastal Zone Management Policy Framework (draft 2014):** This includes biodiversity related policy objectives which can contribute to overall climate resilience via maintaining the diversity, health and productivity of coastal and marine processes and ecosystems and rehabilitating damaged or degraded coastal ecosystems and habitats, and establishing and effectively managing a system of coastal protected areas.

Government has also developed a robust policy framework for biodiversity and environmental management. Under the Vision 2030 – National Development Strategy, specifically under Theme 5 on 'Placing the Environment at the Centre of Development', there is a specific recognition of the need to protect and conserve biodiversity especially through more effective natural resource management.

31 The Escazú Agreement is the first regional environmental treaty for Latin America and the Caribbean and a landmark legal instrument for environmental protection and human rights. It aims to guarantee the full and effective implementation in the region of the rights of access to environmental information, public participation in the environmental decision-making process and access to justice in environmental matters.

Additional national and sectoral policies and plans in relation to climate change and biodiversity are noted in Table 11, along with a brief assessment of whether these make linkages to SDG 13 and define priorities and targets for addressing climate change. Climate change considerations are well mainstreamed in the more recent policies, such as the overarching National Environmental Policy (2018) and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2022 (revised 2018). Older policies require updating to more explicitly outline any climate change objectives, priorities or targets.

Government initiatives: Notably, a national environmental fund – the Green Fund was established in 2002³², as a grant facility available to eligible organisations who wish to engage in environmental activities or projects that are related to the key focal areas – remediation, reforestation, environmental education and public awareness of environmental issues, and conservation of the environment. A key project receiving funding was the EMA’s *Nariva Swamp Restoration, Carbon Sequestration and Livelihoods Project*, valued at TT \$68 million (US\$11 million). Since its inception however, serious issues have been raised with the functionality and administration of the Green Fund – this has been noted in this report as critical to address, as well as another recent study³³ commissioned by the UNDP in 2019. As at April 28, 2019, the Green Fund had awarded a total of TT\$373,292,841 in grants since operations began in 2008. This represents approximately 6% of the total amount of funding available in the Green Fund and illustrates the extent to which the it is under-utilised. As at 31 December 2018³⁴, the Green Fund had received a total of 139 applications since 2008, with only 16% of applications submitted being approved³⁵. See Table 12 for further details on this and other Government-led initiatives.

Civil society action: CSOs have been actively engaged in practical work on biodiversity conservation, reforestation and habitat restoration as well as environmental research and monitoring to capture data for decision-making. They have also served as watchdogs for environmental emergencies, raised awareness and engaged in policy advocacy and promoting good environmental governance. Further, they have built the capacity of local communities and policy makers, including about ecosystem-based approaches and using tools for valuation of ecosystem services. Notable CSO initiatives include:

- **CANARI**, through the *Climate ACTT: Action by Civil society in Trinidad and Tobago to build resilience to climate change project (2015-2016)*, built capacity and supported five environmental CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago in implementing local adaptation planning and actions including community-based and ecosystem-based approaches.
- **CANARI** partnered with The Cropper Foundation, EquiGov Institute, Environment Tobago and others to hold a national civil society *advocacy campaign* for the Trinidad and Tobago Government to signal its commitment for good environmental governance and ensure public participation and access to information by signing and ratifying the Escazú Agreement.
- The **Environmental Research Institute Charlotteville**, Tobago has focused on conservation, monitoring and restoration of coastal and marine ecosystems such as coral

32 The Fund is capitalised by a tax of 0.1% on the gross sales or receipts of companies carrying on business in Trinidad and Tobago. The Green Fund was first established under the Finance Act 2000 and Green Fund Regulations to support its operation came into being in 2007.

33 "Mapping and Capacity Assessment of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)" under the Capacity Development for Improved Management of Multilateral Environmental Agreements for Global Environmental Benefits project UNDP Reimbursable Loan Agreement: RLA 2018/001. N.B. The report is not yet publicly available.

34 Information is not yet available on applications submitted in 2019.

35 Representing 23 grants to a total of 16 organisations



Figure 12: Participants from over 40 CSOs working on environmental management across Trinidad and Tobago at a national civil society workshop, held to gather collective commitment to advocate for urgent signing and ratification of the Escazú Agreement by the Trinidad and Tobago Government, July 2019. Photo: CANARI

reefs and engaged in tree replanting with other Tobago CSOs to help minimise coastal erosion due to wave action and rising sea levels. ERIC also established a community Climate Change Champions Network in 2016 with representatives spanning several communities in North Eastern Tobago.

- **Environment Tobago's** focus is on awareness, advocacy, education, research and conservation of Tobago's biodiversity. Emphasis has been placed on educating younger generations about the importance of biodiversity conservation and inputting into development plans and policies in Tobago.
- **IAMovement** worked on a project, *Building Climate Resilience through Community led Rehabilitation (2019-2020)*, focused on quarry rehabilitation in Turure, Trinidad. This involved use of vetiver grass for soil stabilisation, extensive reforestation with native fruiting trees and use of sargassum seaweed for mulching to build back organic matter and topsoil. 30 community members from the Turure area were trained to become quarry rehabilitation champions. This work formed part of the broader 5-year regional project - *The Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (GEF IWEco) project*.
- **Flying Tree Environmental Management** has undertaken the reforestation and rehabilitation of endangered and sensitive ecosystems, including using innovative aerial techniques for rehabilitation of forests and wetlands. Target areas include the Nariva Swamp, Trinidad.
- **Fondes Amandes Community Reforestation Project** has focused on actions for protecting the St Ann's watershed from fires, including training community stakeholders in forest fire prevention and biodiversity protection techniques (e.g. fire traces in the hills, fire patrols and fire suppression activities), as well as engaging in reforestation and conducting research on climate resilient tree species. A 'Gayap' event has been held annually over a decade, to educate and give people an opportunity to volunteer in activities related to the above.

