

# Rapid Readiness Assessment for the Transition to a Sustainable Blue Economy

Pilot project in Antigua and Barbuda

March 2023



The Commonwealth  
Blue Charter

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# Acronyms

<b>ADOMS</b>	Antigua and Barbuda Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping
<b>AF</b>	Adaptation Fund
<b>CMEP</b>	Commonwealth Marine Economies Programme
<b>DCA</b>	Development Control Agency
<b>DOALOS</b>	Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
<b>DoBE</b>	Department of the Blue Economy
<b>DoE</b>	Department of Environment
<b>EEZ</b>	exclusive economic zone
<b>ECROP</b>	Eastern Caribbean Regional Ocean Policy
<b>EIA</b>	environmental impact assessment
<b>EPMA</b>	Environmental Protection and Management Act (2019)
<b>GCF</b>	Green Climate Fund
<b>GDP</b>	gross domestic product
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>GoAB</b>	Government of Antigua and Barbuda
<b>ICZM</b>	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
<b>IUU</b>	illegal, unregulated and unreported
<b>MEP</b>	Maritime Economy Plan for Antigua and Barbuda (2021)
<b>MoSTBE</b>	Ministry of Social Transformation and the Blue Economy
<b>MP</b>	Member of Parliament
<b>MRV</b>	monitoring, reporting and valuation
<b>MSP</b>	marine spatial planning
<b>NAP</b>	National Adaptation Plan
<b>NDC</b>	Nationally Determined Contributions
<b>NEIS</b>	National Environmental Information System
<b>NOGC</b>	National Ocean Governance Committee
<b>NOP</b>	National Ocean Policy (2021 draft)
<b>ODA</b>	official development assistance
<b>RRA</b>	Rapid Readiness Assessment
<b>SBE</b>	sustainable blue economy
<b>SBE-TF</b>	Sustainable Blue Economy Transition Framework
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>TOR</b>	terms of reference
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UWI</b>	University of the West Indies



# Executive Summary

This blue economy Rapid Readiness Assessment (RRA) pilot project was undertaken in Antigua and Barbuda, alongside a second pilot project in Trinidad and Tobago, to establish the government's readiness to embark on the transition to a sustainable blue economy (SBE). The RRA approach being developed is based on the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP's) Sustainable Blue Economy Transition Framework 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.

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Working with the national Government of Antigua and Barbuda, 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.

Recognising that an SBE provides opportunities to increase economic resilience, climate-change resilience, social uplift and environmental sustainability, there is already some political support for such a transition in Antigua and Barbuda. The development of the draft National Ocean Policy (NOP) and the Commonwealth Maritime Economic Plan in 2021 represent notable steps towards an integrated policy framework – which is highlighted in the UNEP SBE Transition Framework to be the central component of SBE development. Thus, **Antigua and Barbuda has begun the transition to a blue economy.**

However, as encountered in many countries, **developing a shared understanding of what an SBE is and what it means for Antigua and Barbuda is still required to move forward.** Early, frequent and targeted dialogue and engagement among relevant stakeholders, inside and outside government, will build a sense of shared purpose and underpin the collaborative approaches needed to tackle the complex issues ahead.

Existing cross-governmental ocean governance co-operation is evidenced by the National Ocean Governance Committee (NOGC). The current government's intention to progress an SBE is reflected by the newly established Department of the Blue Economy (DoBE). However, as highlighted in other studies and indicated in the RRA workshop, some co-ordination difficulties are evident. **Aligning the mandates of the DoBE and the NOGC to act in a mutually supportive and co-ordinated way is a pragmatic and achievable early step in the SBE transition.**

**The NOP, currently pending revision and cabinet endorsement, should be finalised and adopted.** Notwithstanding the NOP gap, the legislative and policy landscape is relatively robust to support the SBE. However, **accountability mechanisms will need to be developed** to ensure that the principles of the NOP and the SBE are upheld in decision-making. **Marine spatial planning (MSP) is recommended** to strengthen integration of the NOP within the ocean governance framework at national level.

To finalise the NOP, ready for adoption by cabinet, Antigua and Barbuda may wish to better utilise the support available through the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), which provides learning exchanges, funding opportunities and technical support. Similarly, Antigua and Barbuda may wish to request support from the Commonwealth Secretariat.

