

Rapid Readiness Assessment for the Transition to a Sustainable Blue Economy

Pilot project in Trinidad and Tobago

March 2023



The Commonwealth
Blue Charter

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Acronyms

CANARI	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
DMRF	Department of Marine Resources and Fisheries (Tobago)
DOALAS	Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
EEZ	exclusive economic zone
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
GDP	gross domestic product
GEF	Global Environment Fund
GORTT	Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IMA	Institute of Marine Affairs
MoPD	Ministry of Planning and Development
MoWT	Ministry of Works and Transport
MoU	memorandum of understanding
MPA	marine protected area
MRV	monitoring, reporting and verification
MSP	marine spatial planning
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NMPS	National Maritime Policy and Strategy
NPAP	National Protected Areas Policy
NPASP	National Protected Area Systems Plan for Trinidad and Tobago
PNA	protected natural area
RRA	Rapid Readiness Assessment
SBE	sustainable blue economy
SBE-TF	Sustainable Blue Economy Transition Framework
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
THA	Tobago House of Assembly
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UWI	University of the West Indies

Executive Summary

This blue economy Rapid Readiness Assessment (RRA) pilot project was undertaken in Trinidad and Tobago, alongside a second pilot project in Antigua and Barbuda, to establish the government's readiness to embark on the transition to a sustainable blue economy (SBE). The RRA approach is based on the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Sustainable Blue Economy Transition Framework (SBE-TF) and is being trialled by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with UNEP, Howell Marine Consulting and the University of Portsmouth, under the Commonwealth Blue Charter programme. This report presents the findings of the RRA, with recommendations.

Working with the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, and informed by desk-based analysis, in-country stakeholder workshops and interviews, the RRA centred on developing a shared understanding of the current situation regarding the transition to an SBE and the actions needed to further progress.

Trinidad and Tobago is distinctly different to its Caribbean neighbours, with an ocean-based economy that is shaped by the significant economic contribution of the oil and gas sector, and with relatively lower focus on tourism, fisheries or other ocean sectors. The SBE can be a driving force in the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's COVID-19 recovery plan. However, there has been slow progress in the implementation of ocean policy and legislation, including Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), fishing legislation and maritime policy. **Developing an SBE will require expediting the passage of these relevant bills and policies.**

Trinidad and Tobago is not facing a lack of capacity and resources, per se, but rather **a fundamental need to secure increased high-level commitment to an SBE to channel the needed resources.** Decarbonisation and the incremental phasing out of fossil fuels could be a central component of the SBE, linking the future of the petroleum sector to the SBE, and providing a framework for financing the transition.

Other actions set out in this report relate to **developing a shared vision for the SBE**, awareness-raising of the benefits of taking such an approach, and **improved ministerial co-ordination.** An opportunity exists to **review and align provisions made in the draft National Maritime Policy and Strategy 2021** (NMPS, awaiting approval), creating a package of legislation which would provide a co-ordinated approach to the SBE and significantly advance the transition.

Although legislative progress has been slow, **readiness for the transition is relatively high in Trinidad and Tobago** with clear understanding of challenges and opportunities, and **strong and capable institutions ready to act**. With appropriate attention, co-ordination and resources, **addressing the conditions flagged in this RRA is highly feasible**, including implementation of marine spatial planning (MSP), centralised data management, and research and innovation in key sectors. However, attention is needed to ensure **a co-ordinated and integrated approach which considers the specific context for each island**, as captured in the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 objectives, pending cabinet approval.

Transitioning towards an SBE is at times complex, and is challenging maritime institutions globally. The findings of this RRA, however, suggest that Trinidad and Tobago is well placed to advance its own transition.

1. Introduction

Globally, change is needed to decouple economic growth from ecosystem degradation, and to generate wealth from our land and seas in a more sustainable way. Ocean states need to recognise the dependency of their societies on healthy marine ecosystems and develop approaches to ensure that the ocean can support human development needs, now and into the future.

Moving beyond conventional understandings of maritime economies (i.e. economic activities that directly or indirectly take place in the ocean), the SBE concept drives focus on how to promote sustainable livelihoods and economies in an equitable manner that also safeguards the health of the ocean. UNEP defines an SBE as:

'...one in which the sustainable use of ocean and coastal resources generates equitably and inclusively distributed benefits for people, protects and restores healthy ocean ecosystems, and contributes to the delivery of global ambitions for a sustainable future.'

The transition towards an SBE is a multifaceted process that combines natural, social and economic considerations, and which must embed the value of nature at the heart of decision-making. To support countries in this transition, UNEP has developed the SBE transition framework (SBE-TF) which aims to make implementing an SBE feasible and practical. The transition framework provides countries with guidance for developing a strategic process to enable progress towards an SBE, based on existing governance and institutional landscapes. It describes a set of principles that drive forward national implementation, and has been particularly designed to accelerate national contributions to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SBE-TF describes three broad phases of transition:

- phase 1 focuses on analysis of the current ocean governance system in a specific country (6-12 months);

- phase 2 guides the creation of a national integrated policy and supporting governance framework (6-12 months); and
- phase 3 (20-25 years) focuses on the implementation of the integrated policy (created in phase 2) including ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

The phases of transition are underpinned by seven cross-cutting elements that need to be in place and should be considered for all activities and decisions that take place on a country's journey to an SBE:

- leadership;
- institutional infrastructure and culture;
- laws and policies;
- planning and management;
- sustainable finance;
- stakeholder engagement and coalitions; and
- data and monitoring.

To support countries in the transition, an RRA process is being piloted in Trinidad and Tobago and elsewhere. This process supports information gathering and dialogue at national level to enable countries to better understand the current status of their efforts to create an ocean-based economy and from this, to identify key enabling actions and next steps to drive the transition to an SBE. The RRA provides a high-level snapshot of the existing ocean-based economy landscape with an eye towards establishing the unique transition pathway for each country. By its nature, RRA provides a rapid

overview and is not intended as a comprehensive analysis (which may also be required). Working with national government and stakeholders, it aims to:

- assess readiness for taking forward a transition to an SBE;
- collectively identify and understand the necessary first steps; and
- identify short- to medium-term priority resources required.

Supported by UNEP and the Commonwealth Secretariat through the Commonwealth Blue Charter programme, Trinidad and Tobago, alongside Antigua and Barbuda, agreed to pilot the RRA process from October to December 2022. The RRA is derived from:

- a two-day stakeholder workshop held on 18 and 19 October 2022 at the Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA), Port of Spain, Trinidad;
- interviews with stakeholders;
- an online questionnaire; and
- supplementary information from a desk-based review of documents and policies.

Based on the above information, this report provides:

- an overview of the blue economy in Trinidad and Tobago to date (section 2);
- the main issues and opportunities in the ocean-based economy that exist across key enabling factors, including the challenges and barriers to overcoming them (section 3);
- an assessment of national readiness to transition to an SBE (section 4); and
- recommendations (section 5).

2. The Sustainable Blue Economy in Trinidad and Tobago

2.1 Country context

- Population: around 1,365,805¹ (of which 60,874 reside in Tobago²)
- Surface area: Trinidad – 4,828 km²; Tobago – 300 km²
- Coastline: 704km
- Land to sea ratio: around 1:15 (EEZ=77,502 km²)

As an ocean state, Trinidad and Tobago's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) is 15 times the size of its land mass, providing a wealth of marine resources that require a clear and coherent governance framework for their sustainable management and use. Trinidad and Tobago is a small but high-income country, particularly when compared to other island nations in the Caribbean. The current ocean-based economy is dominated by the oil and gas sector. This dependence on a single sector has led to a 'boom-and-bust' economic cycle that is heavily reactive to, and dependent on, external market conditions and foreign exchange rates, with little resilience to global fluctuations. Given the increasing global shift towards renewable energy and the transition away from fossil fuel use, there is an increasing need for economic diversification. Other key ocean sectors, including tourism, fisheries, and ports and shipping, make significantly lower contributions to gross domestic product

(GDP) but provide disproportionately higher levels of employment when compared with the oil and gas sector (see section 2.2).

Trinidad and Tobago is a twin-island state, each with very different characteristics which must be considered in understanding the development of an SBE. The Tobago House of Assembly (THA), the devolved legislative body responsible for the island of Tobago, handles many of the governance responsibilities and plays a critical role. Tobago is much smaller than Trinidad, and relies on an annual fiscal allocation from central government to support development in the island. Regarding the blue economy, tourism is a much more prominent blue economy sector in Tobago, with the majority of international visitors travelling to the island along with domestic visitors from Trinidad. This places greater reliance on the health of marine ecosystems in Tobago where sensitive development alongside ecosystem protection measures are required. The artisanal fishing industry is also of greater significance to the communities in Tobago, with less reliance on the oil and gas sector although exploration is underway just off the coast of Tobago with an electromagnetic survey over 60 per cent complete at time of writing. The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT), including the THA, have recognised the need to diversify the national economy and to increase economic resilience, particularly since the Covid-19 pandemic. National strategies including Vision 2030,³ Roadmap for Trinidad and Tobago Post Covid-19 Pandemic⁴ and the Tobago Roadmap to Recovery,⁵ highlight the opportunity for economic

1 Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Planning and Development, Government of Trinidad and Tobago (no date). Population Statistics [online dataset]. <https://cso.gov.tt/subjects/population-and-vital-statistics/population>

2 Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Planning and Development, Government of Trinidad and Tobago (no date). Trinidad & Tobago 2011 Housing and Population Census [online dataset]. <https://cso.gov.tt/census/2011-census-data/>

3 Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (2016). *Vision 2030: The National Development Strategy of Trinidad and Tobago 2016-2030*. Ministry of Planning and Development.

4 Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (2020). *Roadmap for Trinidad and Tobago Post Covid-19 Pandemic*. Ministry of Planning and Development.

5 Tobago House of Assembly (THA) (2020). *Tobago Roadmap to Recovery: Recommendations for rebuilding the Tobago Society in 2020*.

reformation to enhance social and environmental sustainability, aligned with the UN SDGs and other international commitments. However, economic diversification will place additional pressure on the marine area where space and resources are already subject to considerable demand and competition. This is further complicated by unregulated or illegal activities. Transitioning to an SBE will require addressing complex trade-offs in decision-making across policy areas and sectors, and a robust and coherent framework for management, regulation, enforcement and monitoring.

Trinidad and Tobago is party to the key international conventions relating to the marine environment, including the Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD), the Paris Agreement, and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as well as being signatories to the High Ambition Coalition (HAC) for Nature and People and the Global Ocean Alliance for '30by30', demonstrating commitments to ocean sustainability. Trinidad and Tobago also maintains a range of regional and other supra-national co-operative alliances relevant to the SBE (see Appendix 1).

The coastal zone of Trinidad and Tobago features biologically diverse ecosystems, including coral reefs, seagrass beds, rocky shores, beaches, mudflats and mangrove swamps. These provide a range of provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting services that include erosion control, storm protection, floodwater retention, water quality maintenance and climate regulation. However, there are environmental challenges that also have economic and social impact, threatening water and food security, livelihoods and coastal settlements. Issues identified via stakeholder consultation undertaken as part of the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 development, included (see Appendix 3 for a complete list):

- habitat damage and loss from development or unsustainable practices;
- unplanned and unregulated development;
- pollution (from land, ships, and oil and gas leakage);
- over exploitation (e.g. fisheries);
- conflicts over use/competition for space; and
- loss of public access to the coast.

Trinidad and Tobago's coastal ecosystems play a critical role in protecting the shorelines of both islands. A 2013 study estimated that the average annual loss due to floods and storms was US\$55.7 million.⁶ The Trinidad and Tobago *Fifth National Report to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity* states that coastal protection services provided by coral reefs, mangroves and marshes are valued at US\$49.6 million annually, providing natural disaster protection especially in the context of climate change, and also supporting recreation and tourism-based activities valued at up to US\$390,428 per hectare per year.⁷

Despite Trinidad and Tobago's dependency on healthy marine ecosystems, and the services and resources they provide, there is only one legally gazetted marine protected area (MPA), with a second proposed, both of which are found in Tobago: the Buccoo Reef/Bon Accord Lagoon (also a Ramsar site) (1,287 hectares), and a proposed North-East Tobago MPA (59,280 hectares). Tobago's North-East region, a ridge-to-reef ecosystem including a marine area of 68,384 hectares, was also declared a biosphere reserve by the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme in 2020.

Many national laws and policies relating to marine management need updating, with several new legislative and policy instruments in draft, and/or pending cabinet and parliamentary approval (see Appendix 2). A lack of policy coherence or framework for integrated marine management means that the wealth of ocean resources in the EEZ are overexploited or subject to unsustainable practices that threaten economic, social and environmental resilience. Transitioning to an SBE will help Trinidad and Tobago steer national and local economic development towards sustainable and equitable ocean wealth.

6 Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (2013). Country disaster risk evaluation of Trinidad and Tobago (ATN/OC-12349-TT): Draft report assets exposure model for risk analysis exposition model proxy, prepared for Ministry of National Security, Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (OPDM), April, 2013, IDB.

7 Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (2016). *Fifth National Report to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity*. Port of Spain, Trinidad.

2.2 Key ocean-based sectors in Trinidad and Tobago

Oil and gas

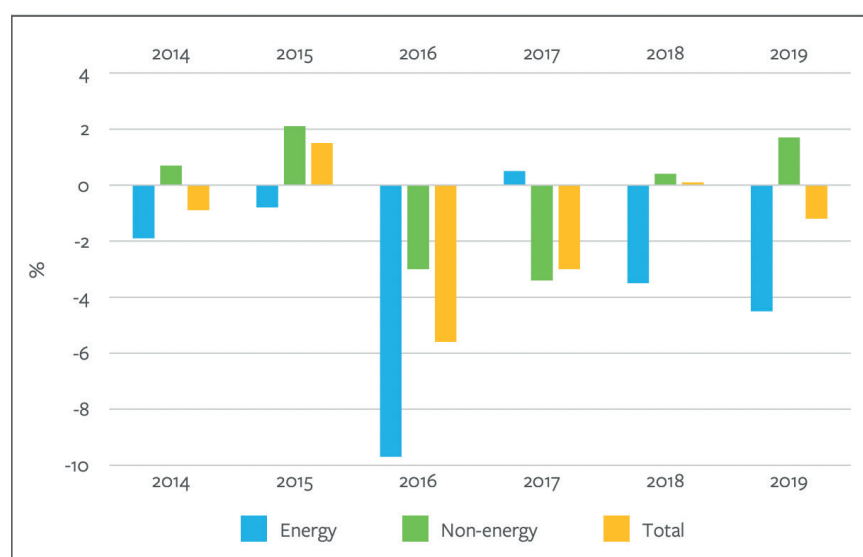
Trinidad and Tobago is the largest producer of oil and natural gas (including petrochemicals) in the Caribbean, and the sector represents around 40 per cent of the country's GDP and over 80 per cent of export revenues.⁸ Given that sector's dominance, less emphasis is given to ocean-based sectors, particularly fisheries and tourism. Notably, the dominance of the oil and gas sector in terms of revenue is disproportionate to its contribution to employment, representing less than 5 per cent of national employment (approximately 10,600 people)⁹ Economic reliance on this sector presents challenges for SBE transition, particularly as it represents a sector in long-term decline with disproportionate benefits across society. However, the revenue it generates presents Trinidad and Tobago with short- to mid-term opportunities to support the funding of initiatives which could accelerate progress to an SBE and drive economic diversification in the long-term. The skills and

infrastructure associated with the sector also provide an asset for development of other sectors such as offshore renewable energy.