- **The Cropper Foundation** has been leading a three-year European Union funded project *CSOs for Good Environmental Governance (2018-2021)* to enhance the capacity of civil society in Trinidad and Tobago for governance that promotes environmental transparency and accountability in the country's extractive industries. Key activities have included training and capacity building for participating CSOs to become adept at capturing, analysing and utilising data on the energy sector, especially as it pertains to the environmental impact of extractive activities in communities, and for advocacy related to extractive industry accountability.
- **The Cropper Foundation** partnered on the *ProEcoServ* project to help build policymakers' capacity for understanding and using ecosystem assessment tools, such as natural capital accounting to value and mainstream ecosystem services in planning.
- **Fishermen and Friends of the Sea's** focus is on grassroots environmental and social activism. It has engaged communities affected by unsustainable activities in the process of public participation, acted as a watchdog ensuring that Certificate of Environmental Clearances (CECs) are granted and used responsibly and supported reporting of environmental emergencies on an ongoing basis.

Progress Assessment: Table 12 below gives an in-depth assessment of progress made in addressing the civil society priorities relating to climate change and biodiversity, including key achievements by the Government, civil society and the private sector as well as challenges and gaps. In addition, recommendations for improvement in addressing the specific priorities are outlined. These recommendations centre around enhancing stakeholder participation in climate action, including through improving awareness and engagement, access to environmental data and information and definition of a civil society environmental agenda. Closely linked to this, the effective functioning of the Green Fund is noted as a key area of concern. Awareness-raising around climate and environmental issues is another area where ongoing action is needed.

Table 12: Progress and recommendations on priorities for addressing climate change & biodiversity				
Key:	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change & biodiversity				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
1. Improve access to/transparency of environmental data and information to inform decisions	●	Sectoral/agency-specific research, monitoring and development of information management systems e.g. by the Ministry of Planning & Development, the IMA coastal monitoring initiatives Actions around the Escazú Agreement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trinidad and Tobago Government played lead 	The situation: Access to and transparency of environmental data and information to inform decisions remains poor and communities' right to consultation on the impacts of large development projects are often minimised; resulting in low citizen participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters. Challenges & gaps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges with data management and sharing between government agencies, civil society organisations and private sector 	Advocate to the Trinidad and Tobago Government to sign and ratify the Escazú Agreement; and involve civil society in the adoption of measures to effectively implement the provisions of the Agreement.

Table 12 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on priorities for addressing climate change & biodiversity

Key:				
	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change & biodiversity				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
		<p>role in Escazú Agreement negotiations in 2018 (but not yet signed or ratified)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy and coalition building by Trinidad and Tobago civil society in 2019 around the Escazú Agreement <p>Environmental Impact Assessments provided for public viewing by EMA</p> <p>Sustained and collective advocacy by civil society around governance and transparency: copyright law for Environmental Impact Assessments, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) amendments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of engagement especially where civil society advocacy is perceived by government as a threat • Transparency issues, for example, in terms of actual access to Environmental Impact Assessments and 2019 amendments to the FOIA 	
2. Enhance research and monitoring to support national policy implementation	●	<p>Conduct of ecological surveys under the <u>IFPAMTT</u> project which established a baseline for pilot protected areas and identified indicators to support monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>Initiatives by the EMA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Nariva Swamp Restoration, Carbon Sequestration and Livelihoods Project</u> • EMA biodiversity clearinghouse (but now defunct) <p><u>National climate change vulnerability and capacity assessment study</u> completed in 2019; priority sectors included Biodiversity and related sectors, Agriculture and food security, Water resources, Coastal resources and fisheries</p>	<p>The situation: Inadequate evidence base to guide decision-making; without up-to-date research and consistent monitoring, there is limited understanding of changing value of biodiversity, threats and what could be done to sustainably manage, including in the face of climate change.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions are mainly project-based and not programmes of work to support long-term efforts • Lack of human and financial resources within environmental-related government agencies e.g. EMA, Forestry Division, IMA, MEA Unit etc. • Need for resource mobilisation and reducing barriers to operationalising the Green Fund to be more effective in supporting needed work • Lack of land use/marine spatial planning, and poor monitoring and enforcement to ensure compliance with environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs) and standards and regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve functionality of the Green Fund to more effectively support environmental projects (see Priority 4 below). • Promote citizen science and community-based monitoring; identify opportunities to feed into broader national data collection systems.

Table 12 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on priorities for addressing climate change & biodiversity