As a twin-island nation, challenges exist in ensuring an effective and inclusive SBE transition for both Antigua and Barbuda. The Barbuda Council is highly active, but **Barbudan representation at the national level could be improved**, including through greater opportunity to participate in national decision-making forums and stakeholder consultations. Barbuda's experience in 'bottom-up' and community-led approaches to management, which can lead to greater equity in decision-making, provides inspiring examples for similar activities elsewhere in the country.

Fully transitioning to an SBE is not straightforward, with significant challenges as governments seek to balance complex and competing demands within sometimes difficult economic situations, with incomplete data and many uncertainties. Island states, in particular, need to forge their own pathway, informed by the most effective practices and best available knowledge, but also accounting for their unique history, culture and circumstances. **To be fully accepted by the people of Antigua and Barbuda, the transition to an SBE will need to involve them each step of the way.**

# 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 sustainable blue economy (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 Sustainable Blue Economy 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 in adopting 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 trialled –in Antigua and Barbuda 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 the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Commonwealth Secretariat through the Commonwealth Blue Charter programme, Antigua and Barbuda, alongside Trinidad and Tobago, agreed to pilot the RRA process from October to December 2022. The RRA is derived from:

- a two-day stakeholder workshop held on 12 and 13 October, 2022 at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, St John's, Antigua;
- 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 Antigua and Barbuda 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 Blue Economy Context in Antigua and Barbuda

### 2.1 Country context

Antigua and Barbuda is a sovereign state comprising three islands, Antigua, Barbuda and Redonda, with a total estimated population of 100,000 people. Antigua has an area of 108 square miles and accounts for 99 per cent of the population. Barbuda, a flat coral island of approximately 68 square miles, accounts for 1 per cent of the population. Redonda, an uninhabited nature reserve, is 0.5 square miles.

The country has an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of 111,568 km<sup>21</sup> which supports several marine economic sectors that contribute significantly to the national GDP. Antigua and Barbuda's economy is heavily reliant on tourism. Other key sectors in the coastal and marine space include fishing, maritime transport, water management (including desalination) and mineral extraction. (Further descriptions are provided in section 2.2.)

Despite its reliance on marine sectors, less than 1 per cent of the marine waters of Antigua and Barbuda marine waters are under environmental protection.<sup>2</sup> However, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda (GoAB) recognises its dependence on ocean spaces and is working to increase the protection of inshore areas. It is enacting and strengthening legislative frameworks covering coastal and marine resources (including the Environmental Protection and Management Act and revisions of the Fisheries Act). It was the first in the Caribbean to ban plastic bags in 2016. And it is recognised globally for its efforts towards achieving a more well-rounded blue economy.

As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), Antigua and Barbuda faces significant environmental and infrastructural challenges including effective waste management infrastructure, water management

(a major concern due to limited natural freshwater resources), deforestation (including mangroves), sargassum blooms, a decline in fish stocks, and plastic pollution. Linked to heavy reliance on tourism, Antigua and Barbuda is among the top 30 global plastic polluters per capita.<sup>3</sup>

GoAB has recognised the need to increase economic resilience including diversifying the national economy from tourism.<sup>4</sup> The *Medium-Term Development Strategy 2016 to 2020*<sup>5</sup> emphasised climate-change resilience, social uplift and environmental sustainability as key outcomes of economic reformation in line with the UN SDGs and other international commitments. This was positioned again in February 2022, with the Prime Minister, Gaston Browne's presentation of the 2022 budget statement, 'Setting the Stage for Economic Rejuvenation', which prioritises a path to economic diversification and names the blue economy. However, economic challenges such as sensitivity to external market shocks, a narrow resource base, and supply-chain disruptions associated with natural disasters are challenges to diversifying its ocean-reliant industries.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, economic diversification will put additional pressures on a marine environment where space and resources are already subject to demand and competition. Robust and coherent ocean governance is therefore needed to support management across sectors, including planning, regulation, enforcement and monitoring, informed by the best available knowledge and data.

1 As stated in the Antigua and Barbuda National Ocean Policy (2021) (draft). There are inconsistencies with the EEZ area in Antigua and Barbuda (including as stated in the Maritime Economy Plan Antigua and Barbuda). This may be due to recent negotiations (2021) over the definition of the maritime boundaries with neighbouring territories.

2 Antigua and Barbuda National Ocean Policy (2021) (draft).

3 Ritchie, H and Roser, M (2018), 'Plastic pollution', Our World in Data, available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/plastic-pollution>

4 The economy is heavily reliant on tourism, which contributes more than half of the national GDP and comprises the largest portion of employment.