Maritime and ports

The maritime and ports sector in Trinidad and Tobago includes diverse activities, including port operations, ship repair and dry docking, and marine services (offshore bulk trans-shipment, bunkering, cold stacking,¹⁰ maritime logistics and open ship registry). Trinidad and Tobago has two major cargo ports, both in Trinidad: Point Lisas and Port of Spain. The country also has liquid and dry bulk handling facilities, as well as liquefied natural gas (LNG) handling facilities. Due to its geography, Trinidad's ports are well positioned for trans-shipment and cargo routes, sitting 2,200km from the Panama Canal. However, a lack of investment in infrastructure, equipment and technology, as well as slow processing and customs procedures, means that these ports may be less competitive than others in the region. They also lack sufficient infrastructure to cope with future shipping needs, such as the capacity for larger ships or the provision

Figure 2.1: Real GDP growth rates for period 2014–2019



Source: Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (2021). *First Biennial Update Report of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago under the UNFCCC*.

8 Ogeer, N. (2020). *Covid-19 Impact on the Oil and Gas Sector*. Commonwealth Secretariat.

9 Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago (2022). *Summary of economic indicators report*. <https://www.central-bank.org.tt/sites/default/files/reports/summary-economic-indicators-bulletin-june-2022-20220310.pdf>

10 'Cold stacking' is when an oil rig is shut down, with the crew reduced to zero or a few key individuals. The rig is then 'stored' in a harbour, shipyard or designated area offshore until it needs to be activated. This is as opposed to 'warm' or 'hot' stacking, when a rig is idle but remains manned and deployable while stored.

of adequate waste management facilities at ports and marinas. There are also concerns over environmental performance and the impact of piracy on port activities. Investing in digitisation and automation, as with the Single Economic Window¹¹ initiative, represents a key opportunity for the nation, with other opportunities including the creation of a regional hub for bunkering (for example, alternative fuels such as LNG, ammonia and hydrogen, which would support a transition away from oil and gas dependency).

Tourism

Unusually for a Caribbean island, tourism represents just 7.9 per cent of total national GDP¹² generating around US\$2.4bn each year. Tobago has a higher dependence on tourism revenues than its neighbour (around 10 per cent of the national GDP raised by Tobago alone)¹³ and receives around 60–70 per cent of all cruise ship arrivals to Trinidad and Tobago.¹⁴ Given the relatively low contribution to GDP, employment from tourism is high, estimated at 62,100 people in 2019,¹⁵ making the industry and dependent livelihoods particularly vulnerable to external market forces and shocks. This is especially true for Tobago where tourism accounts for approximately 25 per cent of employment.¹⁶ The tourism sector was hugely affected by Covid-19. Challenges remain in growing the sector including a lack of differentiation within the Caribbean destination market, changing customer preferences, and a slow transition to digitisation. Sargassum blooms are a considerable threat, with rotting vegetation off-putting to

potential visitors as well as bringing high clean-up costs. Ecotourism and community tourism present a significant opportunity for both islands, though these rely heavily on appropriate management to ensure a healthy and thriving marine environment. The coral reefs, pristine beaches and one of the largest leatherback turtle breeding sites are significant attractions for visitors, national and international. There is potential for expansion of yachting services as well as sustainable expansion of the cruise sector (particularly in Tobago).

Fisheries

The fisheries sector accounted for 0.6 per cent GDP in 2018,¹⁷ although this is perceived as an under-valuation due to a lack of consistent catch data, particularly since landings and exports from locally flagged vessels only are reported. There are many foreign-flagged vessels landing catch in Trinidad that is then exported to the US. Although profits return to the respective countries, Trinidad and Tobago benefit from associated processing fees and taxes. Trinidad and Tobago is a net importer of fish: in 2019, estimated exports amounted to US\$26.1 million, while imports were US\$43.6 million.¹⁸ This is largely driven by consumer taste for species beyond national fish stock and, as with oil and gas, places a dependency on external market forces. Fisheries also represent a disproportionately large employment sector given direct economic contribution, estimated at 50,000 people.¹⁹ The contribution to subsistence is also not reflected in current economic valuations of the sector.

There are challenges related to out-of-date fisheries legislation, resulting in a lack of effective regulation or management. Illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing is problematic, as well as the use of inappropriate equipment and a highly industrialised coastal area causing environmental damage, and high bycatch rates and waste. Artisanal fishers, the largest fisheries subsector, are particularly vulnerable to these challenges and are increasingly squeezed out of the marine space.

11 The Single Electronic Window (SEW) for Trade and Business Facilitation Project, branded as TTBizLink, is an IT-based trade solution to streamline and digitise import, export and transit-related regulatory requirements.

12 World Travel and Tourism Council (2022). *Travel and Tourism in the Caribbean: Prospects for Growth*. <https://wtcc.org/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/2022/Travel-and-tourism-in-the-caribbean.pdf>

13 Tobago House of Assembly (THA) (2022). Tobago House of Assembly Budget Statement for Fiscal – 2023.

14 Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (2021). *Trinidad and Tobago: A blue economy innovation action plan v1.0*.

15 Knoema (no date). 'Trinidad and Tobago – Contribution of travel and tourism to employment', webpage. <https://knoema.com/atlas/Trinidad-and-Tobago/topics/Tourism/Travel-and-Tourism-Total-Contribution-to-Employment/Contribution-of-travel-and-tourism-to-employment>

16 James, C. (2020, October 15). Tobago's tourism needs more incentive to realise full potential. *Trinidad and Tobago Newsday*. <https://newsday.co.tt/2020/10/15/tobagos-tourism-needs-more-incentive-to-realise-full-potential/>

17 Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) (2018). *Fisheries and aquaculture country profiles: The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago*.

18 Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) (2019). *Globefish market profile – 2019*.

19 Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) (2019). *Fishery and Aquaculture Country Profiles: Trinidad and Tobago, 2018*. <https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/facp/tto>

The internal market for fish is dominated by seven species which are currently overexploited. With 100 species in national waters, there is an opportunity to reduce pressure on key fish stocks and to enhance the national market by diversifying consumer preference, including through public campaigns.

2.3 Emerging sectors and opportunities

A number of emerging sectors and opportunities for growth in existing sectors could play a role in the transition to an SBE in Trinidad and Tobago, including the following.

- Offshore renewables, particularly offshore wind – a recent assessment conducted by the University of West Indies (UWI) found the potential to generate 25GW from offshore wind in the Trinidad and Tobago EEZ.²⁰
- The development of the ecotourism sector – the Ministry of Tourism is already drafting new policies for community tourism and ecotourism. Castara Retreats in Tobago demonstrates the huge potential for the community ecotourism model as part of a sustainable tourism sector in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Yachting and other recreational boating activities. The once burgeoning yachting sector has declined since its prime in the early-2000s, outcompeted by neighbours such as Grenada, subjected to onerous bureaucracy (there are over a dozen forms to enter Trinidad and Tobago), and heavily impacted by crime. There has been a significant increase in recreational boating activities but they are poorly regulated and not co-ordinated. There has been no clear policy nor development of infrastructure to support growth in the sector, such as wastewater facilities or appropriate management of the use of anti-fouling paints.

- Diversification of the fisheries sector, including campaigns to change consumer tastes to expand the number of species or diversifying use of fish products such as fish oil or silage for agricultural purposes; and targeting new stocks, such as the invasive lionfish.
- Mariculture is in the very early stages of development, and the IMA is currently trialling mariculture for snapper.
- Offshore infrastructure decommissioning as oil and gas facilities come to the end of their operational life, including the dismantling and recycling of materials, which will require additional regulations.
- Carbon capture and storage (CCS) – Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, the UWI and the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) are to identify reservoirs both on land and in marine areas to accelerate the implementation of CCS in reservoirs and depleted oil fields.²¹
- Research and innovation, such as the Maritime Blue Innovation Technology Parks being considered in Tobago.

While there is plenty of potential for diversification within the ocean-based economy, expanding activities in the marine area will increase competition for space, which is already the source of conflicting priorities across multiple sectors. Emerging sectors also require new legislation and regulatory frameworks that complement an integrated marine management approach, as well as consistent monitoring and reporting, to ensure sustainability.

2.4 Existing support for the SBE transition

In his 2019 address to the Caribbean Development Bank's board of governors, the Honourable Dr Keith Christopher Rowley MP, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, called on the region to 'harness the true potential of the

20 Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) (2022, November 29). 'Launch of The Roadmap for a Green Hydrogen Economy in Trinidad and Tobago'. Press release. <https://www.energy.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Media-Release-Launch-of-The-Roadmap-for-a-Green-Hydrogen-Economy-in-Trinidad-and-Tobago.pdf>

21 Khan, F. (2021, February 1) Address by Senator the Honourable Franklin Khan, Minister of Energy and Energy Industries. Speech delivered at Energy Chamber's Energy Efficiency and Renewables Virtual Conference 2021. www.energy.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Address-by-Senator-the-Honourable-Franklin-Khan-at-the-energy-chambers-energy-efficiency-and-renewables-virtual-conference-2021.pdf

blue economy', highlighting the Caribbean's need to 'leverage its coastal and marine resources to generate sustained growth, unlocking the great potential of fishing, tourism and shipping industries'. More broadly, national policies and strategies recognise the need for economic diversification and development that are aligned with UN SDGs and deliver economic, social and environmental sustainability.

There are legislative and policy instruments in draft, and/or pending cabinet and parliament approval, that would support and promote the transition to an SBE for Trinidad and Tobago and indicate the country's commitment to improving integrated marine management (see Appendix 2 for a list of key laws and policies relevant to an SBE, and section 3.3 for more detail about related challenges and opportunities). However, these initiatives are not given priority, leaving critical gaps in the governance framework.

There have been several recent consultations and resulting reports that aim to articulate opportunities and recommendations for Trinidad and Tobago to transition to an SBE, notably the *Blue Economy Innovation Action Plan*,²² *A Sustainable Blue Economy: Trinidad and Tobago*,²³ and *Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap*.²⁴ There is, however, no unified vision for the SBE across Trinidad and Tobago. So, forthcoming legislation and strategies may lack the coherence needed to deliver sustainability across these sectors and to manage competing priorities efficiently and effectively.

22 Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (2021). *Trinidad and Tobago: A Blue Economy Innovation Action Plan v1.0*.

23 UNESCO-IOC, IMA (2021). *A Sustainable Blue Economy for Trinidad and Tobago*. UNESCO (IOC Technical Series 166/ICAM Dossier no 16).

24 McCue, J (2022). *Tobago blue economy roadmap: Study for the Inter-American Development Bank*. Unpublished report for the Inter-American Development Bank.

3. Cross-cutting Conditions and Enabling Actions

This section reviews seven cross-cutting enabling factors which will need to play a foundational role in building an SBE in Trinidad and Tobago.

3.1 Leadership

Strong leadership is key to achieving a successful transition to an SBE, especially for a twin-island nation such as Trinidad and Tobago, with a need to align activities and realise synergies while respecting different priorities. Leadership should come from the highest level possible to support and champion the development of an SBE transition strategy for Trinidad and Tobago, with a recognised mandate to advocate for developing an SBE agenda. High-level political buy-in for an SBE transition is needed across all GORTT, including THA departments, that intersect with the blue economy to facilitate a united and coherent drive for change.

Developing a unified vision for the SBE in Trinidad and Tobago around which decision-makers and key stakeholders can coalesce is critical to facilitating long-term leadership for the SBE agenda. This should be developed and agreed through consultation with all relevant government departments and non-governmental stakeholders.

A significant challenge for creating the necessary leadership and buy-in to support the development of an SBE transition agenda in the GORTT, including the THA, is one of awareness. Relevant actors across GORTT need a shared understanding of what an SBE transition means for Trinidad and Tobago and their role in delivering it. This will enable them to provide national leadership that also inspires and facilitates stewardship through other stakeholder coalitions across the SBE that drive progress towards a shared SBE vision.

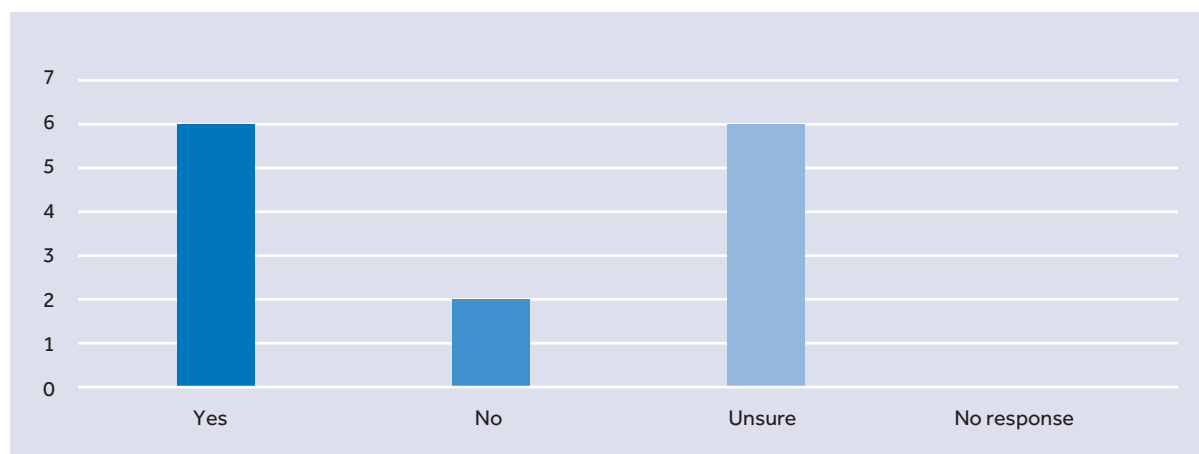
Government leadership should complement and support leadership emerging within other groups, providing a strategic perspective with a clear overarching vision and facilitating co-ordinated actions through coalitions (see section 3.6 – stakeholder engagement and coalitions).

Trinidad

Challenges

- While there is support for the SBE concept in some areas of GORTT, there is no ministry nor department with a mandate or allocated resources to work across government and lead an SBE transition.

Figure 3.1: Participant responses to the question, 'Are there high-level statements (e.g. from a minister or PM) in support of a blue economy?'



Source: survey data.

- The absence of a formal SBE mandate contributes to a lack of continuity and progress on the ocean sustainability agenda, exacerbated by a highly changeable political and administrative landscape within GORTT.
- There is some activity that is relevant to an SBE transition including legislative and policy development (pending cabinet and parliament approval) and supporting analysis by UNESCO, DOALOS and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) on the potential for an SBE in Trinidad and Tobago. However, ambitions and activities are not currently co-ordinated nor articulated as being part of an integrated approach to realise an SBE, leading to a lack of demonstrated support for or clearly defined commitment to an SBE transition within GORTT.
- Given the economic dependency on the oil and gas sector, and the need to tackle ongoing effects of the global pandemic, political appetite for an SBE transition is currently perceived as outweighed by the need to deliver immediate solutions and financial wins.