Climate change & biodiversity				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
Key:	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
3. Support development of a long-term environmental manifesto (10-15 years) by civil society	●	N/A	<p>The situation: National development priorities including environmental priorities do not transcend governments and are typically subjected to lack of continuity and changes based on the 4-5-year political cycle. In addition, there is need for a mechanism for supporting and guiding civil society inputs, which recognises civil society role and identifies responsibilities and actions that they may undertake to contribute to positive and meaningful action in addressing climate change.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of civil society manifesto requires civil society coordination and collaboration, as well as capacity and resources (time, people, funds) • Often limited recognition/support for role of civil society in developing and implementing actions, and monitoring government actions • Issues with current governance system necessitates greater civil society leadership and action – many laws/policies in draft and not formalised to provide coherent institutional framework, lack of political will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a long-term 10-15-year national people’s manifesto or agenda (by civil society and other citizens) on climate change and environment, that goes beyond political terms/manifesto. • Establish a “Citizen Assembly” – 50-100 persons from all walks of life to vote on the ‘manifesto’ and deliberate on key environmental/ climate issues – model against local version of a “Macco Senate” piloted by Lloyd Best Institute.
4. Improve functionality of the Green Fund to support civil society action	●	Recent assessments done of the Green Fund, including specific recommendations for restructuring access and better engaging civil society	<p>The situation: The Green Fund is currently poorly functioning with difficult application process, limited access to funds and long approval times. Technical review of the Green Fund is a critical need toward improving functionality/efficiency of operation, transparency and enhancing access for CSOs.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps: (identified by CSOs under the Mapping and Capacity Assessment of CSOs study³⁶ recently conducted by CANARI in 2019)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burdensome application process – viewed as onerous, unclear and lacking transparency • Lack of institutional capacity and resources – poor staffing of Green Fund Executing Unit, and limited technical capacity – ability of Green Fund staff to guide applicants • Gaps in time where no Green Fund Advisory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify application process and reduce proposal review and response times. • Implement a tiered grant-making process, with differing application, review and reporting requirements depending on the size of grant; enhance the ability of smaller organisations to access smaller amounts of money, while ensuring

36 Findings from CANARI report on “Mapping and Capacity Assessment of CSOs” under the under the [Capacity Development for Improved Management of Multilateral Environmental Agreements for Global Environmental Benefits project](#), UNDP Reimbursable Loan Agreement: RLA 2018/001

Table 12 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on priorities for addressing climate change & biodiversity

Key:				
	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change & biodiversity				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
			<p>Committee in place, yet a recommendation from this committee is needed for a grant application to proceed to the Minister with responsibility for the environment, who has the final right of approval or rejection of a proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about the approval process and times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minister with responsibility for the environment has the final authority to approve or reject proposals and can override a recommendation put forward by the Green Fund Advisory Committee - Long approval times – there is no legally stipulated or otherwise agreed timeframe by which applications to the Green Fund must be reviewed and fully processed (i.e. given a definitive response of approval or rejection) • Limited access and support for Tobago applicants and no Tobago representative on the Green Fund Advisory Committee • The lack of publicly available information on the Green Fund including: the application process, grants awarded to date, balance of funds, members of the Green Fund Advisory Committee, proposal evaluation criteria and overall results achieved to date has bred a lack of trust in the Green Fund and is a main source of misconceptions 	<p>higher levels of accountability for large grants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align the Green Fund more clearly to the National Environment Policy, national Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) obligations and other key policies and plans. It should outline specific strategic areas and investment priorities, including targets and indicators by which the impacts of investments can be measured over a particular time frame (for example, 5 or 10 years). • Increase transparency on Fund operation; develop and publish website.
5. Increase public awareness and engagement in climate change decisions and actions	●	<p>Significant action by civil society, private sector and the Government for increasing public awareness on climate action, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EMA (e.g. National Environmental Policy consultations, Environmentally Sensitive Areas awareness, National Environmental Literacy survey 2017) • IMA – public lecture series 	<p>The situation: Public education and awareness campaigns exist but are often not properly designed and targeted, piecemeal and ad-hoc, and no coherent long-term programme based on Knowledge Attitude and Practice (KAP) surveys etc. Focus needs to be placed on adaptation including on actions that can be taken by people on the ground (and NOT on mitigation), and especially ecosystem-based adaptation, recognising that this is the nexus for climate change and biodiversity.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited public understanding of value of biodiversity, its threats and what could be done to sustainably manage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and conduct KAP survey on biodiversity and climate change; use results to develop long term awareness programme with indicators for monitoring and evaluation. • Create future campaigns to highlight best practices using

Table 12 (continued) : Progress and recommendations on priorities for addressing climate change & biodiversity

Key:				
	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change & biodiversity				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
		including oceans/climate topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IFPAMTT – communicating value of biodiversity and protected areas • IAMovement – People's Climate March, Climate Talk, Quiz/competitions • CANARI/Cropper Foundation/EquiGov – Awareness on Escazú Agreement • Environment Tobago – schools awareness programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus traditionally more on mitigation (reducing emissions) rather than actions communities can take to protect natural resources and ecosystems and adapt to climate change • Misconception that awareness equals engagement; additional steps needed to engage people in practical actions and target behavioural change • Stakeholder consultations are often not well facilitated or target the right people. • Need for increased media action on the issue 	positive messages and human stories, and link to solutions.

4.7 Assessing progress on climate change, health, water & food security



Policies and plans: Actions have been taken by the Government to develop key national and sectoral policies and plans in relation to climate change, health, water and food security. Climate change considerations were well-integrated into the National Integrated Water Resources Management Policy (revised draft 2017) but severely lacking in other policies for agriculture and health. See Table 13 for a brief assessment of whether national and sectoral policies make linkages to SDG 13 and define priorities and targets for addressing climate change. Under the Vision 2030 – National Development Strategy, there was also a recognition of priorities for health in terms of healthy lifestyles and health service delivery, as well as for water in terms of wastewater infrastructure and management and natural resources management. However, there were no specific linkages made to climate change and no priorities or actions related to sustainable agriculture were identified.