5 Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance (2015) *Medium-Term Development Strategy 2016 to 2020*, Government of Antigua and Barbuda (GoAB).

6 European Commission (2014) *National Indicative Programme Antigua & Barbuda 2014–2020*, European Development Fund (EDF).

## Antigua and Barbuda: A twin-island state

While the two islands are governed as one state, the characteristics, resources and needs of both are different in several ways. Barbuda's population is around only 1,300 people and the island is dependent on Antigua through the import of products and resources, and fiscal allocation from the national budget to support development. Barbuda's tourism has generally been small-scale in contrast to the intensive cruise and package holiday nature of tourism in Antigua.

Two separate islands presents the challenge of geographic separation in management and planning. Issues associated with collaboration, co-operation, co-ordination and perceived power imbalances exist between islands in small twin-island developing states. These cannot be ignored. There is only one Barbuda representative in a house of 18 members of parliament (MPs) for Antigua and Barbuda.

One of the most notable recent challenges between the two islands lies in the change of land ownership laws. The Barbuda Land Act of 2007 previously established that the citizens of Barbuda communally owned the land. The Act specified that residents must provide consent for major development projects on the island. However, this Act was repealed in 2018. In order to obtain full possession and transfer rights, Barbudans must now purchase property rights from GoAB for the land on which they have historically lived. GoAB may sell or lease the remaining land to interested parties. This has significantly changed the potential of Barbuda, and opens it up to larger-scale developments which were not previously a priority.

This RRA attempts to highlight where differences may lie in the challenges or opportunities between the two islands. Future work to support the SBE transition in the country must consider the unique challenges facing each island.

## 2.2 Key ocean-based sectors

After tourism, the civil service is the second largest employer in the country. Driven by the tourism sector, the construction industry has also become a large employer and a significant contributor to the national economy. Agriculture was previously the primary economic sector and was dominated by sugar plantations, but the sector is now predominantly characterised by small family plots which supply local areas.<sup>7</sup> The main blue economy sectors (tourism, fisheries and aquaculture, maritime transport and ports, and water management) are described below. Other sectors include marine mineral extraction (particularly sand mining in Barbuda, as well as the unassessed potential for deep-seabed mining); submarine cables and pipelines; and marine environment and biodiversity protection.

### Tourism

Tourism is Antigua and Barbuda's largest economic sector, bringing in more than 50 per cent of GDP and making up more than 46 per cent of national

employment (both directly and indirectly). The majority of tourism is through cruise ships, all-inclusive beach resorts, and yachting. Cruise tourism is the largest contributor to visitor numbers with implications for the management of passengers both at sea and on land. To further grow and develop this industry, Antigua plans to expand to become a home port for cruise liners.

The tourism sector was hugely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and remains challenged by a lack of differentiation within the Caribbean destination market. Climate change, and the associated increasing intensity and frequency of tropical storms and hurricanes, also poses a serious threat to the sector. As found across the region, sargassum is problematic. It leads to high beach clean-up costs and is off-putting to visitors. Ecotourism presents a significant opportunity for both islands, but it depends on a healthy and thriving marine environment. The coral reefs, such as Cades Reef popular for snorkelling and scuba diving, birdlife (including the Frigate Bird Sanctuary and Ramsar site in Barbuda) and pristine beaches, such as 11 Mile Beach (Barbuda) and Dickenson Bay (Antigua) are a significant draw.

<sup>7</sup> Commonwealth Marine Economies Programme (2021), *Maritime economy plan: Antigua and Barbuda*, Department of the Blue Economy Gap Analysis.

Accelerating economic growth in Antigua and Barbuda relies on the development and competitiveness of the tourism industry which itself depends upon a healthy and resilient marine environment. Given the degradation or removal of coastal ecosystems for development, plastic waste, and insufficient waste management infrastructure to cope with national solid waste, expansion in this sector will require major efforts to ensure 'greening' through long-term sustainability and changing existing practices to ensure the islands can cope with increasing visitors and activities. Economic reliance on tourism is also a significant barrier to a transition to more sustainable marine sectors, as the environmental sustainability of this sector has been relatively poor to date.