Opportunities

- The Minister of Planning and Development, Hon Pernelle Beckles-Robinson, has indicated support for developing an SBE agenda. The IMA has already played a key role in advocating for the potential of an SBE and supported delivery of this RRA pilot. Endowing the Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD) with a formal mandate for delivering an SBE transition would send a strong message of commitment that would help to drive the prioritisation of activities relating to an SBE transition within other government departments, and help to provide some level of permanency amid shifts in government administration.
- Cross-governmental awareness-raising and advocacy could be taken up by representatives already engaged in SBE decision-making, including the MoPD, via the IMA, and the Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT) via the Maritime Services Division, and other departments previously engaged with the ICZM committee that continues to advocate for this agenda, pending the committee's reappointment.
- Reappointment of the Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee, currently under the consideration of the Minister for Planning and Development before being carried forward to cabinet, could provide a means of convening key actors from across the GORTT to support advocacy and awareness-raising and to steer the SBE transition.

Tobago

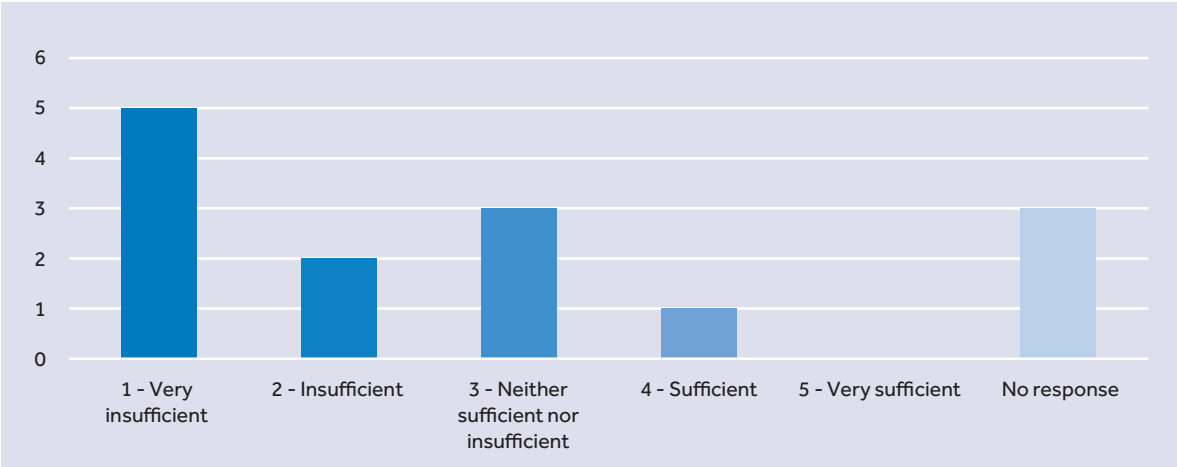
Challenges

- While the THA has made some co-ordinated progress towards planning an SBE transition, with a Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap currently in draft, there remains a lack of clarity over where the responsibility for its delivery will lie.
- A lack of awareness and understanding of the benefits of an SBE in Tobago is feeding perceptions that a drive for more sustainable practices in the marine space will negatively impact livelihoods.

Opportunities

- The Department of Marine Resources and Fisheries (DMRF) is responsible for managing the marine space and is well placed to be mandated to deliver the Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap (McCue 2022, in draft).
- The Coastal Zone Management Unit oversees SBE progress and could act as a champion for SBE awareness and advocacy within the THA, but as the Fisheries Unit is responsible for managing activities beyond the high-water mark, a co-ordinated advocacy and awareness-raising campaign involving both units would be beneficial. Activities should be supported by relevant departments across the Division for Food Security, Natural Resources, the Environment and Sustainable Development.
- Given the dominance of tourism in Tobago's economy, a key focus of engagement and advocacy should be to elicit support for an SBE transition from the Division of Tourism, Culture, Antiquities and Transportation, specifically the Department of Tourism.

Figure 3.2: Participant responses to the question, ‘In your view, are existing government structures sufficient to deliver a transition to an SBE?’



Source: survey data.

3.2 Institutional infrastructure and culture

With high competition for space, and the need to diversify economically and to accommodate the different priorities across the two islands, it will become increasingly important that management interventions in Trinidad and Tobago’s marine area are agreed upon collaboratively, to reconcile differing priorities and reduce conflict.

While there are some examples of inter-departmental and inter-agency co-operation and collaboration (e.g. the Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee), this is inconsistent. There is a recognised need to improve co-ordination within government, including the THA and between each island, but there is no clear co-ordinating group working across departments or agencies with responsibility for driving SBE progress within the GORTT, including the THA.

‘There is no shortage of institutions and institutional architecture... but they are not speaking from the same page or same plan’

Participant response

Mandating a centralised committee to steer decision-making and provide leadership towards a shared SBE vision would increase accountability and transparency, help to embed SBE values across relevant policy areas, and improve collaboration. Upon reappointment, the Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee would be well placed to take on such a

mandate, and should be supported with allocated resources necessary to co-ordinate and deliver an SBE transition.

For a twin-island state like Trinidad and Tobago, where there are major distinctions between the respective economies, a clearly defined, centralised structure for collaborative decision-making provides a range of opportunities to ensure coherence of management while respecting each island’s needs and priorities. Mandating a cross-GORTT committee to deliver an SBE transition, as well as a linked, cross-THA committee that serves the specific SBE priorities of Tobago, would help to realise synergies of cross-sectoral working including:

- promoting policy coherence and complementary marine management that accounts for transboundary considerations;
- overcoming competing priorities and improving decision-making on prioritisation and trade-offs in the highly competitive Trinidad and Tobago marine area;
- resource and cost efficiencies;
- knowledge and data sharing;
- capacity-building;
- research and innovation; and
- non-governmental stakeholder engagement, co-ordination and consultation.

For a government-level co-ordinating committee to be effective, it will require representation and commitment from all departments and key agencies relevant to the SBE (see Appendix 4). Strong engagement of all relevant stakeholders is essential to support ongoing adaptive management that is responsive to changing impacts, pressures, priorities and opportunities in Trinidad and Tobago's marine space.

Trinidad

Challenges

- Lack of understanding and awareness of the SBE concept, and the role of different stakeholders and/or policy areas in delivering it, is hindering engagement that could support the development of an SBE agenda across GORTT.
- There is a lack of mandated, cross-departmental co-ordination to support transition to an SBE.
- Institutional change is slow within government, meaning co-ordination mechanisms are difficult to establish and activate. For example, groups including the Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee, the Green Fund Advisory Committee and the board of the Caribbean Fisheries Development and Training Institute are fixed term, but the change process can take many months or years from the end of one term to the appointment of new membership, leaving gaps in leadership and decision-making.

Opportunities

- The Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee brought together key stakeholders across marine decision-making to co-ordinate the development of the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 which is currently pending cabinet approval. Expediting approval of that framework could catalyse the reappointment of the Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee, empowered with an expanded mandate for an SBE transition.
- Ensuring sufficient representation from THA would support coherence and deliver synergies while accommodating the two islands' differing priorities and needs.

Tobago

Challenges

- Although a Blue Economy Roadmap for Tobago is in development,²⁵ there remains a lack of shared understanding of what an SBE means for Tobago, and the role of different stakeholders and/or policy areas in delivering it. This hinders delivery.
- The Coastal Zone Management Unit is currently overseeing the delivery of the Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap, while the Fisheries Unit is responsible for the management of activities beyond the high-water mark. Tourism is the major economic driver for Tobago. This is creating some of the key pressures on the marine space. A lack of co-ordinated decision-making means that conflicts are not adequately resolved nor co-benefits realised. This creates inertia relating to an SBE transition.

Opportunities

- Given progress on the development of the Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap, an SBE co-ordinating committee, including relevant stakeholders from across the THA, could steer future decision-making and deliver SBE priorities that are specific to Tobago's needs and priorities.
- Members of the SBE co-ordinating group should act as representatives on a national SBE taskforce to help align interests and optimise synergies and efficiencies. A THA representative could act as co-chair to demonstrate shared leadership across the two islands.

3.3 Laws and policies

There is no overarching national ocean policy nor a specific roadmap for the SBE for both Trinidad and Tobago, although a Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap is currently in development.²⁶ Laws and policies are in place that contribute towards the sustainability agenda, including the Environmental Management Act (2000), National Environmental Policy (2018) and Vision 2030: National Development Strategy for Trinidad and Tobago 2016-2030. However, key

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

legislation is out of date and attempts to update the legislative framework are being hampered by slow progress through parliament (see Appendix 2 for existing laws and policies, as well as those pending adoption). The Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 and the Draft National Maritime Policy and Strategy (NMPS) 2021 could help to improve policy coherence and support an SBE transition but, again, progress is hindered by slow cabinet approval, leaving critical gaps in governance. These delays in approval may be exacerbated by a lack of high-level political support. This risks continued inertia on SBE progress, as well as hindering effective, integrated marine management. Slow parliamentary processes have also delayed progress on the designation of protected natural areas (PNAs) and MPAs.

As is common in many countries, legislation and policies relating to the SBE in Trinidad and Tobago are fragmented, and there is a lack of a coherent, cross-sectoral approach to planning and management, critical for the delivery of an SBE. For example:

- New policy and legislative instruments do not provide a consistent definition of, nor vision for, SBE against which management activities and interventions can be effectively benchmarked at all levels. The Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 and the draft NMPS 2021 both refer to a blue economy, but do not provide a consistent vision for an SBE in Trinidad and Tobago.
- There is a lack of co-ordination between key instruments. Those that have recently been approved or are currently pending approval are not inter-referential, including the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 and the National Protected Area Systems Plan (2019). This could impede effective, integrated management if not supported by enhanced institutional arrangements and effective co-ordination for implementation.

The cross-cutting role of the ocean is recognised and reflected across a broader range of legislation, policies and strategies. For example, the need to preserve and enhance key coastal and marine habitats for the purpose of climate change mitigation is noted in the National Climate Change Policy (2011). However, there is a recognised opportunity to enhance the integration of cross-cutting issues into forthcoming laws and policies pending approval, such as climate mitigation and

adaptation, to deliver greater resilience to climate change-related impacts and other environmental or economic shocks, and to improve the integration of social sustainability considerations to aid community resilience. These actions would help to provide a more coherent policy framework for an SBE, and support delivery of UN SDGs.

Insufficient implementation and enforcement of policy and management for an SBE across Trinidad and Tobago is of primary concern. Key stakeholders within the GORTT, including the THA, identified the need for a rapid uplift in financial, human and technical capacity in order to effectively implement and enforce existing legislative and policy commitments, such as fisheries catch monitoring or enforcement within MPAs. Elsewhere, outdated legislation was reported as impeding the provision of sufficient regulation and enforcement. As such, there is a need to examine the current system of marine management in Trinidad and Tobago in detail (across regulation, enforcement, monitoring and evaluation) to identify and address gaps in funding, staffing, training and technology, as well as to accelerate the passage of pending laws and policies through the GORTT, including the THA on devolved matters.

In addition, the aspiration for economic diversification may drive a need for further laws and policies to deliver sustainable management of emerging sectors, such as mariculture and renewable energy, or potential growth sectors, such as the expansion of ports and shipping activities, yachting and ecotourism.²⁷

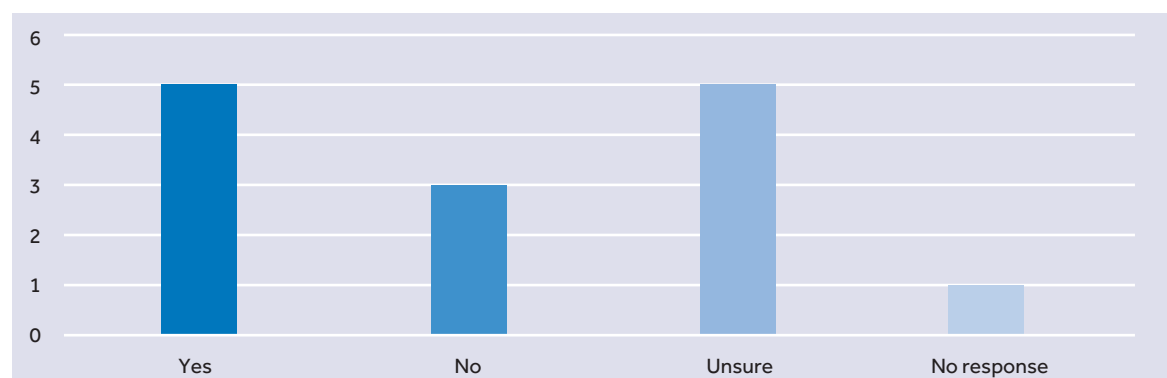
'There's a need for a cohesive strategy to bring laws and policies together, to identify our needs, priority sectors...'

Participant response

To fully support an SBE transition, key relevant laws and policies should be reviewed to identify and address any critical gaps, conflicts or overlaps, and to ensure policy coherence. This includes those relevant to climate mitigation and adaptation in Trinidad and Tobago, to ensure that climate resilience is fully integrated into future marine management as a key principle of the SBE.

²⁷ Ecotourism and community tourism policies are currently being drafted by GORTT.

Figure 3.3: Participant responses to the question, 'Are there policies, regulations or other guidelines in place that directly support a blue economy approach, such as a national ocean policy or blue economy roadmap (or preliminary scoping study)?'



Source: survey data.

Trinidad

Challenges

- There is a lack of legislative and policy coherence towards an SBE transition at national level. Emerging and existing laws and policies are not unified by a consistent vision for an SBE that complements and progresses ambitions for sustainable management of marine resources already established in developmental policies such as Vision 2030, leading to a lack of co-ordination and complementarity between instruments.
- Slow progress of draft laws and policies through parliament is hindering the SBE transition. This includes the Fisheries Bill, the Shipping Bill, the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020, and the draft NMPS 2021. This will also affect new laws and policies that will need to be created to regulate emerging sectors.
- A lack of human, financial and technical capacity means there are gaps in implementation, regulation, enforcement and monitoring aligned with GORTT priorities.

Opportunities

- Expediting the approval of pending laws and policies is fundamental to progress towards an SBE transition, particularly the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 and draft NMPS 2021.
- Creation of a shared SBE vision for Trinidad and Tobago that complements the Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap and any subsequent SBE plans for Tobago will help to identify

and address gaps or conflicting priorities, and guide progress towards a coherent governance framework.

- Building on the DOALAS report, and previous analysis conducted in 2013,²⁸ a gap analysis of existing laws and policies is needed to identify opportunities to improve coherence towards to a unified SBE transition and to better integrate socioeconomic considerations and efforts to enhance resilience to climate change.
- Given that pending laws and policies would provide a strong foundational framework for SBE delivery, developing appropriate principles and guidance to support their implementation could help to address remaining gaps while avoiding further delays resulting from new laws and policies that would require cabinet or parliamentary approval.
- The creation of an 'SBE Omnibus Bill' that packages together SBE-relevant legislation and policies (both approved and pending approval) could provide the foundation for SBE delivery, presenting an opportunity to enshrine Trinidad and Tobago's SBE definition and unified vision, and provide an SBE mandate for the Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee, as described in section 3.2.

28 Hassanali, K. (2013). *Examining the Ocean and Coastal Governance Framework in Trinidad and Tobago: Transitioning Towards Integrated Coastal Zone Management*. United Nations–Nippon Foundation of Japan Fellowship Programme. https://www.un.org/depts/los/nippon/unfpp_programme_home/fellows_pages/fellows_papers/Hassanali_1314_T&T.pdf

- New principles and guidance should be developed to ensure that emerging marine sectors such as offshore renewable energy and mariculture are sustainably managed.

Tobago

Challenges

- Although the Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap provides the first step towards a more formalised SBE approach, there is a need for wider consultation to develop an SBE vision for Tobago that reflects Tobago's priorities and goals and complements a national-level vision for Trinidad and Tobago.