Government initiatives: One key action by the Government has been the launch of the GCF project, *Improving the monitoring system for climate change impacts on the agricultural sector in Trinidad and Tobago* (2020-2022). Under the project, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries has just started a programme to assess climate-smart agriculture and climate impacts in the sector, in collaboration with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. Project activities focus on building climate change resilience in the agricultural sector through the collection and analysis of agricultural and associated activity data. This includes a focus on food import dependency, the impact of hydrological

Table 13: Health, water & food security - Key policy instruments and linkages to climate change

Health, water & food security

- **National Integrated Water Resources Management Policy (revised draft 2017):** Climate change considerations are mainstreamed into policy, which includes objective to: “Establish an integrated framework for water resources and wastewater management, particularly as it relates to planning, environmental management, pollution control and adaptation to the impacts of climate change and variability”. This suggests provisions for multi-sectoral responses to be adopted by integrating climate variability and change into Integrated Water Resources Management Plans for watersheds, wetlands, coastal zones, and agriculture, and overall management of water resources; as well as climate sensitive/responsive operations and management of infrastructure assets for ensuring reliable and climate-resilient water services. In addition, the policy calls for Government to develop a water security programme for Trinidad and Tobago, develop comprehensive dry season and drought water supply management plans and a monitoring programme for predicting local dry spells and droughts.
- **Health:** Within the Health Ministry, there are discrete divisions or sections dealing with aspects relevant to impacts of climate change, such as insect vector control or environmental health, however there is no official health policy which explicitly factors in climate change considerations.
- **Food security and agriculture:** There is an absence of an overarching policy framework for sustainable agriculture (including food security and rural development) and existing plans such as the National Food Production Action Plan 2012-2015 are outdated. Discrete initiatives to address climate change impacts are being undertaken (e.g. drought risk management and recently approved Green Climate Fund project³⁷ targeting agriculture). The draft Fisheries Management Policy for Trinidad and Tobago (2016) does address the issue of climate change but the status of implementation is unclear.

and meteorological data, assessment of greenhouse gas emissions and the reporting of gender-sensitive climate impacts on agriculture and food systems. In addition, Trinidad and Tobago is participating in the regional *Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector (CC4FISH)* project, which aims to increase resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts through introduction of adaptation measures in fisheries management and capacity building of fisherfolk and aquaculturists. See Table 14 for further details on Government-led initiatives.

Other partners such as the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture Delegation in Trinidad and Tobago have been piloting a climate-smart food production system³⁸ involving training of farmers and design of climate-smart farms.

Civil society action: Key actions by CSOs have been implemented in the areas of awareness raising, training and education, and implementing research and demonstration projects around sustainable water use and climate-smart agriculture. Practical projects to reduce watershed degradation and developing resources to support subsistence production and food security in disaster situations have also been undertaken. The notable CSO actions include:

- The **Agriculture Society of Trinidad and Tobago** has been implementing the project, *A Greener Tomorrow – The Creation of a Sustainable Agricultural Sector Through Education, Training and Sensitization of Farmers and Consumers*, to promote and encourage sustainable agricultural practices. Climate change and its impacts on the agricultural sector are considered under the project, which has resulted in greater awareness of and interest in improving agricultural practices as it relates to water quality and management.

³⁷ <https://agriculture.gov.tt/media-releases/agriculture-ministry-seeks-green-climate-fund-gcf-assistance/>

³⁸ <https://iica.int/en/press/news/iica-supports-trinidad-tobagos-development-smart-agriculture-production-system>



Figure 13: Local farmers participating in the Cropper Foundation's Making Agriculture Profitable and Sustainable (MAPS) project are being supported to adopt more sustainable and climate resilient agricultural practices. Photo: The Cropper Foundation

- **Caribbean Youth Environment Network -Trinidad and Tobago** implemented the *Learn and Flow* project as part of the Water Resources Agency's Adopt a River initiative to help increase awareness of water resource issues in select watersheds. In partnership with the Asa Wright Nature Centre, the Agricultural Society and the Santa Rosa First People's Community, they adopted the Arima and Courland Rivers to improve the health of watersheds and the lives of those who depend on them. The project reached 300 community members and 1,200 school children and involved activities such as tree planting to address deforestation and river siltation, water testing with kits donated to residents to detect improper sewage disposal, and clean-up of the waterways.
- **The Cropper Foundation** has been implementing the three-year [*Make Agriculture Profitable and Sustainable \(MAPS\)*](#) project aimed at mitigating the environmental degradation of watersheds in the Northern Range of Trinidad and Tobago by demonstrating the technical and commercial viability of climate-smart agricultural practices to low-income small-scale farmers operating in this critical ecosystem. The project promotes the [*Grown Safe Certification Programme*](#) which encourages farmers to adopt more sustainable and climate resilient agricultural practices.
- **Tech4Agri** has partnered with Green Farm Nation to create the [*Agri Recovery Kit \(A.R.K.\)*](#) which is a tool that supports subsistence production, promotes human connectedness and provides knowledge access for families or communities who are displaced in the early stages of a recovery period following a disaster.
- **WHYFARM** created Agri-Man, an agricultural superhero, in 2015, to help children learn about food and related issues such as climate change and food insecurity. Activities primarily involve school visits aimed at helping children learn to grow their own food while gaining a first-hand understanding of risks associated with climate change, such as flood, drought and fire and effects on the supply chain and overall food security.
- **Women Gender Water Network** has promoted sustainable water use and management, including through research, hosting of water camps targeting children, and training of community water champions in all aspects of water, water use, management, sanitation and hygiene.

Progress assessment: Table 14 below gives an in-depth assessment of progress made in addressing the civil society priorities including key achievements by the Government, civil society and the private sector as well as challenges and gaps. In addition, recommendations for improvement in addressing the specific priorities are outlined. These emphasise multisectoral working and the need for climate-smart agriculture and improved water management to minimise climate change impacts as well as for research and adequate monitoring of impacts, to inform decision-making.