### Fisheries and aquaculture

Fisheries in Antigua and Barbuda are small-scale and target predominantly reef-dwelling or demersal species which account for around 85 per cent of landings. Fishing contributes approximately 2 per cent of GDP. Artisanal fishing for domestic consumption is important for both local food security and partially meeting demand from the tourism sector, which also requires fish to be imported. Fishing has considerable cultural significance as a deeply ingrained activity which enhances livelihoods and wellbeing in coastal communities. In Barbuda, about one quarter of the population is involved in fisheries or is part of families involved in fisheries.<sup>8</sup> The main fisheries are snappers and groupers, Caribbean spiny lobster and queen conch. Key challenges facing the fisheries include illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, the use of inappropriate equipment causing environmental damage, high bycatch rates and waste, post-harvest losses associated with a lack of freezing facilities, declining fish stocks, toxic catches (i.e. ciguatera, particularly off the Redonda Bank) and climate change.

Aquaculture is in the nascent stages of development in the country, with some farming of gracilaria and euclidean species of sea moss, but there is limited data on activities in this area.

8 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2022), *Fishery and aquaculture country profiles: Antigua and Barbuda*, Country Profile Fact Sheets, Fisheries and Aquaculture Division: Rome, available at <https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/facp/atg>

### Maritime transport and ports

Approximately 90 per cent of all goods imported arrive by sea so shipping is essential to the national economy. The maritime transport and ports sector includes diverse activities, including port operations, ship repair and dry docking, and marine services (including offshore bulk transshipment, bunkering, cold stacking, maritime logistics and open ship registry). There is a significant relationship between this sector and tourism given the high volume of cruise ships and yachts which dock in Antigua. Nelson's Dockyard Marina, a primary yachting marina, sits within the Nelson's Dockyard National Park, which also hosts Clarence House and Shirley Heights, and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Within this sector, cruise tourism continues to expand, placing pressure on sensitive areas. The yachting sector has also seen exponential growth over the last ten years with Antigua and Barbuda being considered one of the premier destinations for yachts within the Eastern Caribbean, especially given the popular Antigua Yacht Club Marina and Resort in English Harbour Town. However, onshore yacht facilities are insufficient to manage the quantity of yachting vessels arriving in both Antigua and Barbuda, let alone any expected increases in yachting visitors. Suitable waste treatment and reception facilities for leisure craft and cruise ships would enable growth in the sector. Local shipyards are relatively small and are of inadequate capacity for repairing or constructing new and larger vessels. This presents an opportunity for development especially given the drive to become a cruise home port, with Emerald Cruises and P&O Cruises confirming they will be using the Port of St John as home port for one their vessels each from 2023.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the Antigua and Barbuda Port Authority is looking to redevelop the Antigua deep-water port to become a revenue centre for the island as a regional transshipment hub for roughly ten smaller islands such as St Kitts and Nevis, Monserrat and Saba.<sup>10</sup>

Key challenges facing the transport and ports sector include the need to grow and shift existing

9 Antigua Observer (2022), 'Antigua poised to become homeport for P&O cruises', available at: <https://antiguaobserver.com/antigua-poised-to-become-homeport-for-po-cruises/>

10 World Investment News (2022), 'Antigua's deep-water port redevelopment: A new port for the 21st century Caribbean', available at: <https://www.winne.com/ag/company-profiles/Transforming-Antigua-from-the-Port>

infrastructure to be climate resilient and carbon neutral, to protect against extreme weather events, and to ensure that coastal development does not lead to environmental damage. GoAB proposes to address some of these challenges, as highlighted in its nationally determined contributions (NDCs) submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (2021).

## Water management

Water is supplied primarily through five reverse osmosis (RO) desalination plants including the Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA's) Crabbs plant, Ivan Rodrigues RO plant, Ffryes Beach RO plant and a collection of reservoirs. Water treatment plants at Delapps and Bendals support the capacity of the RO plants. The water management sector is essential to all other sectors that operate in the blue economy, and increasing the security of this sector should be a national priority. The provision of water is threatened by agriculture (including the quantity of water used and agricultural run-off), silting of reservoirs, pollution, the influx of sargassum (which blocks desalination filters), and reduction in investments due to the increasing frequency of extreme weather events. The integration of land-use plans with coastal or MSP requires providing space to support the future expansion of wastewater infrastructure. To reduce drought risks and vulnerability of other sectors, storage solutions are a priority area for development.