Opportunities

- The Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap provides a foundation on which to build a coherent vision for SBE in Tobago. But it would benefit from wider consultation to engender buy-in of the full range of stakeholders.
- A review of existing laws and policies applicable in Tobago will identify gaps that need to be addressed to deliver the Blue Economy Roadmap, or future SBE action plans, particularly in relation to emerging ocean-based sectors. This will also be critical for ensuring that Tobago's SBE law and policy requirements can be articulated and integrated at national level, and reflect the unique pressures and priorities of the island.
- Although some capacity-building (financial, human and technical) priorities will differ between Trinidad and Tobago, it is likely that there are also many common priorities that would benefit from a co-ordinated approach. Developing a national financial and capacity-building strategy would optimise synergies and efficiencies across both islands, enhance knowledge sharing and reduce the financial burden for marine management implementation.

3.4 Planning and management

Given the significant competition for marine space between sectors, and the dependence of Trinidad and Tobago's economic, social and environmental wellbeing on marine ecosystem services and resources, coherent, integrated marine management is essential for an SBE transition.

There is no integrated marine management framework in Trinidad and Tobago, although the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 and draft NMPS 2021, along with the National Protected Areas Policy (2011) (NPAP) provide the foundation for MSP for Trinidad and Tobago's EEZ. Progress is needed in both implementation of MSP and ICZM. Adopting the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 would be a significant step forward, with clearly defined actions to promote a 'ridge-to-reef' delivery approach, and guidelines or principles that can be adopted by terrestrial and marine stakeholders to alleviate land-based pressures affecting the coastal and marine environment.

There are currently over 20 separate pieces of legislation that intersect with coastal zone management. This is driving a lack of legislative coherence, inadequate implementation and issues with enforceability.²⁹ There are also as many as 29 institutions that have a legal and/or policy role in aspects of coastal management. Co-ordination is needed to address issues such as habitat damage and loss from development or unsustainable practices, unplanned and unregulated development, and others identified via the stakeholder consultation undertaken as part of the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 development (see Appendix 3 for a complete list of issues). A clear and robust regulatory framework is also less vulnerable to the prioritisation of economic interests over social and environmental impacts, can address inequalities in access and benefits, and reduce the influence of the 'parallel economy' based on illegal and/or unregulated activities.

'There are capacity challenges in terms of persons with ocean governance expertise. Existing resources are not sufficient ... limited funds is a challenge'

Participant response

There has been limited success in the protection of wetland areas or designation of MPAs in Trinidad and Tobago. Although the National Policy and Programmes on Wetland Conservation for Trinidad and Tobago (2001) commits to 'no net loss of wetlands and values and functions on publicly owned lands and waters', wetland areas continue

29 Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020.

to be subject to pressures including reclamation for development, pollution from land-based sources and development related to privately-owned land.

In addition, although the NPAP was published in 2011, there is currently only one designated MPA in Trinidad and Tobago: Buccoo Reef in Tobago. Tobago's North-East region was also declared a biosphere reserve by the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme in 2020. In 2019, GORTT approved the National Protected Area Systems Plan (NPASP), which proposed designating new MPAs covering 1,414.6 hectares for Trinidad and increasing MPA coverage to 56,917 hectares for Tobago. Offshore MPAs were also proposed, totalling 15,622 hectares, to reduce conflict with the oil and gas industry. This scale of designation could bring huge dividends for the protection and conservation of marine ecosystems. However, it is contingent on developing coherent management plans (including relevant conservation and restoration interventions) for each site, along with the financial, human and technical capacity to implement them. Specific MPA management plans would be required for Tobago to consider locally relevant demands and pressures.

'Stakeholders often see interventions [to improve sustainability] as stopping them from making a livelihood'

Participant response

The Environmental Management Act provides the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) with powers for the management of biodiversity. However, most of the organisation's personnel remain focused on the administration of the certificates of environmental clearance process and the enforcement and compliance associated with this function. As such, the EMA has very limited capacity for managing PNAs or MPAs.³⁰ In the event that the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 and draft NMPS 2021 are approved, there is the need to develop a financial plan that supports the provision of the requisite resources, training and equipment needed to implement them for both islands. This should also extend to the designation of new MPAs (see section 3.5 for opportunities related to sustainable finance).

30 Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) (2018). *National Protected Area Systems Plan for Trinidad and Tobago*. (GORTT approved, 2019)

Trinidad

Challenges

- The lack of approval for the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 is leaving a critical gap in Trinidad and Tobago's policy provision for integrated marine management. The current lack of a clear co-ordinating body or coherent policy framework makes the coastal zone vulnerable to the effects of inadequate implementation of regulation and enforcement measures.
- There is a lack of sufficient funding, training and personnel for implementing existing interventions.
- There are concerns that regulatory processes for decision-making are often over-ridden or bypassed in favour of economic interest, private sector influence (particularly the oil and gas sector) or short-term gains without consideration for long-term sustainability impacts.

Opportunities

- Swift approval of the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 will provide a platform to deliver ICZM and MSP. The framework would benefit from a review alongside other relevant policies to support a co-ordinated approach to the SBE transition.
- Developing a public expenditure and sustainable finance plan to support the implementation of SBE laws and policies (including planning, regulation, enforcement, monitoring and reporting) will be essential to ensure the necessary training, personnel and technical capacity to deliver an SBE in Trinidad and Tobago over the long-term. This should be developed jointly between relevant departments across the GORTT, including the THA, to take advantage of the efficiencies and synergies that can be achieved from collaborative approaches.
- The IDB has recently approved a technical co-operation initiative that will conduct a diagnosis of ICZM governance and provide recommendations for its strengthening. It will also engage in pilot activities to achieve better governance of the coastal zone.

- Improving socioeconomic valuation of ocean-based sectors and the associated ecosystem benefits of a healthy marine environment would help to better articulate their value, and may stimulate greater compliance with regulation and more informed decision-making in managing the marine environment.

Tobago

Challenges

- There is a lack of sufficient funding, training and personnel for implementing existing planning and management.
- The dominant sectors of tourism and artisanal fisheries put considerable pressure on marine and coastal ecosystems, but are also highly reliant on a healthy coastal zone, both for economic success but also ecosystem services including coastal protection from climate-related impacts and fish nursery grounds. There is a need to improve public awareness of the importance and benefits of sustainable management practices, particularly those operating in these sectors.

Opportunities

- The THA Budget Expenditure Report Fiscal – 2023 (published in 2022), commits to establishing a 'Living with the SEA' working group, tasked with developing a comprehensive coastal resilience plan for areas affected by the effects of climate and environmental change. This plan should be developed to complement the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 and take into account the implications of key sectors, primarily tourism (including cruise ships) and fisheries.
- The THA has the capacity to legislate for the protection of biodiversity and natural areas locally. This offers the opportunity to develop a locally relevant ICZM framework that considers the specific pressures and demands on the marine resources of Tobago.
- Upon approval of the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020, THA may wish to develop public awareness tools aligned to Tobago's marine management needs that demonstrate the need for integrated management and the benefits this will bring, and provide guidelines on the key principles and how they apply sectorally.

3.5 Sustainable finance

Sustainable and thriving economic activity, enabled by strategic governance and cross-sector innovation, is a fundamental goal of an SBE. As such, it is necessary to understand the current levels of economic activity in the marine space, the incentives which drive current activities, as well as gaps in investment or funding that may hinder implementation of sustainable practices or initiatives. In Trinidad and Tobago, sustainable finance and investment to support the transition to an SBE can be divided across three key areas:

- long-term finance to enable the **implementation of laws and policies** (both existing and emerging), particularly those related to integrated marine management, including regulation, enforcement, monitoring and reporting;
- investment in current and emerging ocean-based sectors to support **sustainable economic diversification**; and
- finance for the **implementation of conservation and restoration** of coastal and marine ecosystems.

Implementation of laws and policies

'We are often unable to access funding because we don't have the capacity to use it'

Participant response

In a country that possesses a marine area 15 times larger than its land mass, and with the majority of its natural assets, economic activity and population situated within the coastal and marine area, prioritisation of funding for coastal and marine management and related interventions, aligned with a clear SBE strategy, will provide significant sustainability benefits. However, as highlighted in sections 3.3 and 3.4, there is currently a shortfall in funding for training and staffing to deliver regulation, enforcement, research, monitoring and reporting of existing activities in the marine space. Funding needs will increase significantly if the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 and the draft NMPS 2021 are approved, and/or additional MPAs are designated across Trinidad and Tobago.

Sustainable economic diversification

Economic dominance by the oil and gas sector (driving Trinidad and Tobago's export trade imbalance) has contributed to the de-prioritisation of investment in other sectors which, despite lower contributions to GDP, provide proportionately higher levels of employment (e.g. tourism, ports and shipping, fisheries). While there is planned investment in offshore renewable energy infrastructure³¹ to support diversification in the energy sector, there is a recognised need to redirect investment to other industries with significant growth potential to enhance their economic, social and environmental sustainability and to support economic diversification across an SBE. To successfully realise economic diversification, there will be a need for training related to new and emerging sectors/subsectors to ensure the requisite expertise and capacity exist to support their development and delivery.

A range of investment areas to improve sustainability are outlined in plans such as the draft NMPS 2021 and the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 (both pending approval), as well as Vision 2030 and the National Tourism Policy (2020). Broader evaluation of other (non-oil and gas) ocean-related sectors across a range of socioeconomic indicators could help guide political decision-making to direct investment into sectors that can deliver sustainable economic growth and diversification.

'Incentives are provided for the extraction of resources – there needs to be a review of where subsidies are applied'

Participant response

There are no financial incentives or subsidies to encourage the transition to sustainable practices in ocean-based sectors. Tax incentives are proposed in the Trinidad and Tobago 2023 budget for expansion of extractive practices, including an increase in Investment Tax Credit for energy companies from 25 per cent to 30 per cent to

stimulate exploration and development-related investments.³² These must be reviewed to ensure alignment with sustainability principles.

Funding conservation and restoration

The Trinidad and Tobago Green Fund, introduced in 2001 and funded by a 0.3 per cent levy on gross sales or receipts, represents a significant source of potential funding for conservation and restoration activities in coastal and marine areas. This includes delivering MPA management measures and supporting vital capacity-building and awareness initiatives in communities to promote sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction. The fund has already contributed over TT\$40 million to support environmental and capacity-building projects, although the amount that has been allocated to marine-based projects is unclear. With a financial reserve estimated in the order of billions of TT\$, the fund represents a potentially significant source of project finance.

However, accessing the fund is reportedly very challenging, with a slow and highly bureaucratic application process. High-level agreement regarding legitimate use of the fund for SBE transition could streamline and simplify the application process. Expanding existing training for bid writing and financial capacity-building among non-governmental actors could also help to improve access to funds.

Although Trinidad and Tobago is not eligible for official development assistance (ODA) originating from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) donor countries, it is eligible for international funding mechanisms, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and PROBLUE (an umbrella multi-donor trust fund, administered by the World Bank). In 2021, Trinidad and Tobago was one of eight countries announced to benefit from over US\$13.6 million awarded by GEF to deliver four FAO-led projects that aim to address environmental challenges, including biodiversity loss and unsustainable fishing.

31 Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) (2016). *Vision 2030: The National Development Strategy of Trinidad and Tobago 2016–2030*.

32 Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) (2022). *Budget Statement 2023: Tenacity and Stability in the Face of Global Challenges*. <https://www.finance.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Budget-Statement-2023-E-Version.pdf>

Tobago is particularly dependent on external sources, with RRA participants observing that revenues generated by the island's tourism-based economy are insufficient to support investment levels needed for a transition to an SBE. Again, however, application processes are burdensome, and require capacity and resources that are currently insufficient to meet national needs within GORTT. Stakeholders have identified finding the human resource to administrate and deliver projects, if funding is received, as an additional challenge.

Existing sources of finance or financial mechanisms in Trinidad and Tobago (included those proposed in current policies) that may be used to support future SBE transition and initiatives include:

- establishment of a Green Infrastructure Fund (GIF), proposed in Vision 2030, to provide investment in areas including research infrastructure, solar, water and wastewater facilities, climate resilient infrastructure and social infrastructure;
- Trinidad and Tobago's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) Implementation Plan which sets out a climate finance plan to realise NDC commitments – this could create funds for climate change mitigation-related activities in the marine space;
- private sector funding for blue initiatives, such as BP International's investment in coral restoration and blue bond development – this presents a potentially significant financial resource to support future marine conservation, restoration and innovation in sustainable technologies and solutions;
- Tobago Blue Economy Ideas Competition, supported by the IDB – aims to support innovative concept ideas for projects that will support blue economy sectors.³³ The first few grant awards have already been made to provide a degree of traction on SBE delivery;
- satellite office launched by USAID in Trinidad and Tobago in September 2022 – the US Embassy states that the focus will be on financing for sustainable development, building resilience in areas such as adaptation to climate change and food security, and

empowering youth through citizen security and education, to advance a safe, prosperous, and resilient Eastern Caribbean region;³⁴ and

- Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) of which Trinidad and Tobago is already a member – provides parametric insurance facilities to unlock short-term finance in the event of extreme events and natural disasters.

There are other financial mechanisms that Trinidad and Tobago could consider to support the transition to an SBE including the development of:

- an endowment fund, using money from the Green Fund, to provide for conservation, restoration and management activities in MPAs (also suggested in the NPASP);
- a national development bank, akin to the Agricultural Development Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, focused on initiatives supporting an SBE transition;
- a user levy, such as licences for travel and recreation operators, or access permits (for example, for divers or day-boat tourists) – particularly relevant for Tobago in relation to Buccoo Reef MPA and the North-East Tobago UNESCO Biosphere site; and
- a blue carbon or biodiversity credit system as a form of payment for ecosystem services.

Trinidad and Tobago could also look to other regional examples of innovative financing. For example, the IDB approved a US\$100 million guarantee for Barbados, enabling the creation of a long-term financial instrument to fund measures related to sustainability and marine protection.³⁵

Trinidad and Tobago

Challenges

- There is currently insufficient investment or financing to support an SBE transition in Trinidad and Tobago including: the shift to

33 See <https://tobagoblueeconomy.com/blue-economy-challenge/>

34 US Embassy, Trinidad and Tobago (2022, September 8). 'USAID Establishes Permanent Presence In Trinidad and Tobago'. Press release. <https://tt.usembassy.gov/usa-id-establishes-permanent-presence-in-trinidad-and-tobago>

35 Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (2022, August 4). 'Barbados to Promote Environmental Sustainability with Innovative IDB Solution'. Press release. www.iadb.org/en/news/barbados-promote-environmental-sustainability-innovative-idb-solution

more sustainable practices across ocean-based sectors that would facilitate sustainable economic diversification; the funding for staff, training and technical capacity required to implement existing marine management measures; and the delivery of conservation and restoration projects in the marine and coastal zone.

- Some ocean-based sectors are likely to be significantly undervalued in terms of GDP, employment and subsistence due to a lack of funding directed towards consistent socioeconomic monitoring and reporting.
- Access to environmental and social sustainability funds is hampered by a lack of capacity and resource as well as burdensome and complex application processes.