Table 14: Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, health, water & food security				
Key:	● Little progress	● Intermediate progress	● Significant progress	
Climate change, health, water & food security				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
1. Encourage CSOs to work multi-sectorally to address health, water and food security	●	The Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago is currently working multi-sectorally with key Government and CSO stakeholders to promote sustainable farming practices, and to improve water quality (targeting 80 – 100 farmers)	<p>The situation: Climate change impacts on health, water and food security are closely interlinked. There is a need for greater coordination and to increase cross-sectoral working within and across civil society to help address climate impacts in these areas and be an effective partner to Government on the ground.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues with current governance system – many laws/policies with respect to health, water and food security outdated or in draft and not formalised to provide coherent institutional framework and clear roles for CSOs • Lack of sectoral adaptation plans that take into account results of vulnerability assessments and linkages across sectors • CSOs are engaged in a limited way by Government e.g. stakeholder consultations are often not inclusive or equitable in terms of CSO sector participation but CSOs are more closely connected to communities on the ground • Challenges in civil society with respect to organisational and technical capacity, transparency and historical barriers to CSOs working together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communication and collaboration with CSOs and other stakeholders to jointly develop, implement and monitor plans/initiatives that help build climate resilience. • Directly engage CSOs in joint initiatives for adaptation and mitigation e.g. private sector can engage CSOs as part of corporate social responsibility initiatives in areas such as exploration of renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, quarry rehabilitation and reforestation.
2. Promote climate-smart agriculture and sustainable food production, storage and distribution	●	<p>Sharing of information by Caribbean Research and Development Institute and Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology e.g. via agro-climatic bulletins which includes climate smart advisories</p> <p>The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture</p>	<p>The situation: Increasing unpredictability and changes in weather patterns and usual wet/dry seasons are impacting local agricultural practices. Small farmers in small island states like Trinidad and Tobago are particularly vulnerable and there is a critical need to improve climate responsiveness in the agriculture sector, including to ensure food security.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agriculture sector has traditionally not been a priority compared to other sectors and is typically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve training and agricultural extension services to enhance knowledge of farmers on climate change impacts and encourage the use of climate-smart approaches (e.g. promoting small site farming,

Table 14 (continued): **Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, health, water & food security**

Climate change, health, water & food security				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
		<p>Delegation in Trinidad and Tobago is piloting a climate-smart food production system at the Matelot Community College; intended to be scalable. Coupled with training farmers and youth and in the use of 3D modelling and design of climate smart farms</p> <p>Trinidad and Tobago is participating in the regional CC4FISH project which aims to reduce vulnerability and increase climate resilience in the Eastern Caribbean fisheries sector</p> <p>The Cropper Foundation's, <i>Make Agriculture Profitable and Sustainable (MAPS)</i> project, targeting small scale farmers in Trinidad's Northern Range</p>	<p>under-resourced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of clear, up-to-date policy and legal framework for agriculture and food security to support best practices in mitigating against or adapting to new norms due to climate change • Regional entities such as CARDI & CIMH are doing research and developing products e.g. agro-climatic bulletins and climate outlooks, but the information does not always effectively reach farmers • Information on climate smart practices and relevant tools, technologies and resources including financing need to be made more accessible • Limited public understanding of impact of climate change on agriculture and food security, and cross-cutting implications for other sectors • More emphasis is needed on addressing impact of climatic hazards e.g. flooding a major cause of crop and livestock losses in past few years; Government provides compensation but no proactive measures and there is a lack of effective risk transfer mechanisms e.g. crop insurance • Lack of clarity on whether the Disaster Risk Management plan for the agricultural sector, following the extensive flooding in 2017 and 2018 was completed, finalised and being implemented; this was intended to address aspects such as preparedness, capacity building and institutional strengthening, sustainable livelihoods, risk information and early warning 	<p>shifting farming patterns, water use and alternatives for access to potable water especially in dry season, crop/ seed selection etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage technological tools for sharing information on forecasts, bulletins or early warnings to farmers e.g. mobile phone apps.
3. Enhance research and monitoring on climate change impacts on food, water and air quality	●	<p>National climate change vulnerability and capacity assessment study completed in 2019; priority sectors included: Agriculture and food security, Water resources, Human health (as well as Coastal resources and fisheries, Human settlements and infrastructure, Biodiversity, Finance)</p>	<p>The situation: There is limited data and information on how climate change is impacting health and socio-economic wellbeing, including through impacts on food, water, air; and lack of consistent monitoring of trends and patterns to be able to adequately plan and implement suitable adaptation strategies.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of comprehensive vulnerability assessments of climate change in relation to human health, which also adequately consider interlinkages with other key sectors such as water, and identify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a climate-linked health monitoring and early warning system that draws upon climate information services provided by the Meteorological Office and other relevant sectors and institutions that collect/provide

Table 14 (continued): **Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, health, water & food security**