## 2.3 Emerging sectors and opportunities

Several emerging sectors and opportunities could support sustainability and economic diversification for Antigua and Barbuda in the context of an SBE transition including:

- expanding aquaculture activities and exploring mariculture to support the demand for fish, particularly in response to the increasing demand from tourists;
- building on recent interest on aquaponics linked to the growing tourism sector and the need for sustainable food production;
- fisheries diversification, including campaigns to change consumer tastes; and diversifying use of fish products such as fish oil or silage for agricultural purposes;

- increasing awareness of the potential of marine biopharmaceutical enterprises. There are no known biopharmaceutical enterprises based on marine resources operating in Antigua and Barbuda. However, the diversity of the marine environment offers opportunities for pharmaceutical and cosmetic discovery;<sup>11</sup>
- investment in marine renewable energy. At present, fuel import costs are among the highest in the Caribbean and worldwide, accounting for nearly 13.7 per cent of Antigua and Barbuda's GDP,<sup>12</sup> highlighting the urgent need to reduce its dependency on imported oil;
- ecotourism, which could include coral reef restoration initiatives, birdwatching in Barbuda, turtle-watching and conservation projects (particularly at Darkwood Beach in Antigua), expanding the GreenFins programme to promote sustainable dive and snorkel practices, and natural landscapes tours;
- expanding the tourism sector to move beyond holiday tourism, to include sports, health and entertainment subsectors;
- expanding the maritime cluster associated with the yachting and transport sector, using vessels as a locus for generating socioeconomic benefits such as through drydocking, insurance and entertainment (see above); and
- investing in waste management infrastructure, particularly in relation to the proposed plans to make Antigua a cruise home port. Managing cruise-related waste can generate income to support wider waste management infrastructure and technology for both islands.

Accelerating economic growth in Antigua and Barbuda through diversification into emerging sectors of the SBE will rely upon healthy and resilient coastal and marine environments. Increasing competition for space and conflicting priorities will increase the pressure on these environments. Therefore, sufficient legislation and regulatory frameworks, as well as consistent and robust monitoring and evaluation, are needed to ensure the sustainability of economic expansion in the emerging and traditional sectors.

11 Commonwealth Marine Economies Programme (2021). *Maritime economy plan: Antigua and Barbuda*, Department of the Blue Economy Gap Analysis.

12 Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC) (no date). *Antigua and Barbuda country profile*, available at: <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/atg>

## 2.4 Existing support for the SBE transition

The Eastern Caribbean Regional Ocean Policy (ECROP 2013) aims to promote a common approach to ocean governance in all member states of the Eastern Caribbean region, led by the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). The ECROP required the development of a **draft National Ocean Policy (NOP)** by each member state, including Antigua and Barbuda. The NOP was drafted in 2021 with the support of the Commonwealth Secretariat. It is designed to help co-ordinate and monitor existing and new operations and activities that occur in Antigua and Barbuda's ocean-based economy to ensure alignment with existing plans, strategies and policies. It is pending revision and cabinet endorsement.

A **National Ocean Governance Committee (NOGC)** was established in 2014 in response to the ECROP (2013). It is responsible for overseeing the implementation of national strategies and the NOP, to facilitate the transition towards an SBE, and encourage the concept of marine citizenship. This includes increasing people's connection to the marine environment, raising awareness and understanding of the importance of the coastal and marine ecosystems in supporting livelihoods, and encouraging people to value the marine area and to be more involved in decisions about it.<sup>13</sup>

The Commonwealth Marine Economies (CME) Programme, supported by the UK, worked with 17 Caribbean and Pacific SIDS in conserving their marine environments and managing their maritime resources. This was to catalyse sustainable economic development while addressing climate change, in alignment with the UN SDGs and the Paris Climate Change Accord. As part of the CME Programme, a **Maritime Economy Plan (MEP)** was created in consultation with GoAB during 2019–2020. The cabinet-endorsed MEP was a partnership initiative between the governments of the UK and Antigua and Barbuda. It aims to provide an overview of the current maritime economy, and establish priorities and actions for a plan that takes account of national issues, international commitments and the challenges of a SIDS.

13 Commonwealth Marine Economies Programme (2021), *Maritime economy plan: Antigua and Barbuda*, Department of the Blue Economy Gap Analysis.