Opportunities

- Developing a cross-sectoral investment strategy and action plan aligned with an agreed SBE vision should include all such existing and draft policies, and be developed via stakeholder consultation to represent the widest range of ocean stakeholder interests and deliver an equitable distribution of benefits.
- A public expenditure and sustainable finance plan is needed to support the implementation of SBE laws and policies (see opportunities in section 3.3).
- Provisions for integrated management, particularly enforcement and monitoring, through inter-departmental co-operation and collaboration across GORTT, including the THA, could provide cost savings, as well as more co-ordinated decision-making.
- Improving socioeconomic evaluation of ocean-based sectors key to an SBE transition (particularly fisheries and tourism) to demonstrate their potential contribution could mobilise investment in sustainable economic diversification.
- Reviewing and streamlining application processes and eligibility for existing funding mechanisms, such as the Green Fund, would help to improve access to finance for projects and activities that could support SBE principles.

- There is a range of innovative financial mechanisms that Trinidad and Tobago could explore. This must be approached strategically based on understanding what the financial gaps and priorities are, and how existing financial resources could be better used.

3.6 Stakeholder engagement and coalitions

Understanding how SBE stakeholders engage with each other is key to identifying opportunities to ensure an inclusive and participatory transition to an SBE that is fair and equitable. Coalitions of actors operating across the governance system can also catalyse positive change through working together, and sharing knowledge and capacity to use available opportunities.

'There is appetite to further expand collaboration both within government and with non-government stakeholders on progressing SBE objectives'

Participant response

A wide range of non-governmental stakeholder coalitions and organisations across Trinidad and Tobago can support co-ordination and implementation across the private sector, NGOs, civil society organisations (CSOs) and other communities. CANARI is already supporting successful initiatives in local communities, such as the Turtle Village Trust and the Experience Nariva project, and could be a powerful SBE leader including facilitating engagement between GORTT, including the THA, and other ocean stakeholders. Environment Tobago could play a similar role.

There are successful examples of stakeholder consultation in Trinidad and Tobago including the development of the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020, delivered by the ICZM Steering Committee. Stakeholders including government agencies, the media, the energy sector, the business sector and coastal communities across Trinidad and Tobago were invited to participate in 19 consultations to determine stakeholders' priority issues and preferred interventions to address them. However, RRA participants reported that there is a need to improve inclusivity and representation across decision-making to support an SBE transition.

In Tobago, there is a clear appetite for enhancing engagement with non-governmental actors across government departments and the THA. In 2019, the Tobago Partnership Conference brought together local and national stakeholders from government, NGOs, CSOs and the private sector to consider sustainability opportunities and action in the green and blue economies. However, there remains a need for follow-up action, for example, developing co-operative joint-projects and, in some cases, formalising government engagement through MoUs and private-public partnerships.

'Tobagonians are generally vociferous and vocal on issues... but it is expected that consensus can be found through dialogue'

Participant response

Trinidad and Tobago

Challenges

- A general lack of awareness and understanding of what an SBE means limits engagement. Many stakeholders do not identify as playing a role in an SBE agenda, and therefore do not engage.
- There is limited private sector engagement in consultation processes and stakeholder forums (particularly the oil and gas sector) constraining open dialogue and conflict resolution in relation to Trinidad and Tobago's competitive marine space.
- A sense of process fatigue exists among some stakeholders, with long consultation periods then a perceived lack of action or outcomes. For example, development of the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 started in 2012 but is still pending approval.
- A lack of transparency and equity in decision-making in relation to marine management may lead to the displacement of some sectors, such as artisanal fishers. This fuels concerns over accountability, which deters engagement.
- Trinidad and Tobago has not enshrined a mandate for equitable sharing of benefits derived from genetic resources in legislation.

- The cost of engagement can be a deterrent, particularly for self-employed stakeholders such as fisherfolk, who are often not compensated for loss of earnings or travel and subsistence costs related to participation.

Opportunities

- Development of a unified SBE vision for Trinidad and Tobago (previously mentioned in sections 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) will provide a shared ambition around which stakeholders can coalesce.
- Active organisations could provide leadership for the SBE transition at all levels such as CANARI and Environment Tobago.
- Cabinet approval of the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 would provide a mandate for co-ordinated stakeholder engagement on marine management decision-making across Trinidad and Tobago.³⁶
- Efforts have begun to support a thorough stakeholders' analysis and engagement plan to support the Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap.

3.7 Data and monitoring

Transitioning to an SBE requires governments to take an adaptive management approach to planning and implementing their policies and management actions to ensure ongoing progress.

Environmental monitoring is undertaken. For example, the IMA undertakes periodic monitoring of beaches and bays, coral reefs, seagrass and mangroves. There is an IMA-supported research station at Buccoo Reef in the planning and development stage. The IMA plays a key role in co-ordinating environmental reporting including producing the 2016, 2018 and 2020 (in draft) *State of the Marine Environment* reports.³⁷ The IDB and UWI have signed a technical co-operation agreement for the implementation of a regional monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) system for mangroves in Trinidad and Tobago.

36 Objective 9 of the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 is 'To ensure continual meaningful public participation and to promote partnerships between the State (national and local government), the private sector and civil society in order to foster co-responsibility in coastal management'.

37 See for example IMA (2016). *State of the Marine Environment: Trinidad & Tobago – 2016*. <https://planning.gov.tt/content/state-marine-environment-report-2016>

Figure 3.4: Participant responses to the question, 'To what extent are data needs being met for economic components of sustainability?'



Source: survey data.

However, there are recognised gaps in socioeconomic datasets and accounting systems. These present a key challenge, with monitoring and reporting activities taking place in a poorly co-ordinated way, and with no agreed framework of indicators for reporting (for example indicators related to SDG14: Life Below Water and other key SDGs). There is consensus among stakeholders, however, that gaps in data should not be an excuse for inaction, but that precautionary approaches should be applied while data needs are being addressed.

Investment in technical innovations could reduce the financial and resource burden of monitoring. Trinidad and Tobago has already established a voluntary vessel monitoring system (VMS) to monitor both artisanal and non-artisanal fisheries, pending approval of the draft NMPS to create a mandate for its implementation. Funding for remote monitoring, such as drones or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) offer an innovative solution to data gathering, as well as detecting IUU activities in the marine space.³⁸

Environmental data relating to biodiversity are currently centralised via the Trinidad and Tobago Biodiversity Information System (TTBIS),³⁹ but there is no centralised hub for all SBE data, with access

and sharing subject to the discretion of the agency or department that holds it. This is problematic as data relevant to the SBE are held across multiple departments and ministries across GORTT and the THA. In Tobago, participants also reported that data generated by international researchers are often not made available to support the island's development. The IMA is currently operationalising the new Marine Data Hub.⁴⁰ This could serve as a centralised repository for relevant SBE data from across GORTT if its scope is expanded to include relevant socioeconomic data and associated data gathering is delivered.

'The days of waiting for data collection are gone... we need to get going and start taking action using a precautionary approach'

Participant response

The development of an accessible and centralised data platform to inform MSP in Trinidad and Tobago has been identified as a key SBE priority by UNESCO.⁴¹ This recommendation is supported here, with associated quality control to ensure data are collected consistently and to the international standards required for MRV. The Central Statistics

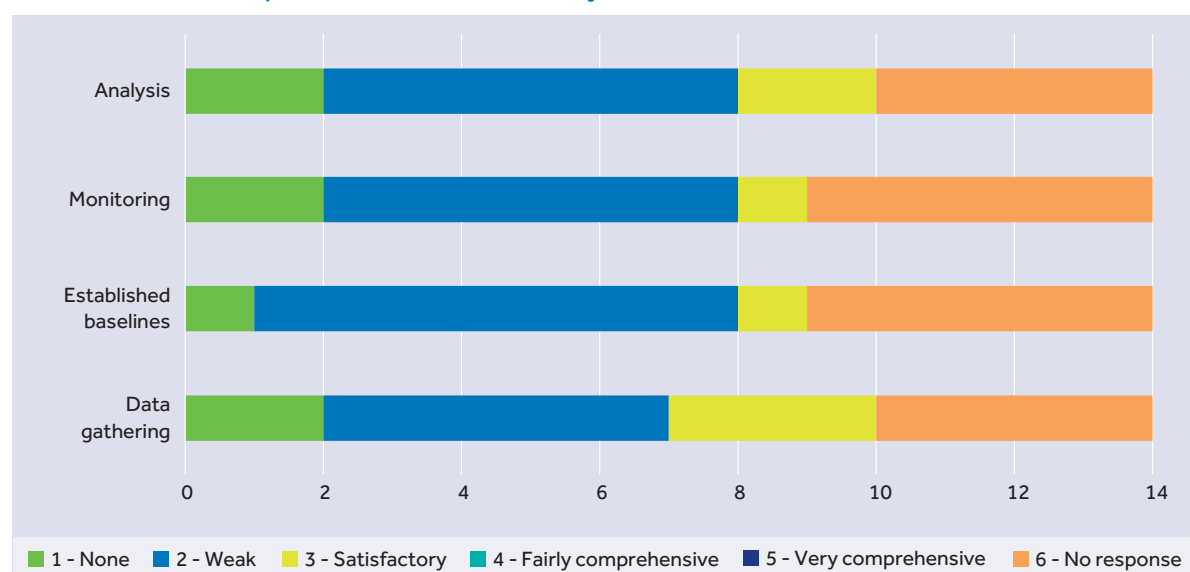
38 Peters, S. (2021, May 22). 'Technology to protect Buccoo Reef'. *Wild Tobago*. <http://wildtobago.blogspot.com/2021/05/technology-to-protect-buccoo-reef.html>

39 <https://ttbis.planning.gov.tt/ttbis/>

40 <https://mdh.ima.gov.tt/portal/apps/sites/##/datahub>

41 UNESCO-IOC, IMA, (2021). *A sustainable blue economy for Trinidad and Tobago*. UNESCO (IOC Technical Series 166/ ICAM Dossier no 16).

Figure 3.5: Participant responses to the question, 'To what extent are data needs being met for social components of sustainability?'



Source: survey data.

Office (currently being restructured as the independent National Statistical Institute) could provide a focal point for collating and centralising existing data, and lead the independent data collection and interpretation to inform SBE priorities and goals.

In July 2022, a two-year Joint SDG Fund project was announced to improve the quantity, quality and pace of disaggregated data to facilitate more robust monitoring of Trinidad and Tobago's progress on all 17 SDGs,⁴² including SDG 14: Life Below Water. This provides an ideal opportunity to identify, prioritise and meet data needs relevant to the SBE.

Trinidad and Tobago has also been awarded over US\$1 million from the GEF Trust Fund for a project designed to help meet its reporting requirements under the Enhanced Transparency Framework of the Paris Agreement. It is unclear if this will include reporting under the IPCC Wetlands Guidance for blue carbon habitats – mangroves, seagrass and saltmarsh.

As in most countries, no framework yet exists to value ecosystem benefits and resources as part of a natural capital approach needed to support decision-making, prioritisation and adaptive

management for long-term delivery of an SBE. Comprehensive valuation of marine resources and benefits would support the political buy-in needed to catalyse the shift away from the central focus on the oil and gas sector in Trinidad and Tobago towards an SBE transition.

Trinidad and Tobago

Challenges

- There is no centralised system for collating SBE-related data from across GORTT, including the THA, or relevant agencies to support SBE decision-making.
- The lack of sufficient socioeconomic data is likely to be driving an under-valuation of non-energy sectors, hindering the redirection of investment needed to shift an economic focus away from the oil and gas sector in Trinidad and Tobago towards an SBE transition (see also section 3.5).
- There are currently no standardised MRV frameworks or indicators to report progress on SDGs, including SDG14.

42 Pan American Health Organization (2022). *Modernising Trinidad and Tobago's Statistical Ecosystem through Enhanced SDG Data Development*. <https://www.paho.org/en/trinidad-and-tobago/modernising-trinidad-and-tobagos-statistical-ecosystem-through-enhanced-sdg>

Opportunities

- The IMA is a key asset in understanding environmental change. The State of the Marine Environment Report (2020), currently in draft, would provide a revised overview of the current environmental baseline to inform the SBE transition.
- Funding allocations to develop data gathering and MRV against NDC and SDG commitments will help to fill critical data gaps that could help to inform decision-making. But SBE data needs must be considered as part of the development process for those systems.
- The Marine Data Hub being developed by the IMA could act as a repository for SBE-related data, but its scope would need to be widened to include relevant socioeconomic data.
- Investment in technical solutions, such as drones and UAVs, could help to alleviate the burden on resources required for monitoring and data collection.
- Regional data collaborations, such as the Caribbean Marine Atlas and the Caribbean Coastal Data Centre at UWI, or international partnerships such as the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, could be explored for the potential to fill current gaps in environmental datasets.

4. Summary of Readiness

To support transition to an SBE in Trinidad and Tobago, the RRA process identifies the level to which each of the enabling conditions of the UNEP SBE-TF is established, including the opportunities that exist to enhance readiness and support the transition. The degree to which Trinidad and Tobago has established the enabling conditions outlined in section 3 is presented below using a scale

(Figure 4.1) which ranges from the lowest ('no demonstration of progress and not actively pursuing improvement') to the highest ('enabling condition is well established, or significant progress and defined plan are evident'). An overview of the UNEP SBE-TF and associated actions which these critical enablers underpin is in Appendix 7.

Figure 4.1: Scale against which the readiness of each of the enabling factors to transition to an SBE is assessed for Trinidad and Tobago