Climate change, health, water & food security				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
		<p>The <i>CC4FISH</i> project collects information from vulnerability and capacity assessments of coastal and fishing communities</p> <p>Recent launch of the GCF project, <i>Improving the monitoring system for climate change impacts on the agricultural sector in Trinidad and Tobago (2020-2022)</i>, which includes a programme to assess climate-smart agriculture and climate impacts in the sector</p>	<p>specific vulnerable populations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of systematic observations, research and modelling with respect to climate impacts on health, for better monitoring and management • Lack of climate-health early warning systems which draw on existing work such as climate outlooks, early warning system developed for dengue outbreaks in the Caribbean • Lack of transparency and accessibility of information/research in areas related to mitigating the effects of climate change being undertaken by government agencies, CSOs or academia • Limited public awareness on climate-health linkages e.g. warmer temperatures and mosquito-borne diseases and education on preparation for and prevention of health issues due to impacts of climate change 	<p>information for forecasting and decision-making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a research programme in partnership with national and regional health bodies and academia on the epidemiology of diseases and linkages with climate observations and trends, to enhance understanding of climate change impacts on human health.
4. Improve water management systems to ensure access to clean, drinking water	●	<p>Initiatives by the Water and Sewerage Authority including ongoing water conservation campaigns (not climate focused), implementation of water schedules and the Adopt a River Program – a local initiative encouraging citizen participation in addressing water issues toward improving quality of Trinidad and Tobago rivers and watersheds</p>	<p>The situation: Water management issues are expected to become increasingly difficult with climate change. In the past few years, Trinidad and Tobago has been experiencing more intense flooding as well as harsh dry seasons with increasing frequency of drought-like conditions and water scarcity issues.</p> <p>Challenges & gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Integrated Water Resources Management Policy (2017) has not yet been finalised; limited implementation of an integrated approach to management recognising linkages between water resources, land use, pollution etc. • Challenges with water infrastructure affecting water security – old, leaking pipeline infrastructure and inadequate infrastructure in underserved parts of the country • Lack of clear/formalised flood or drought management policy or plan in place; responses have been somewhat ad-hoc • Poor culture of water conservation and wastage by general population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally adopt and implement the National Integrated Water Resources Management Policy (2017). • Update relevant water resources legislation to integrate climate change risk management considerations e.g. EMA Water Pollution Rules and Water Permitting System, Certificate of Environmental Clearance Rules, proposed Water Resource Management Act.

Table 14 (continued): **Progress and recommendations on addressing priorities for climate change, health, water & food security**

Climate change, health, water & food security				
Civil society priorities	Score	Achievements/progress	Challenges & gaps	Recommendations
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve reliable clean water access including through diversification – water harvesting and desalination; and promotion of water conservation. • Increase capacity for water storage and reduce water wastage through improvements in the network, especially if facing increased drought. • Expand watershed management projects (Adopt a River) to include awareness and action on reducing risks from climate change.

4.8 Summary of findings across SDG clusters

The top 5 areas which CSOs felt required the most attention to ensure effective action on climate change in Trinidad and Tobago include:

1. Finance

2. Research, assessments, and data collection

3. Access to information

4. Capacity-building

5. Law and policy

The key challenges to implementing SDG 13 Climate Action and building resilience were noted as:

- Poor access to funding (e.g. from the Green Fund)
- Limited information and assessments (e.g. detailed vulnerability assessments by sector) for understanding the scale of threat (e.g. to GDP), supporting decision-making and prioritising actions needed.
- Transparency issues and challenges accessing information for supporting wider civic engagement in climate change and environmental decision-making (e.g. in relation to amendments to the Freedom of Information Act which increase the time-frame for public bodies to provide applicants with information requested under the Act)
- Weak policies, legislation and political will
- Limited coordination within Government and with other sectors
- Limited national buy-in to multi-year development plans like Vision 2030
- Limited awareness, education and knowledge dissemination to the populace to enable behaviour change.

In terms of assessing barriers to civil society participation in climate action and sustainable development, lack of funding and access to finance were noted as the biggest deterrents.

Along with limited human resources and manpower, this results in limited organisational preparedness to engage. Other barriers include lack of partnerships and requisite policies and mechanisms which support their engagement alongside Government and other development actors.

Section 5. Lessons and recommendations for integrated action on climate change



5.1 Key civil society recommendations for integrated action on climate change

Despite ongoing and increased efforts to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change in Trinidad and Tobago, CSOs felt that the response to the climate crisis is not being treated as urgently as it should be. Based on CSOs' knowledge and experiences, they made 10 overarching key recommendations for accelerating and integrating action on climate change:

- 1. Review and update national development performance priorities, targets and indicators in line with the global SDGs framework to ensure better coverage and linkages across sectors.** This could better ensure that there is an enabling environment for climate action and more effective tracking of progress.
- 2. Strengthen the legislative and policy environment around climate action,** including updating the National Climate Change Policy (2011), developing a National Adaptation Plan and mainstreaming climate action in all key sectoral policies and plans for a more comprehensive and inclusive climate response.
- 3. Sign and ratify the Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement)⁴⁰,** which can enhance the enabling environment for climate action.
- 4. Ensure climate change and disaster responses target the most vulnerable and disempowered.**
- 5. Increase focus on climate change adaptation actions and building local adaptive capacity.** In particular, ecosystem-based adaptation should be promoted given the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services to key areas such as agriculture, water, the coastal zone and tourism.

⁴⁰ The Escazú Agreement seeks to ensure that all people have access to timely and reliable information and are able to access justice regarding environmental matters. It also aims to: contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs; guarantee environmental access rights in the region; provide special protections for environmental human rights defenders; and ensure people can play a part in decisions related to environmental challenges, such as climate change, ocean pollution and deforestation. (IISD, SDG Knowledge Hub)

6. Strengthen understanding of the economic impact of climate change including on businesses and livelihoods, in order to develop effective strategies to address related issues such as climate financing and economic diversification that encourage green enterprises.

7. Improve the functionality of the Green Fund of Trinidad and Tobago as a priority for addressing needed climate finance and enhancing civil society's access to the fund⁴¹, including but not limited to improvements to the application process and reducing delays in approvals.

8. Strengthen or develop mechanisms for improved inter-sectoral coordination, including of civil society, in climate change and SDGs decision-making.

9. Strengthen mechanisms to support effective civil society and public engagement in decision-making, development of enabling legislation and regulations, and improving access to information and participation; formalise the engagement of CSOs in decision-making mechanisms (e.g. as part of national committees and working groups)

10. Recognise and support civil society as partners in implementation of responses that will achieve on the ground change and long-term transformation. Specifically:

- a) Engage civil society actors in public and private sector partnerships to develop and execute sustainable projects on the ground.
- b) Support development of a civil society agenda on climate change that identifies collective priorities for actions and link these to the Green Fund.