Following development of the MEP, in 2020 the portfolio of the Ministry of Social Transformation was expanded to include the blue economy. This led to establishing the **DoBE within the Ministry of Social Transformation and the Blue Economy (MoSTBE)**.<sup>14</sup> This was also when the first ministerial commitments were made for an SBE. The DoBE was established to focus on marine citizenship, and should facilitate the development of an SBE to provide more diverse, sustainable and resilient economic activities. It should also serve as a primary point of contact for all regional and international engagements. The establishment of the DoBE was intended to act as a driver and focal point to integrate the concept of the SBE across GoAB and facilitate an integrated approach across ministries and departments to effectively manage, protect and enhance the marine environment and the economic opportunities it provides.

As part of its commitment to transitioning to an SBE, including reducing over-reliance on tourism and supporting sustainable economic development, GoAB signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the Association of Commonwealth Universities in 2021 to establish a **Centre for Excellence for Oceanography and the Blue Economy** based at the UWI Five Islands Campus.<sup>15</sup> The aim of this centre is to advance intellectual progress and strengthen institutional capacity in marine science and the SBE.<sup>16</sup>

The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALAS) Ocean Governance Study (2022, draft) sets out a detailed institutional review of Antigua and Barbuda which identifies gaps and indicates where strengthening is needed for in relation to The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which overlaps significantly with the blue economy. The report is due in 2023.

14 Ibid.

15 The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) (2022), 'Progressing plans for a Centre of Excellence for oceanography and the Blue Economy in Antigua', available at: <https://www.acu.ac.uk/news/progressing-plans-for-a-centre-of-excellence-for-oceanography-and-the-blue-economy-in-antigua/>

16 CARICOM (2021), 'MoU signed establishing centre for excellence for oceanography and the blue economy at the University of the West Indies Five Islands campus', available at: <https://caricom.org/mou-signed-establishing-centre-for-excellence-for-oceanography-and-the-blue-economy-at-the-university-of-the-west-indies-five-islands-campus/>

## 3. Cross-cutting Conditions and Enabling Actions

This section describes the main issues and opportunities in Antigua and Barbuda relevant to the seven enabling factors which play a foundational role in the SBE-TF. It is based on information gathered through desk-based review, stakeholder surveys, workshops and interviews.

### 3.1 Leadership

Strong leadership is key to driving meaningful, collaborative and co-ordinated change, especially within a twin-island nation such as Antigua and Barbuda. It should come from the highest levels to steer cross-governmental action. High-level statements and political commitment have been set out by the Minister of MoSTBE, Hon Dean Jonas, and have been well publicised. However, while the DoBE within the MoSTBE exists, its mandate is new, unclear to other departments and untested. Among some of the more established government departments, there is a lack of confidence in the ability of DoBE to act as leading convenor in the transition to a SBE, including navigating the overlapping responsibilities and roles across relevant departments. Combined with limited resourcing, these factors undermine the leadership role that the DoBE was instituted to take.

**'The Ministry of Education should be involved. We are not grooming the next generation of leaders to take ownership of the blue economy.'**

Participant response

Cross-governmental collaboration and co-ordination are needed to unify SBE sectors across government. Co-ordination is currently limited. Not all departments are aware of their role in the SBE and are thus limited in their engagement with the DoBE or involvement in other SBE-related activities. This includes, for example, key departments such as the Tourism Authority and the Ministry of Education which, while not directly involved in maritime activities, play a critical role on outreach-related matters and in educating the

next generation of SBE leaders. Such difficulties are exacerbated by the DoBE's lack of mandate, including how it fits with other departments and agencies.

Effective leadership for the SBE agenda is contingent on a clear, overarching vision in Antigua and Barbuda. This vision and definition should be developed and agreed upon through consultation with relevant government departments and key non-governmental stakeholders to ensure buy-in and collective ownership. As in many countries, there is limited understanding of what a blue economy means in practice, as identified by workshop participants and survey results. Several related workshops and conferences have contributed to growing general awareness of the SBE, but follow up and further work on these has been limited (Appendix 5).

Limited understanding of different sectoral involvement in the SBE underpins many challenges, such as the lack of clarity surrounding roles, responsibilities and expectations. Cross-governmental advocacy is needed to raise awareness of the role various government departments and policy areas play in the SBE. This role is assigned to the DoBE in the MEP, but activity in this area could be strengthened.

Political emphasis on the SBE has raised awareness of the existence of work towards an SBE for the country, as has the presence of a dedicated department (the DoBE). Thus, while awareness of the exact definition and scope of the SBE remains low at institutional and sectoral levels, existing awareness of the concept among the general population provides a basis for engaging a range of stakeholders in ongoing discussions.