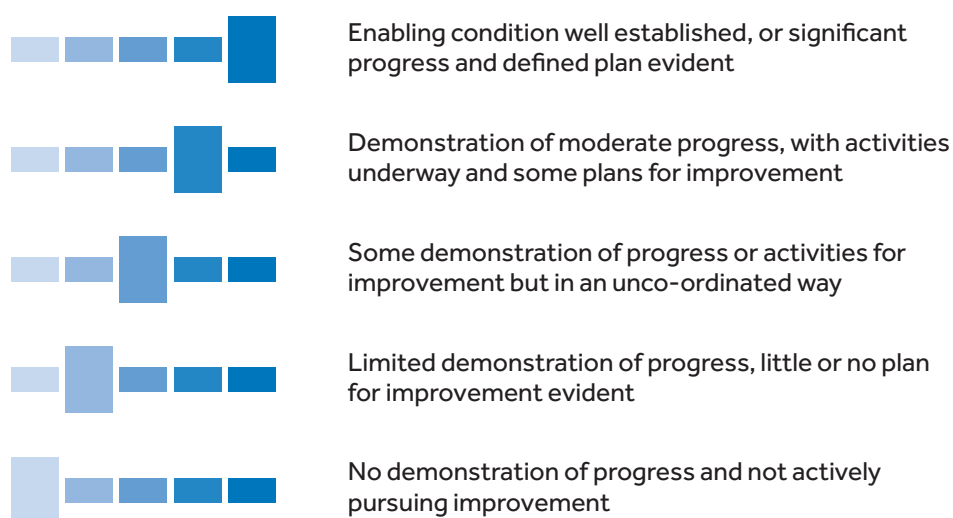


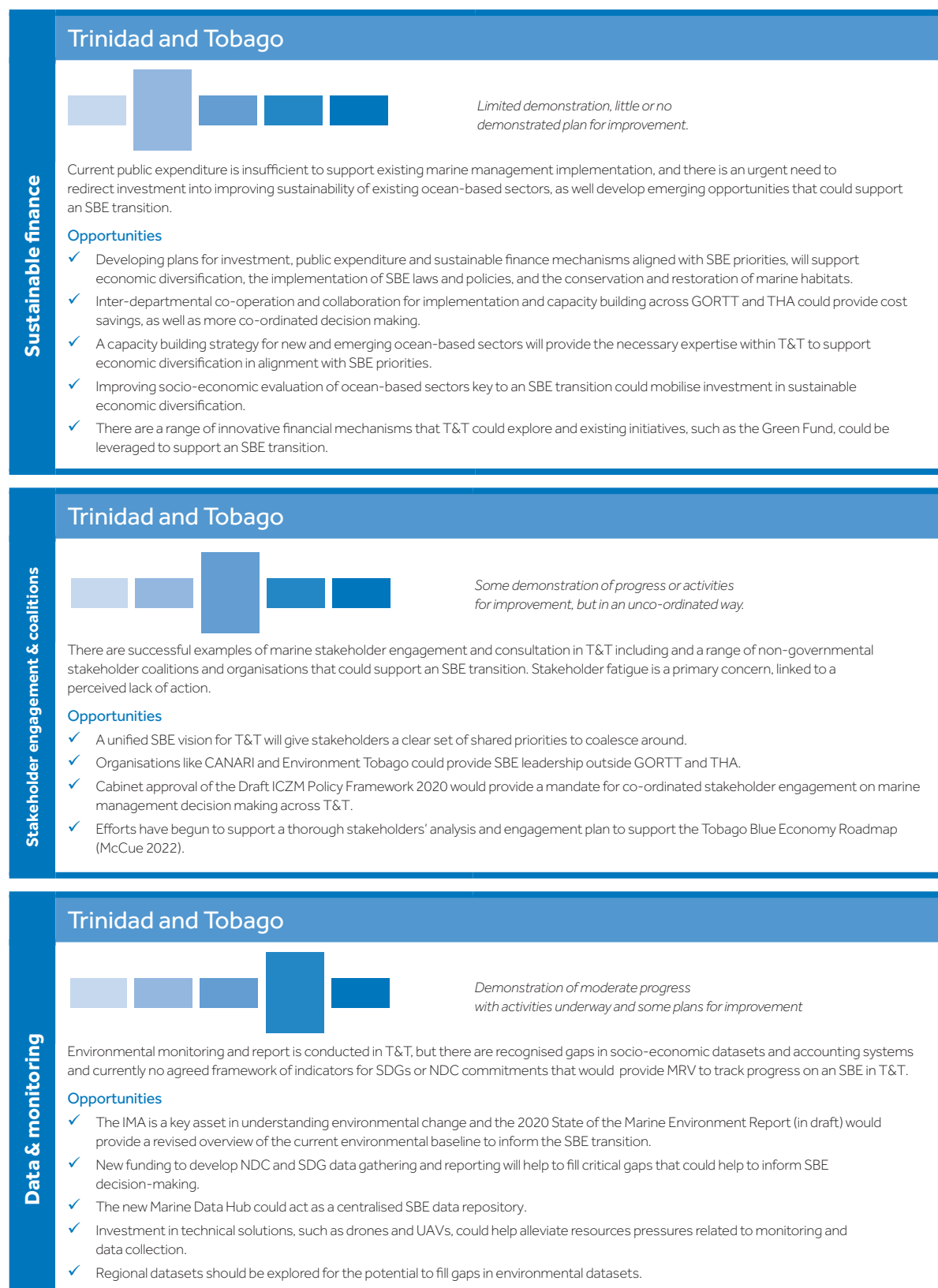
Figure 4.2: Assessments of the extent to which four of the seven enabling conditions of the UNEP SBE-TF (leadership; institutional infrastructure and capacity; laws and policies; and planning and management) are established in Trinidad and Tobago respectively, including key challenges and opportunities



Laws & policies	Trinidad <p><i>Some demonstration of progress or activities for improvement, but in an unco-ordinated way.</i></p> <p>There is a lack of coherent governance, with no consistent vision for an SBE, and several SBE-critical laws and policies are pending approval. Progress is hampered by insufficient financial, human and technical capacity for implementation.</p> <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A shared SBE vision for Trinidad and Tobago will help guide progress towards coherent governance. ✓ Expedite cabinet approval of key draft laws and policies that would provide the foundation for integrated marine management. ✓ A gap analysis of existing laws and policies will identify opportunities to improve coherence, including provisions for emerging ocean-based sectors. ✓ Developing principles and guidelines to support the implementation of policies such as ICZM will help to address gaps in governance while avoiding delays caused by governmental approval processes.
	Tobago <p><i>Some demonstration of progress or activities for improvement, but in an unco-ordinated way.</i></p> <p>Although the Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap provides the first step towards a more formalised SBE approach, there is a need for wider consultation to develop an SBE vision for Tobago that reflects Tobago's priorities and goals, and complements a national-level vision for Trinidad and Tobago.</p> <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap provides a foundation on which to build a clear, coherent vision for SBE in Tobago. ✓ A review of existing laws and policies applicable in Tobago will identify gaps that need to be addressed to deliver the Blue Economy Roadmap, particularly in relation to emerging ocean-based sectors. ✓ Developing a combined financial and capacity building strategy for implementation for Trinidad and Tobago would optimise synergies and efficiencies.
Planning & management	Trinidad <p><i>Some demonstration of progress or activities for improvement, but in an unco-ordinated way.</i></p> <p>There is currently no integrated marine management framework in Trinidad and Tobago, but policies pending Cabinet approval provide the foundation for MSP. However, there is insufficient capacity for implementation, and concerns related to the prioritisation of economic interests over social and environmental impacts.</p> <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Swift approval of the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020, along with the draft NMPS 2021, will provide a platform to deliver ICZM and MSP. ✓ Developing a public expenditure and sustainable finance plan to support the implementation of ICZM and MSP will ensure the necessary training, personnel and technical capacity to deliver an SBE in Trinidad and Tobago over the long-term. ✓ Improved socio-economic valuation of marine resources may stimulate greater compliance and more informed decision-making.
	Tobago <p><i>Some demonstration of progress or activities for improvement, but in an unco-ordinated way.</i></p> <p>As in Trinidad, there is a lack of sufficient funding, training and personnel for the implementation of existing planning and management. There is a need to improve stakeholder awareness of the benefits of sustainable management practices to encourage stewardship and compliance with regulations.</p> <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Establishing the "Living with the SEA" working group could complement the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 and promote coastal resilience in Tobago. ✓ The THA can develop a locally-relevant ICZM framework that takes into account the specific pressures and demands in the Tobago marine area. ✓ The THA may wish to develop a set of public awareness tools linked to the ICZM Framework, that are aligned to Tobago's marine management priorities.

Figure 4.3: Assessments of the extent to which three of the seven enabling conditions of the UNEP SBE-TF (sustainable finance; stakeholder engagement and coalitions; and data and monitoring) are established across Trinidad and Tobago, including key challenges and opportunities

The following three enabling conditions were found to have common opportunities across both Trinidad and Tobago. These can often be co-ordinated or delivered at a national level to help realise synergies.



5. Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations

The recommendations set out in Table 5.1 present immediate steps which can be taken to create the necessary enabling conditions for an SBE transition

in Trinidad and Tobago, with some notes on the specific actions to advance each recommendation. Stakeholders, in addition to those engaged in the RRA process, will need to be identified and consulted.

Table 5.1: Recommendations and specific actions to enable readiness for an SBE transition in Trinidad and Tobago

Recommendations	Specific actions
Appoint ministry/department to lead SBE agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify leadership within GORTT, including the THA, to provide strategic steer and drive progress towards an SBE transition. The lead ministry or department requires a clear mandate, terms of reference and standard operating procedure (linked to an operations manual) that enables it to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> steer the SBE agenda and co-ordinate across relevant stakeholders and sectors, possibly through a secretariat role to the MoPD; channel resources to areas where they are most needed, building capacities, and facilitating co-ordinated actions by supporting collaborative action; and ensure allocation of sufficient human and financial resource required for SBE agenda co-ordination and leadership.
Awareness-raising across government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry/department appointed to lead the SBE agenda should undertake activities to advocate across the government to raise awareness and ensure participation of relevant departments. In the interim, this could be taken up by representatives already engaged in SBE decision-making, such as IMA and the Maritime Services Division in GORTT, and the Coastal Zone Management Unit in THA. Detailed analysis is needed to understand and articulate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the scope of the SBE in Trinidad and Tobago; the full range of sectors and policy areas that intersect with the SBE and their role within decision-making; and the long-term benefits and opportunities that an SBE can deliver for the economy, the environment and society in Trinidad and Tobago. Advocacy should also include political engagement to secure SBE champions at the highest decision-making levels.

Recommendations	Specific actions
Reappoint the Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reappoint the Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee with representation from all key government ministries/departments that intersect with the SBE (including relevant representation from the THA) to co-ordinate the development and delivery of the SBE agenda in Trinidad and Tobago. • An equivalent committee should be established to take ownership of the SBE agenda in Tobago but with a clear relationship to the national ICZM Committee. • Both committees should have a cabinet/THA-approved mandate and terms of reference that enables them to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – steer the SBE agenda and co-ordinate across relevant stakeholders and sectors; and – channel resources to areas where they are most needed, building capacity and facilitating co-ordinated actions through stakeholder coalitions.
Agree on SBE definition and vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake workshops and consultation to develop a shared vision which sets out the aspiration for an SBE and guides SBE planning and decision-making. • This activity should be led by the Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee and developed in consultation with representatives of non-governmental organisations. • This process should form part of a wider campaign of awareness-raising, engagement and advocacy for an SBE transition with stakeholders across Trinidad and Tobago.
Accelerate cabinet approval of relevant legislation, possibly through creation of a 'SBE Omnibus Bill'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are several laws and policies relevant to the SBE that require urgent approval to improve policy coherence and facilitate implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Draft National Maritime Policy and Strategy (NMPS) (2021) – Shipping Bill (2019) – Fisheries Management Bill (2020) – Draft ICZM Policy Framework – Shipping (Marine Pollution) Bill (in draft) • Packaging these instruments together as an 'Omnibus Bill for SBE' would create a clear mandate for the SBE in Trinidad and Tobago. • An SBE Omnibus Bill could: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – include a preamble that explains how the instruments relate to the SBE and each other; – enshrine an agreed SBE definition and vision; and – expand the mandate of the Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee to include co-ordination and delivery of an SBE transition.

Recommendations	Specific actions
Stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinated advocacy and awareness-raising on the SBE agenda activities are needed with key stakeholders to improve understanding of what an SBE means for Trinidad and Tobago, and the benefits of a transition and their role within it, and to encourage ongoing participation, support and stewardship. • Once approved, adopting participatory processes to implement the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020 would demonstrate action and may help assuage stakeholder fatigue. • The GORTT, including the THA, should work with key non-governmental actors, such as CANARI and Environment Tobago, to support stakeholder coalition building and ensure inclusive and equitable processes and outcomes.
Develop an SBE strategic action plan/ SBE roadmap for Trinidad and Tobago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The respective committees mandated to deliver an SBE transition should co-ordinate the development and delivery of an SBE roadmap for Trinidad and Tobago and associated strategic action plan (informed by the draft Tobago Blue Economy Roadmap), including appropriate stakeholder engagement. • Working groups could be established by the Inter-ministerial ICZM Committee to lead on key deliverables and cross-cutting priorities such as overseeing the delivery of MSP. • The action plan should detail a prioritised list of necessary steps over the short-, medium- and long-term, detailing the accountable agency or department in Trinidad and Tobago and the resources required. An accompanying monitoring and evaluation plan should be developed to ensure progress, with a financial plan and strategy for capacity-building as required.
Improving access to existing finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve accessibility of existing funding streams, inter alia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – streamline the application process and expand eligibility for the Green Fund; – promote project funding calls across key stakeholder groups; and – enhance capacity-building for funding applications.

5.2 Other priorities for consideration

The RRA process identified several priorities that actions relevant to an SBE transition could help to address. These are listed below for consideration as part of the development of an SBE strategic action plan or as standalone activities:

- **sustainable economic diversification:** e.g. developing integrated sectoral plans aligned to SBE priorities; developing new regulatory frameworks for emerging sectors; public awareness campaigns to shift consumer preferences and practices (e.g. fisheries market);
- **mobilising funding for implementation:** e.g. developing a public expenditure and sustainable finance plan to support the implementation of SBE laws and policies across Trinidad and Tobago;
- **better integration of social outcomes:** e.g. review existing and draft policy frameworks to identify opportunities to enhance social sustainability, such as job creation and poverty alleviation;
- **improved valuation of sectors and ecosystem benefits:** e.g. development of key indicators and increasing monitoring and data related to socioeconomic factors and

ecosystem valuation to improve political buy-in and support redirection of investment to sustainable initiatives and emerging sectors;

- **development of a capacity-building strategy:** e.g. training and education to develop capacity within Trinidad and Tobago to support the development and delivery of new and emerging ocean-based sectors, contributing to sustainable livelihoods and supporting economic diversification; and
- **investment in technical capacity:** e.g. tools and systems that support automation and digitisation, such as drones for monitoring and data gathering, digitised platforms for tourism (marketing and booking), and automated infrastructure at ports.

Appendix 1: Key International and Regional Partnerships Relevant to the SBE

Collaborations and partnerships

- Association of Small Island States (AOSIS)
- Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
- CARICOM
- CLME+ Coordinating Mechanism
- Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre – Caribe

Agreements and initiatives

- Commonwealth Blue Charter
- The Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention)
- Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities
- Protocol Concerning Co-operation and Development in Combating Oil Spills in the Wider Caribbean Region
- Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region
- CARICOM Energy Policy
- Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework
- SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway
- MoUs on energy sector co-operation with the governments of Barbados, Grenada, Guyana and Republic of Haiti

Appendix 2: Key Laws and Policies Related to the Blue Economy

Legislation

- Fisheries Act of Trinidad and Tobago (1916)
- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Trinidad and Tobago (2017–2022)
- Marine Areas (Preservation and Enhancement) Act (1970)
- Conservation of Wildlife Act (Chapter 67:03) amended by 31 of (1980)
- Forest Act (1915) and the Forest Amendment Act (1999)
- Environmental Management Act (2000)
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) Rules (2001)
- Environmentally Sensitive Species (ESS) Rules (2001)
- Tourism Development Act (2000) – Amendment 2006 (tax exemptions)
- Control of Importation of Live Fish Act (1954) – (updated 2016)
- Shipping Act (1987)
- Shipping (Ship and Port Facility Security) Regulations (2004)
- Fishing Industry (Assistance) Act (1955)
- Water and Sewerage Act (1980)
- Waterworks and Water Conservation Act (1944)
- The Litter Act (1981)
- Water Pollution Rules (2019) (Amendment 2007)
- Oil Pollution of Territorial Waters Act (1951)
- Toxic Chemicals Act (2007)
- The Land Acquisition Act (1994)

- Town and Country Planning Act (Act 21 of 1990)
- Planning and Facilitation of Development Act, Act 10 of (2014)
- Minerals Act (2000)
- Continental Shelf Act (1969)
- Territorial Sea Act 1969 (amended 1986)
- Archipelagic Waters and Exclusive Economic Zone Act (1986)

Policies

- Vision 2030 National Development Strategy – 2016–2030
- Recovery Roadmap for Trinidad and Tobago Post Covid-19 Pandemic (2020)
- Comprehensive Economic Development Plan for Tobago: Clean, Green, Safe and Serene (2006)
- Tobago Roadmap to Recovery: Recommendations for rebuilding the Tobago society in 2020
- National Environmental Policy (2018)
- National Forest Policy (2011)
- National Wildlife Policy (2013)
- Certificate of Environmental Clearance Rules (2001)
- Trinidad and Tobago National Protected Areas Policy (2011)
- The National Policy and Programmes on Wetland Conservation for Trinidad and Tobago (2002)
- Environmental Management Authority National Environment Policy (2017) (draft)

- National Oil Spill Contingency Plan of Trinidad and Tobago (2013)
- Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) of Trinidad and Tobago (2018)
- National Climate Change Policy (2019)
- Strategy for Reduction of Carbon Emissions in Trinidad and Tobago for 2040 (2015)
- National Solid Waste or Resource Management Policy (2012)
- National Waste Recycling Policy (2015)
- National Tourism Policy 2021–2030
- Aquaculture Strategic Plan: A Framework for Sustainable Development in Trinidad and Tobago 2018–2023
- National Spatial Development Strategy for Trinidad and Tobago (2013)
- Trinidad and Tobago Trade Policy 2019–2023
- Yachting Policy of Trinidad and Tobago 2017–2021
- National Policy on Gender and Development of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (2018)

Laws and policies currently in draft

- Shipping (Marine Pollution) Bill
- Ecotourism Policy
- Community Tourism Policy

Laws and policies currently passing through parliament

- The draft National Maritime Policy and Strategy (NMPS) (2021): before cabinet for approval
- The Shipping Bill (2019): currently before a joint select committee of the parliament
- The Fisheries Management Bill (2020): lapsed on 3 July 2020
- The Draft Integrated Coastal Zone Management Policy Framework (ICZM) (2020): before the cabinet for approval

Appendix 3: Issues Identified by Stakeholders in the Trinidad and Tobago Coastal Zone

Issues identified by stakeholders in the coastal zone of Trinidad and Tobago as part of the stakeholder consultation conducted during the development of the Draft ICZM Policy Framework 2020.