5.2 Lessons and best practices

Key lessons shared by civil society for implementing SDG 13 Climate Action focused on the value of:

- using bottom up, participatory approaches to successfully engage all sectors and levels of society, including vulnerable groups;
- working in coalitions and forming linkages to share resources, knowledge and experiences;
- enrolling and educating the wider population and engaging local mentors and climate champions to spur action and behaviour change; and
- working in partnership with government and other development partners, which can enhance credibility and buy-in and support from local communities and enterprises

⁴¹ At present, there are issues with the Green Fund application process, which is perceived as onerous, unclear and lacking transparency. There is also a lack of publicly available information on the Green Fund, including on grants awarded, overall results achieved to date, personnel, proposal evaluation criteria and balance of funds.

The following section highlights **best practices**, including some notable examples, which can be considered in accelerating climate action in Trinidad and Tobago.

Best practices: Climate change, gender & equality



Gender mainstreaming in government ministries

- Establishment of Gender Focal Points in most ministries and state agencies for supporting climate-gender awareness and mainstreaming; capacities currently being built through the Gender Affairs Division

Training for key stakeholder groups to increase awareness and buy-in of climate issues

- Training for parliamentarians, for example at the ParlAmericas 10th gathering of the Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality: Gender Responsive Climate Action (May 22-24, 2018, Port of Spain)

Developing tools and methods to support gender mainstreaming

- Civil society action to integrate gender concerns, including via conducting research and developing and providing tools and expertise – since 2018, the University of the West Indies-Institute of Gender and Development Studies conducted research and developed a Gender Justice Scorecard to assess fiscal policymaking in Trinidad and Tobago; and has been advocating on gender responsive budgeting approach

Enhancing civil society participation through networks

- Establishment of the SDGs Catalysts Network under the CSOs4GoodGov project which used the power of networks to strengthen civil society engagement, participation and voice in national development issues

Cross-sectoral collaboration and inclusion of vulnerable groups in climate responses

- Habitat for Humanity Trinidad and Tobago collaboration with disability organisations to implement a campaign promoting hurricane resilient construction techniques, healthy housing practices and disaster preparedness, targeting low-income and vulnerable groups with special emphasis on the deaf and autistic.

Facilitating development of civil society agendas on climate change/environment

- Development of a [civil society agenda for impacts of climate change in Tobago](#) (2012)
- Engagement of civil society actors to collectively develop the [Civil Society Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of the Shared Living Marine Resources of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems \(2018-2030\)](#)⁴², that provides a framework for how civil society will help to address the priorities and actions in the politically endorsed regional programme.

Using participatory tools and approaches to ensure community voices and local knowledge are incorporated

- [Participatory 3D modelling](#) (P3DM) used to facilitate effective participation by local communities and other stakeholders in climate change vulnerability assessments and action planning in [Tobago](#) (CANARI-led 2012) and Matura (EMA-led). The P3DM process helps capture traditional knowledge and local priorities for addressing climate change.

Supporting entrepreneurship in climate related sectors

- The Caribbean Climate Innovation Centre supports local Caribbean companies to build their businesses in climate-related sectors including via idea generation sessions; seeding local companies with climate-related business opportunities; and introducing new ideas to local climate markets.

Piloting of green buildings and infrastructure including sharing learning on process

- Piloting of a green building-Savannah East, by the Green Building Council; the process included training, education and on-site meetings with local contractors to build their experience. Construction waste diverted to landfills or recycled where possible.
- The [Downtown Green Roof project](#) – first rooftop garden in Trinidad and Tobago, piloted by Cocoa Republic/IAMovement

Promoting community co-management as part of sustainable livelihoods approach

- [Nature Seekers](#) model of co-management for turtle conservation and research – the first real co-management partnership in Trinidad between a community-based organisation and a government agency
- Grand Riviere Nature Tour Guides Association working alongside the Forestry Division to co-manage Grande Riviere Beach during sea turtle nesting season

Building community capacity for climate change adaptation

CANARI's development of a [toolkit](#) to support community climate change adaptation in the Caribbean context; a [radar tool](#) to help community SMEs assess their businesses in terms of triple bottom line performance; and piloting of a value chain analysis method to help SMEs 'climate proof' their businesses.

⁴² CANARI is working as a co-executing partner under the five year (2015-2020) UNDP/(GEF) Catalysing Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems project (CLME+ Project) to promote broader participation of, and contributions from, civil society groups in the implementation of the CLME+ SAP by implementing the project Engaging Civil Society in CLME+ SAP Implementation.



Understanding economics of climate change to inform action

- IDB study conducted on [Understanding the Economics of Climate Adaptation in Trinidad and Tobago \(2014\)](#) calculated the economic effects of climate change in Trinidad and Tobago, proposed actions to mitigate losses caused by climate change, and analysed their economic costs and benefits

Building capacity for valuing and integrating ecosystem services in economic decision making

- The [ProEcoServ](#) project that increased policymakers' understanding of the potential to use natural capital accounting tools to value and mainstream ecosystem services in planning

Developing tools and methods for helping community SMEs assess the triple bottom-line

- Under the [#GE4U project](#) CANARI developed a Local Green Blue Enterprise Radar tool to help businesses assess their triple bottom line, as well as a methodology for 'climate proofing' of value chains of nature-resource based SMEs

Supporting ideas and innovation for climate action

- The Caribbean Climate Innovation Centre which supports local Caribbean companies to build their businesses in climate-related sectors including via idea generation sessions; seeding local companies with climate-related business opportunities; and introduction of new ideas to local climate markets.