Regionally, there is an opportunity for Antigua and Barbuda to act as a pioneer for the wider Caribbean region, especially given its role as co-champion of the Commonwealth Blue Charter Action Group on the SBE. There are lessons to be learned from elements of the SBE activity exhibited in other Caribbean island nations such as Grenada and Saint Lucia, which could be compiled to inform

decisions by GoAB. But there is an overarching gap in regional leadership that, with the support of the OECS, Antigua and Barbuda is well positioned to fill, particularly given the development of the Centre of Excellence for Oceanography and the Blue Economy.

## Challenges

A lack of clear, formal mandate for the DoBE, or allocation of resources, to act as leading convenor in the transition to a sustainable SBE limits proactive leadership (see also sections 3.2 and 3.5 on institutional infrastructure and sustainable finance respectively).

While there is government commitment to an SBE at the highest levels, there remains a disconnect between activities in the SBE governance space, with varying agendas and no overarching or agreed vision.

Limited understanding of the definition of the SBE underpins many of the challenges identified, such as the lack of clarity surrounding roles, responsibilities and expectations within SBE sectors resulting in disjointed efforts and activities occurring in siloes.

There are concerns that some key departments are not aware of their integral role in transitioning to the SBE (such as tourism) resulting in challenges with responses to, or engagement with, the DoBE or other SBE activities, limiting effectiveness of the DoBE.

Ensuring that leadership is representative of both Antigua and Barbuda is challenging but essential to develop the SBE for the nation in a co-ordinated and collaborative way.

## Opportunities

- A dedicated department (the DoBE) exists, as well as cross-governmental mechanisms (the NOGC) that could provide leadership for the SBE transition at all levels if operating effectively and collaboratively.
- General awareness by the population of some SBE activity due to the presence of the MoSTBE and associated statements (even though there might not be unified understanding) presents a basis for developing engagement with stakeholders at all levels.

- The DoBE has potential to strengthen cross-governmental advocacy and raise awareness of the role various government departments play in the SBE, if technical capacity is increased.
- Formalising a mandate for the DoBE for delivering an SBE transition, accompanied by appropriate resourcing, would send a strong message of commitment and leadership that would help to generate support and engagement from other government departments.
- There is potential for Antigua and Barbuda to develop as a regional leader of the SBE, with the support of the OECS and the new Centre of Excellence for Oceanography and the Blue Economy at UWI.

## 3.2 Institutional infrastructure and culture

With the drive for diversification of the SBE, it will become increasingly necessary that management interventions in marine areas are agreed upon collaboratively, to reduce conflict and negotiate the inevitable trade-offs that will be encountered in Antigua and Barbuda's ocean space.

At national level, the NOGC was established in 2014 and is endorsed by cabinet with clear terms of reference (TOR)<sup>17</sup> and a chair who reports directly to the cabinet. The NOGC was charged with responsibility for delivering the NOP (although this is yet to be endorsed, finalised and adopted), as well as 'overseeing broader aspects of ocean governance relevant to the sustainable development of Antigua and Barbuda including

17 The TOR for the NOGC are 'to provide advice to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda on the management and sustainable development of the marine space under the jurisdiction of Antigua and Barbuda – internal waters, archipelagic waters, territorial sea, contiguous zone, exclusive economic zone and continental shelf'. According to the TOR, the NOGC should be made up of the head or senior representative from the following: The Ministry responsible for ocean affairs and/or Blue Economy; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs; The Ministry of Tourism; The Barbuda Council; Office of the Attorney General; Fisheries Division; Department of Environment; Antigua and Barbuda Port Authority; The Antigua and Barbuda Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping (ADOMS); Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force Coast Guard; Customs and Excise Division; Immigration Department; and such other person(s) as may be appointed by the Prime Minister or the Cabinet.

regional/international issues'. The NOGC has maintained relatively frequent activity, although limited during the COVID-19 pandemic, but presents a strong communication mechanism according to workshop participants. It is currently chaired by the Antigua and Barbuda Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping (ADOMS), which has operated in the maritime and ocean governance space prior to the first major political SBE commitments in 2020, and contributed significantly to the development of the MEP. ADOMS works closely with the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force Coast Guard (ABDFCG), Department of Fisheries, the Port Authority and National Parks Authority, and communication links exist between these and the NOGC.