Sector/activities	Issues
Oil and gas	Oil spills; loss of productive fishing grounds; dumping of drilling mud; seismic survey impact on fisheries; mangrove destruction; user conflicts; restrictions imposed on fishermen in areas where oil spill response activities or rig operations are in progress; contamination of shoreline/beaches.
Shipping and maritime transport	Abandonment of derelict vessels; pollution from ships; maritime traffic management; excessive speed of vessels and jet skis; reclamation for port development and associated dredging; underdeveloped/under-utilised transport linkages; ballast water discharge; use of harmful anti-fouling paints.
Fisheries	Overfishing; lack of knowledge on fish stock/observed decline in fish stock; harmful fishing practices; lack of infrastructure for the fishing sector (landing sites, storage, fish processing facilities and so on); illegal fishing by foreigners; piracy; bycatch of turtles and associated damage to fishing nets; ghost fishing by discarded nets, invasive species.
Agriculture	Deforestation; pollution – fertilisers, animal waste and sediment pollution.
Mining	Deforestation; sand mining; sediment pollution.
Built development	Lack of regulations on building set-backs; unplanned/unregulated development; land tenure; land reclamation; loss of mangroves and seagrass beds; coral reef destruction; loss of public access to the coast; lack of facilities on beaches; conflicts at and destruction of cultural and heritage sites; pollution – domestic and solid waste.
Tourism	Damage to coastal ecosystems; domestic and solid waste pollution; loss of public access to beaches; user conflicts.

Appendix 4: Government Departments and Agencies with a Role in the SBE

- Ministry of Planning and Development
 - Institute of Marine Affairs
 - Environmental Management Authority
 - Town and Country Planning Division
- Ministry of Works and Transport
 - Maritime Services Division
- Ministry of Trade and Industry
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (Fisheries Division)
- Ministry of Tourism
- Ministry of National Security
- Ministry of Sport
- Ministry of Education
- Tobago House of Assembly including:
 - Department of Marine Resources and Fisheries
 - Department of the Environment
 - Department of Natural Resources and Forestry
 - Department of Tourism
 - Community-Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP)

Appendix 5: List of Key SBE Non-Governmental Actors

- The Shipping Association of Trinidad & Tobago
- Trinidad and Tobago Pilots' Association
- Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
- Port Lisas Industrial Port Development Corporation Limited
- The Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago
- Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission
- American Chamber of Commerce of Trinidad and Tobago (AmCham T&T)
- Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce
- Community Chambers of Commerce
- Chaguaramas Development Authority
- Municipal Corporations of Trinidad and Tobago
- San Fernando Waterfront Redevelopment Project and San Fernando City Corporation
- Association of Upstream Operators of Trinidad and Tobago
- Bankers Association of Trinidad & Tobago
- Trinidad and Tobago United Fisherfolk (TUFF)
- All Tobago Fisherfolk Association
- Fish Processing Company of Tobago
- Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company (SWMCOL)
- Water and Sewage Authority (WASA)
- Water Resources Agency
- Agricultural Cooperative Societies and Farming Associations
- Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago
- National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO)
- Council of Presidents of the Environment (COPE)
- CANARI
- Environment Tobago
- Movement for Social Justice (MSJ)
- Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN)
- The University of the West Indies
- The University of Trinidad and Tobago
- Turtle Village Trust
- Bucco Reef Trust
- Tobago Hotel Association
- Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute
- Trinidad Hotels, Restaurants and Tourism Association
- Trinidad Ltd and Tobago Ltd
- Yachting Association of Trinidad and Tobago
- Association of Tobago Dive Operators (ATDO)
- The National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago

Appendix 6: Survey Responses

Leadership

Figure A.1: Participant responses to the question, 'Are there high-level statements (e.g. a minister or PM) in support of a blue economy?'

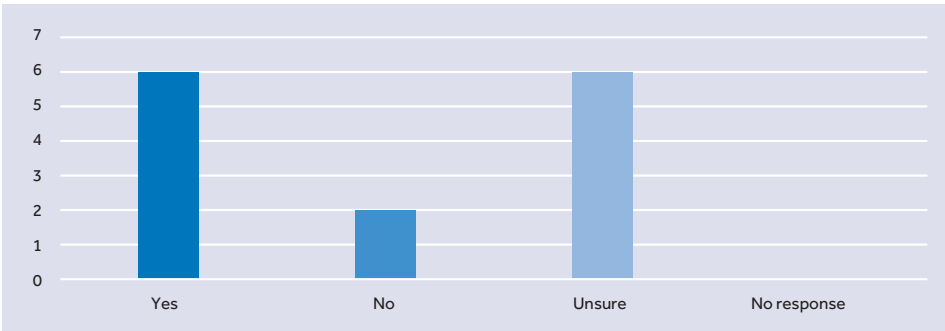


Figure A.2: Participant responses to the question, 'Have any blue economy meetings or conferences been held in the country?'

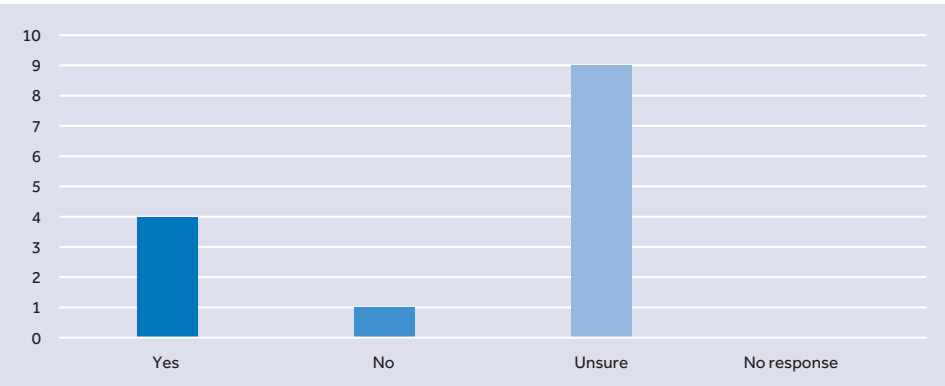
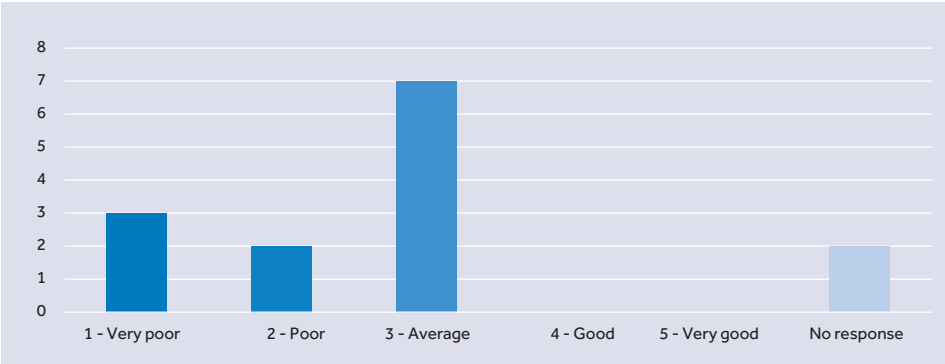
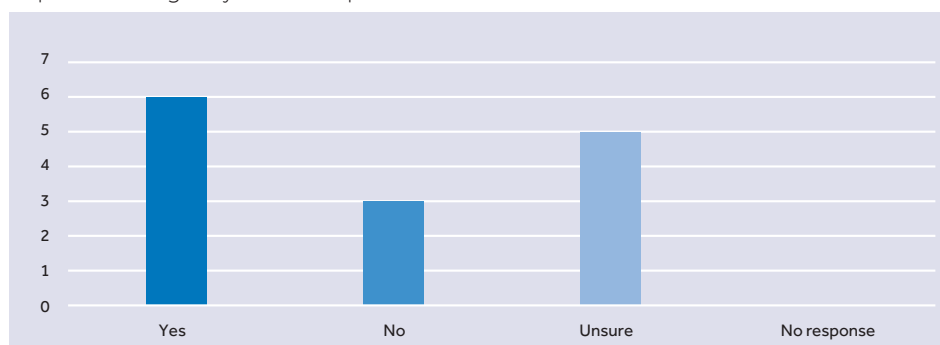


Figure A.3: Participant responses to the question, 'How much follow-up was there in your estimation?'



Institutional infrastructure & culture

Figure A.4: Participant responses to the question, 'Is there a government ministry/department/agency/office responsible for SBE transition?'



* Across the six 'yes' responses, when asked which department/ministry was responsible for SBE transition, there was no consensus. Responses included the Ministry for Planning and Development (2); the Ministry for Sustainable Development (2); the Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (1); and the Institute of Marine Affairs/Environmental Management Authority (1).

Figure A.5: Participant responses to the question, 'Are there any ministerial or agency-level committees or fora in place to support cross-sectoral collaboration?'

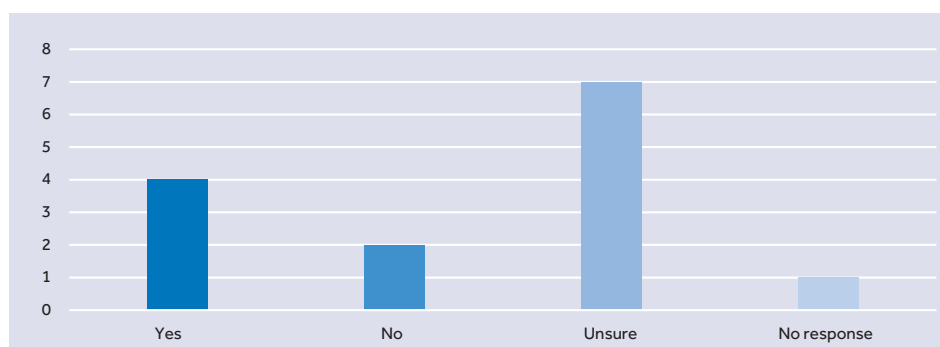
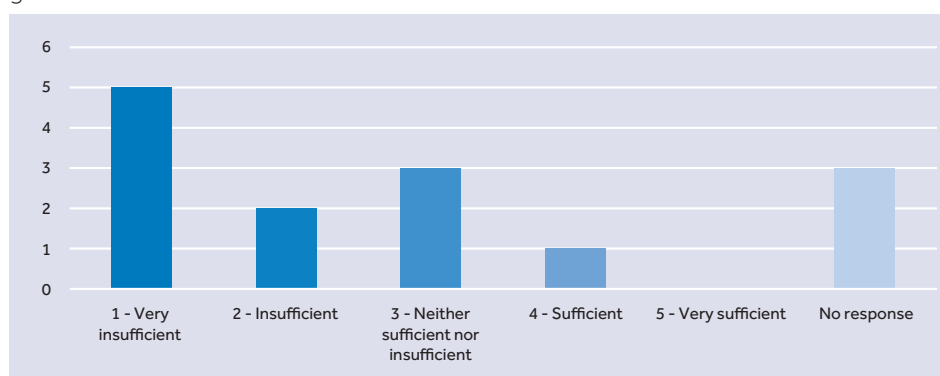


Figure A.6: Participant responses to the question, 'In your view, are existing government structures sufficient to deliver a transition to an SBE?'



When asked what more might be needed, suggestions included:

- multi-stakeholder committee with a mandate role and responsibilities;
- greater focus on sustainable development at a national level;
- a clear SBE strategy; and
- improved public awareness/education.

Laws and policies

Figure A.7: Participant responses to the question, 'Are there policies, regulations or other guidelines in place that directly support a blue economy approach, such as a national oceans policy or blue economy roadmap (or preliminary scoping study)?'

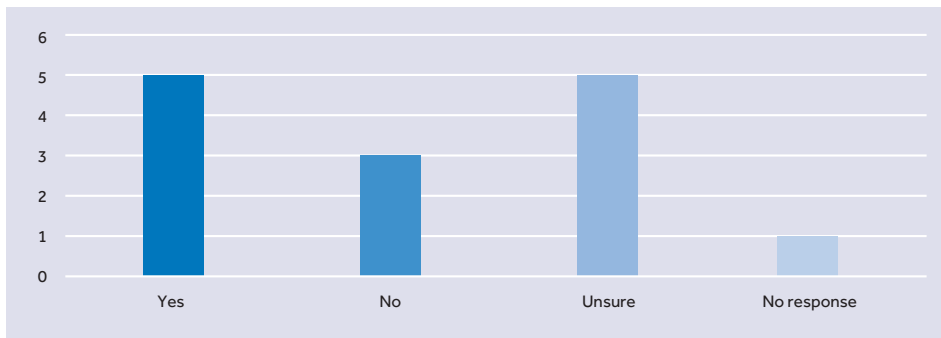


Figure A.8: Participant responses to the question, 'Are there additional laws, policies, plans or programmes being discussed/developed that address the blue economy?'

