



OECS green economy diagnostic: Exploring opportunities for green economy transformation in the Eastern Caribbean

Under the project #GE4U: Transformation towards an inclusive green economy in the Caribbean

Background

Since 2010, Member and Associate States of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)¹ have been involved in regional and national dialogues to explore what ‘green economy’ means in the Caribbean context, which resulted in the definition shown in the box to the right. There continues to be interest in the OECS on how green economy approaches can provide new economic opportunities with more environmentally sustainable and inclusive development. Several recent studies have started to explore ideas and opportunities. For example, a scoping study² was conducted in Saint Lucia to explore potential opportunities in specific sectors such as agriculture, tourism, construction and manufacturing and considering cross cutting issues such as energy, water and waste. There are several initiatives to develop geothermal, solar and wind renewable energy opportunities in the OECS and a regional Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) study³ assesses the potential for renewable energy to support transitioning to a green economy in the Caribbean. A World Bank report⁴ highlights the potential for marine and coastal resources in a ‘blue economy’ to support growth and provides a framework of principles to “ensure that financing meets both economic and environmental objectives, consistent with internationally accepted principles on equity and social justice, and with a priority on poverty reduction.” These principles are congruent with principles for a green economy. OECS Member and Associate States are also looking to their Caribbean neighbours, such as Barbados and Jamaica, for lessons on their experiences with green economy transitions.

“In the context of the Caribbean, a Green Economy is one that aims for long-term prosperity, rather than solely for growth, through equitable distribution of economic benefits and effective management of ecological resources. It is economically viable and resilient to both external and internal shocks; self-directed and not driven by external agendas or funding opportunities, and self-reliant by being based predominantly on domestic production and investment. A Caribbean Green Economy is pro-poor and generates decent jobs and working conditions that offer opportunities for self-advancement for local people.” CANARI Policy Brief 13

Recognising the multiplicity of potential opportunities, the potential for leveraging synergies and coordination at the sub-regional level, and the importance of distilling key recommendations for pathways forward and communicating these to policy makers and other key stakeholders, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is collaborating with the OECS Commission to conduct a diagnostic study of potential opportunities and capacity needs for a transition to inclusive and sustainable economic development. This is intended to feed into development and implementation of the new *OECS Growth and Development Strategy* which is currently being developed through the OECS Economic Affairs Council. This is being implemented as the *OECS green economy diagnostic: Exploring opportunities for green economy in the Eastern Caribbean* component.

¹ The OECS is a sub-regional economic union comprising Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands are associate members of the OECS.

² The study was conducted by the University of the West Indies (UWI) for the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). See http://web.unep.org/greenconomy/sites/unep.org.greeneconomy/files/final_green_economy_scoping_study_for_saint_lucia.pdf.

³ The study was conducted by CANARI for the CDB. See http://www.caribank.org/uploads/2014/05/Booklet_A-New-Paradigm-for-Caribbean-Development-Transitioning-to-a-Green-Economy.pdf.

⁴ See <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/oecs/publication/demystifying-blue-economy-caribbean>.

This work is part of a global European Commission-funded project *Creating enabling policy conditions for the transformation towards an inclusive green economy* that is taking place in several countries and regions of the globe (or hubs). CANARI is managing the *#GE4U: Transformation towards an inclusive green economy in the Caribbean* (*#GE4U*)⁵ project as the Caribbean component of this global project. This will: (1) support documentation and sharing of knowledge on the green economy in the Caribbean; (2) explore the potential opportunities and capacity needs for green economy transformations in the Eastern Caribbean; (3) explore the potential for small and micro enterprises (SMEs) to be a pathway to an inclusive and green economy in Trinidad and Tobago; (4) mobilise regional and national multi-stakeholder networks to advocate for green economy transformations in the Caribbean; and (5) leverage and catalyse partnerships and additional support to explore other pathways (such as renewable energy and participatory economic governance) and transformations in specific sectors and countries.

Goal

The overall goal of the *OECS green economy diagnostic* component is to develop recommendations for sub-regional economic policy which will shape future development planning processes, plans and institutions that are needed to deliver a sustainable and inclusive economy in the OECS.

Project activities

The activities under the *OECS green economy diagnostic* component are to:

- conduct a desk study and interviews to produce a diagnostic study analysing the status of the transition to a green economy in the OECS, potential opportunities and institutional capacities needed;
- facilitate a one-day workshop with senior technical officers of OECS Member and Associate States in a one-day workshop preceding a meeting of the OECS Economic Affairs Council. The draft diagnostic study along with recommendations from the workshop will be presented to the Ministers at the Council meeting on the following day for their consideration;
- finalise the diagnostic study and draft a policy brief and disseminate to policy makers and other stakeholders.

Project Duration

April 2017 to September 2019

Project outcomes and outputs

The outcomes of the *OECS green economy diagnostic* component are:

- Civil society, small enterprises, policy makers and researchers working closely together to implement an inclusive transition to a green economy through changes to policies, practice and legislation in Trinidad and Tobago
- Evidence, inventions and recommendations being employed within national processes in the OECS

The outputs of the *OECS green economy diagnostic* component are:

- A diagnostic study and a policy brief on potential opportunities, blocks, catalysts and institutional capacities needed for green economy transitions in the OECS



European Union

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⁵ See <http://www.canari.org/ge4u> for more information on the project.