Piloting and developing demonstration projects utilising green approaches

- Government pilots of renewable energy installations in government buildings including hospitals, medical clinics and schools. Collaboration with the GEF on the greening of 2 community centres to incorporate renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies and systems⁴³
- Trinidad and Tobago Green Building Council piloting green buildings and providing capacity building
- IAMovement piloting quarry rehabilitation under the GEF IWeco project

Enhancing consumer education and awareness using social media and local culture and lifestyle trends

- The [New Fire Festival](#) and the [Green Market Santa Cruz](#) promoting green/sustainable living
- Social media advocacy by IAMovement – video infographic production on climate-energy issues – Rethinking Energy, for sharing to wide audiences.

43 <http://www.energy.gov.tt/our-business/alternative-energy/pilot-projects/>



Engaging in legal and policy advocacy to ensure enforcement

- Civil society led [Escazú Agreement advocacy campaign 2019](#)

Building coalitions and leveraging partnerships for increased voice

- Civil society coalitions/networks established under EU-funded projects - [CSOs for Environmental Governance](#) focusing on environmental transparency and accountability in the country's extractive industry and [CSOs for Good Governance](#) focusing on civil society participation in the SDGs, provide models and lessons for engaging in joint advocacy efforts

Encouraging and facilitating citizen science and community-based monitoring

- Academia (i.e. University of the West Indies, University of Trinidad and Tobago) leading on research and promoting citizen science e.g. BioBlitz exercise which promotes partnering to collect and analyse biodiversity data
- Citizen science monitoring programme developed by the Environmental Research Institute Charlotteville, using tour guides and environmental CSOs for sea turtle monitoring and research in Tobago

Exploring alternate spaces/forums for civil society dialogue and ideas

- A local version of "Citizen Assembly" i.e. the "Macco Senate" initiative by Lloyd Best Institute brought together citizens and CSOs to discuss critical sustainable development issues.

Improving CSO access to (small) grants

- Successful small grants mechanisms targeting CSOs, developed by CANARI under regional projects such as the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund in the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot (2010-2015)
- Direct grants to local communities, community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations by the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme

Increasing public engagement through co-management and capacity building of CSOs/SMEs

- Nature Seekers-Forestry Division co-management arrangement in Matura, contributing to co-management of key biodiversity and Protected Areas
- Capacity building of resource managers and users and SMEs by CANARI for conservation and sustainable use of natural resources



Exploring civil society models for collaboration on governance and development issues

- Civil society coalitions/networks established under European Union funded projects - *CSOs for Environmental Governance* and *CSOs for Good Governance* which engage CSOs from diverse sectors to collaborate and enhance their participation in local governance and development issues.

Leveraging technology for sustainable agriculture

- The University of the West Indies' e-agriculture project – AgriNeTT, which developed and utilises mobile apps to provide farmers and policy makers with locally developed information to inform practices could potentially be expanded to include climate information

Promoting and demonstrating partnerships across sectors

- IAMovement and the National Quarries Company Limited collaborating on a quarry rehabilitation project under the wider GEF IWECO project that aims to address water, land and biodiversity resource management as well as climate change.
- The Adopt a River Programme – an initiative by the Water and Sewerage Authority involving communities, CSO partners and corporate entities in the improvement of watersheds throughout Trinidad and Tobago
- The Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) Focal Point Network and the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Committee – multi-sectoral committees set up by Government

Section 6. Call for Accelerated Climate Action



The cross-cutting impacts of climate change reveal the complexity and multi-faceted nature of the approach that must be taken to deal with this challenge. At the national level, CSOs have contributed to shifting government policy, raising awareness and, importantly, making the connection between climate change and national development issues. At the local level, CSOs provide a crucial link between government policymaking and practice and people on the ground.

In the context of climate change and ongoing degradation of the ecosystems critical to our survival, civil society in Trinidad and Tobago calls for more opportunities for engagement and greater involvement of women, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities in coordinated action on this front.



To address and accelerate action on climate change, the SDGs Catalysts Network and wider civil society calls on the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago:

1 To consider the 30 priorities and actions identified by civil society in addressing climate change and tracking progress on implementing SDG 13 Climate Action.

2 To practice more participatory approaches to implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and Vision 2030 by partnering with civil society.

3 To ensure that civil society is guaranteed an active role in national decision-making on climate change issues, including a role in deciding on priorities and monitoring implementation.

4 To recognise the contribution being made by civil society to delivering results on SDG 13 Climate Action.

5 To offer the support civil society needs including access to information, finances, partnerships and formalised roles in decision-making so that it can serve as a critical partner in climate action and sustainable development in Trinidad and Tobago.

6 To ensure that a multi-sectoral, integrated approach is taken to effectively address climate change and SDGs in Trinidad and Tobago and that the poor and most vulnerable are recognised and included in decision-making.

7 To put in place an adequate monitoring framework to effectively track progress on SDG 13 Climate Action.

8 To practice good governance and prioritise access to information, transparency and accountability in all actions taken to address climate action and sustainable development in Trinidad and Tobago.

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Caribbean Natural Resources Institute

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a regional technical non-profit organisation which has been working across the Caribbean for over 30 years. We are registered in Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Lucia and the United States Virgin Islands, with charitable status in Trinidad and Tobago and 501 (c)(3) status in the United States.

Our mission is to promote and facilitate stakeholder participation in the stewardship of natural resources in the Caribbean. Our work currently focuses on four themes: Biodiversity and Ecosystems, Equity, Resilience and Participatory Governance.

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