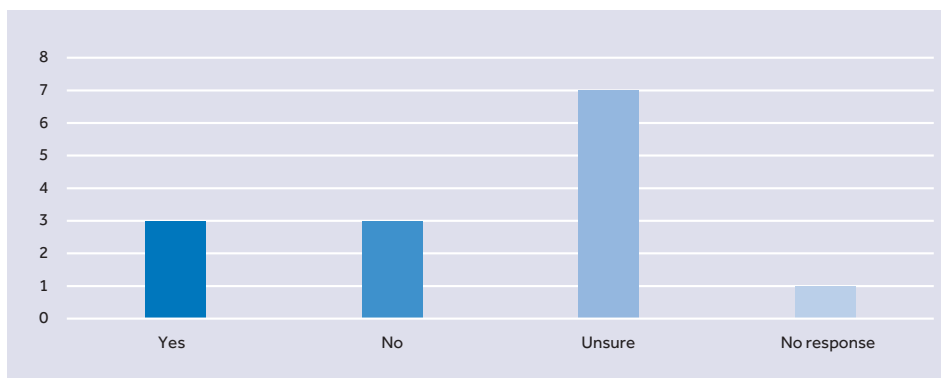
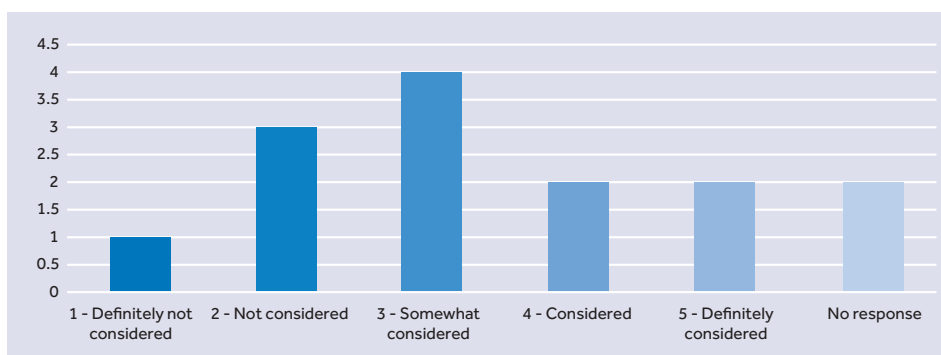
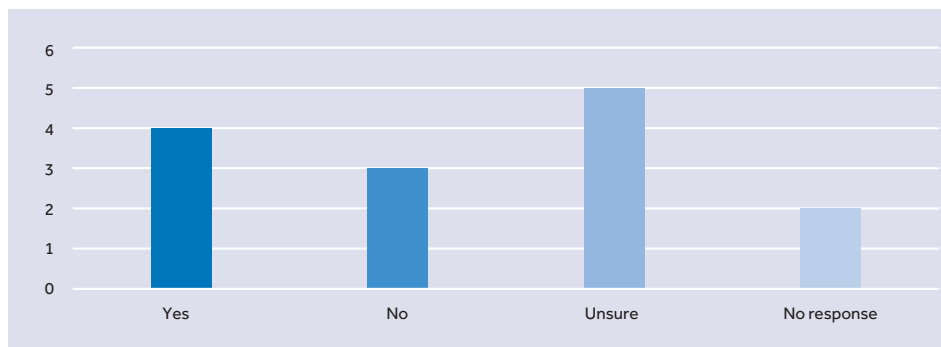


Figure A.9: Participant responses to the question, 'As far as you are aware, is the ocean considered in plans and policies across other sectors related to the blue economy (i.e. climate, tourism, gender, health, education, research and development)?'



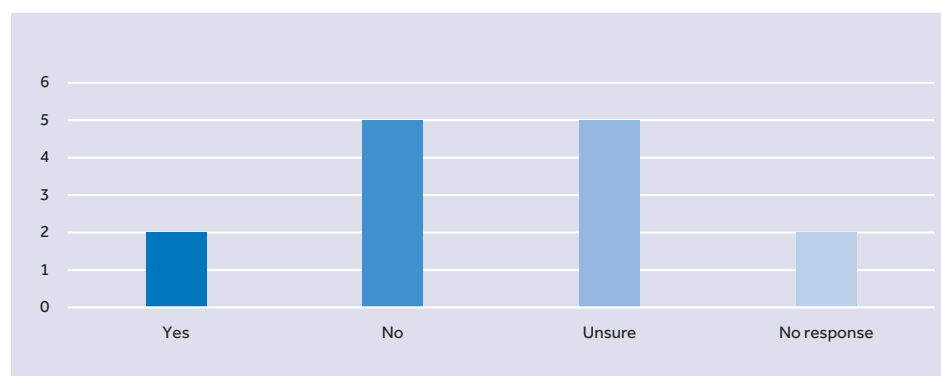
Planning and management

Figure A.10: Participant responses to the question, 'Is there related policy or legislation that would support an SBE, e.g. requiring the implementation of marine spatial planning (MSP) or integrated coastal zone management (ICZM)?'



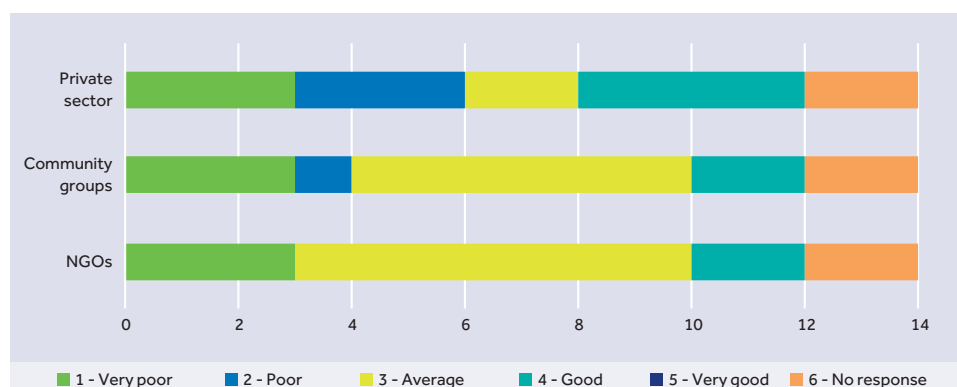
Sustainable finance

Figure A.11: Participant responses to the question, 'Are any incentives, such as subsidies, tax incentives or co-investment provided to encourage sustainable development in the marine area?'



Stakeholder engagement and coalitions

Figure A.12: Participant responses to the question, 'In your view, how well does government engage with non-government organisations in the SBE?'



Data and monitoring

Figure A.13: Participant responses to the question, 'Have the following key data needs been identified?'

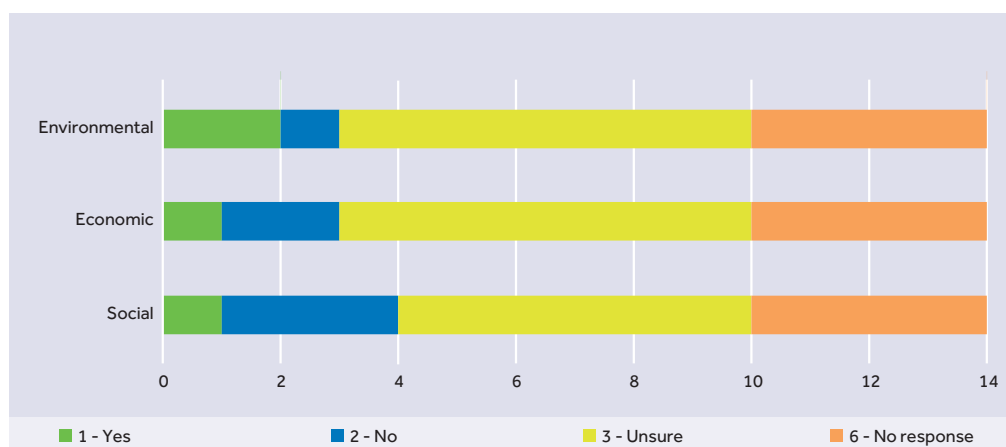


Figure A.14: Participant responses to the question, 'To what extent are data needs being met for economic components of sustainability?'

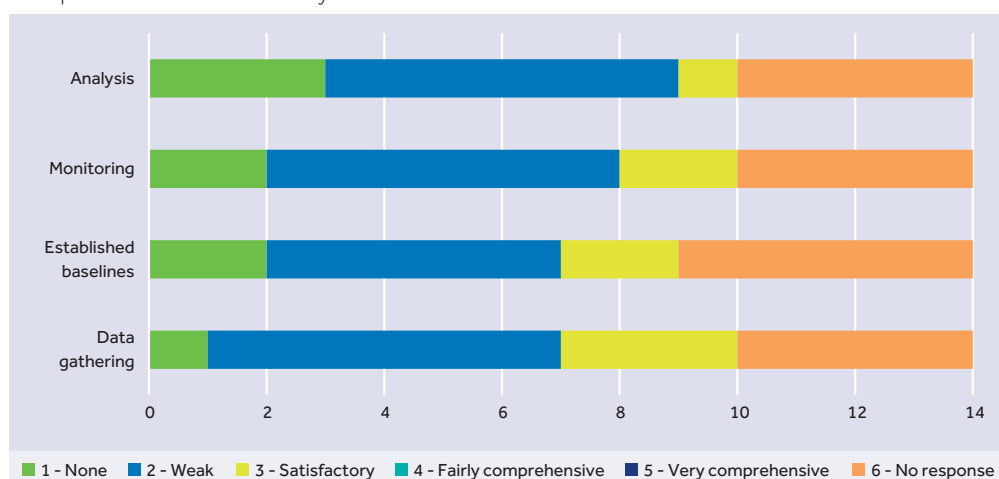


Figure A.15: Participant responses to the question, 'To what extent are data needs being met for social components of sustainability?'

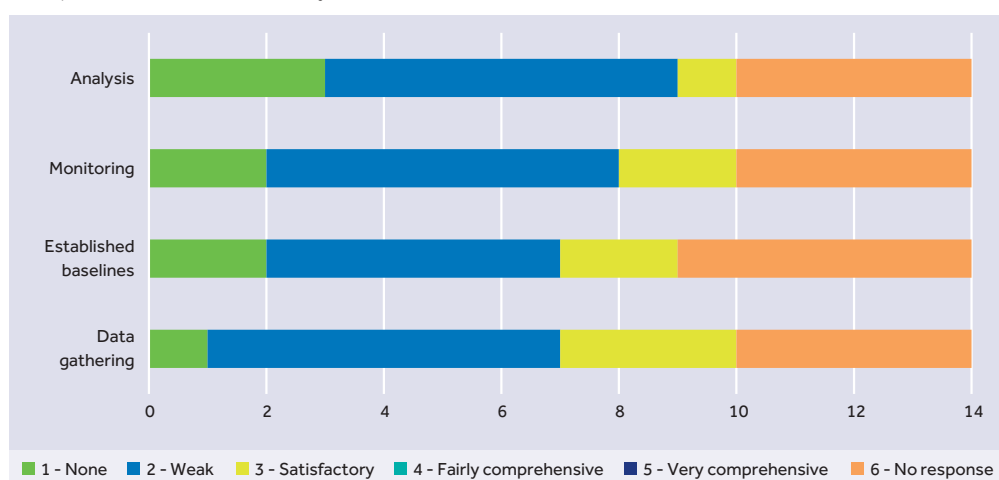
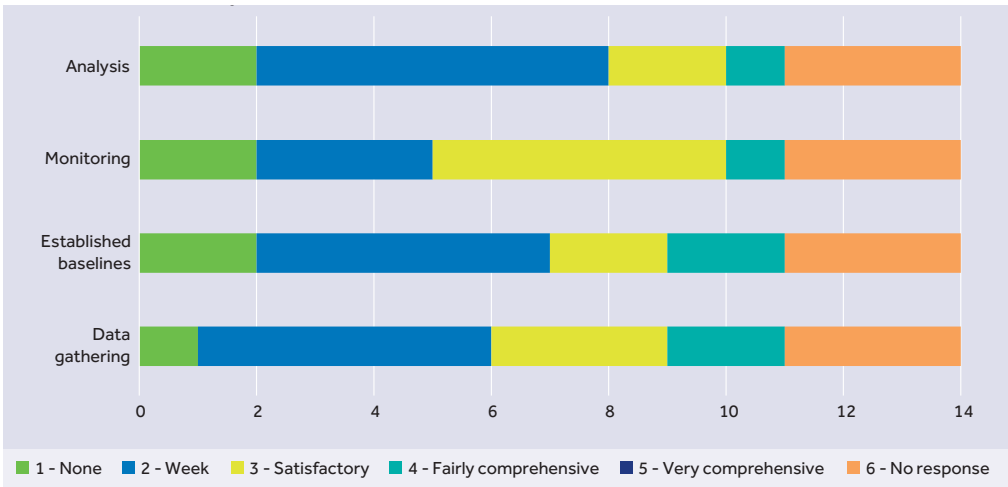
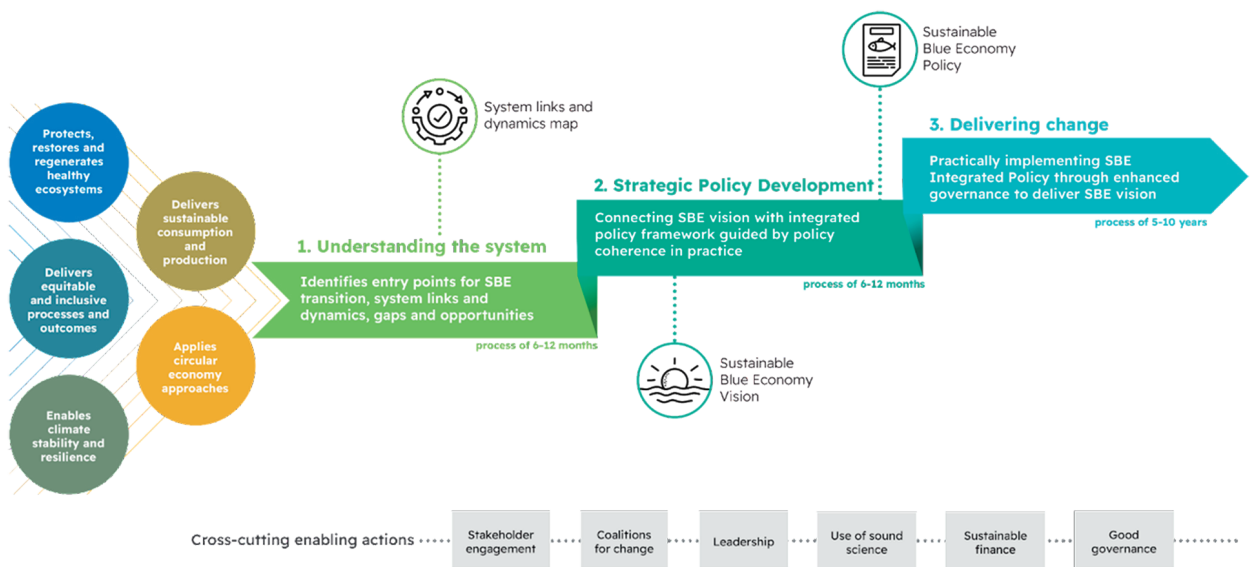


Figure A.16: Participant responses to the question, 'To what extent are data needs being met for environmental components of sustainability?'



Appendix 7: UNEP SBE Transition Framework Overview

Figure A. 17: High-level overview of the SBE-TF including the guiding principles, phases, timeline and cross-cutting enabling actions.



Source: UNEP report (forthcoming 2023)

Phases and specific activities of the SBE-TF

Phase	Example activities
1. Understanding the system	1.1 Policy and institutional assessment and gap analysis 1.2 Economic baseline 1.3 Social baseline 1.4 Environmental baseline 1.5 Stakeholder analysis 1.6 Understanding system links and dynamics
2. Strategic policy development	2.1 Developing an SBE vision 2.2 Policy development 2.3 Sector planning 2.4 Public expenditure planning and sustainable finance 2.5 SBE integrated policy
3. Delivering change	3.1 Integrated marine management 3.2 Knowledge and innovation 3.3 Capacity-building 3.4 Monitoring and evaluation 3.5 Review and adaptation

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