These institutional arrangements are seen as the ministerial- or agency-level platforms for cross-sectoral and cross-agency implementation and oversight of an SBE. The creation of the DoBE within the MoSTBE, following a recommendation made in the MEP gap analysis<sup>18</sup> in 2021, has generated much concern among those already operating in this space, particularly as members of the NOGC highlighted in the consultations that they had little to no input into the formation of the DoBE.<sup>19</sup> As such, institutional memory and ongoing SBE-relevant activities have not been transferred, nor the remit of the DoBE integrated within the strategy of other departments and ministries relevant to the SBE.

While there is a perceived overlap of roles between the NOGC and the DoBE that has created uncertainty over ultimate responsibilities, the DoBE is clearly mandated to deliver to MoSTBE, whereas the NOGC has a different expectation: to act as a national inter-ministerial co-ordinating body. The concept of multiple departments and agencies working towards an SBE is vital to help support and bolster efforts on ocean governance-related matters and is achievable if actions are strategically aligned and co-ordinated in an easy-to-implement manner. As set out in its TOR, being representative of all ministries and with the legislative mandate to oversee SBE activities, the NOGC should have

lead role in implementing the draft NOP. When the NOP is finalised, endorsed and mandated, this should guide national activities pertaining to an SBE transition. Participants thought that the DoBE could play a critical role working on behalf of the NOGC to better align functions and simplify collaborative and communication processes, while using the expertise and relationships across government that exist already within the NOGC and wider OECS region.

In practice, some institutional frameworks are not fully implemented in Antigua and Barbuda due to a lack of technical capacity. In many instances, the technical capacity exists, but the distribution of this capacity is often limited to one department due to a lack of flexibility and siloed system. Sharing knowledge and technical skills across departments should be designed into the institutional structure. This will make best use of funds and minimise the need for external consultants. There is a need for capacity-building to ensure that the DoBE is equipped to support the transition to an SBE given the newness of the ministry and the small size of the department.

Overall, while feedback from participants suggested that inter-departmental co-operation and communication between some policy areas is well-maintained, there is a crucial need to clarify roles and responsibilities, and develop better cross-government co-ordination to ensure policy coherence. Relationship-building between agencies is essential for all involved to understand how agencies interact and to work together effectively.

## Challenges

- overlap in responsibility of NOGC and DoBE, leading to uncertainty and a lack of clarity regarding roles limiting progress;
- lack of mandated, cross-departmental co-ordination to support SBE activities;
- need to improve inter-departmental and inter-agency co-operation, collaboration and frequent communication to support an effective transition to an SBE – the NOGC provides a foundation for inter-departmental engagement – a critical role that needs to be strengthened;
- lack of accountability in the institutional infrastructure where 'money talks' and investments into development may be accepted even where negative ecological

18 The gap analysis of the MEP outlines the activities of the DoBE and proposes actions for the way forward.

19 The NOGC might not have been regularly meeting during this time as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, but participants highlighted that there was no due procedure followed to explain the role of the DoBE to the existing SBE actors.

and social impacts are indicated. In some instances officials are appointed rather than elected, indicating the need for constitutional change to be more democratic and accountable to society;

- frequent changing of staff across GoAB which reduces effectiveness and capacity-building; and
- limited technical capacity within departments, especially the DoBE given its newness and small size.

### Opportunities

- Building on established communication and co-ordination mechanisms will focus and clarify the role of the NOGC as central to delivery of the SBE.
- Establishing the DoBE as a secretariat of the NOGC and clarifying the remit of the DoBE will minimise the overlap of responsibilities and provide a precise role with a clear mandate.
- Across the NOGC and DoBE there is opportunity to include other agencies and actors for improved cross-governmental collaboration namely:
  - the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance – essential for ensuring synergies with proposed SBE activities channelling resources to ensure their long-term viability;
  - the Ministry of Education – awareness of dependency on coastal and marine environments needs to be ingrained at a much deeper level to ensure that future leaders consider the effects of activities on their environment and society;
  - the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries – inclusion of Agriculture, beyond the fisheries division has been highlighted, particularly to address land/sea issues;
  - increased representation from Barbuda to ensure effective participation in decision-making;
  - national Parks Authority – plays an essential role in managing protected areas; and
  - private sector.

- Sharing knowledge and technical skills across departments could maximise limited financial and human resources.
- The DOALAS Ocean Governance Study (2022 draft) sets out a detailed institutional review which identifies gaps and indicates where strengthening is needed that could be used as a starting point in reconfiguring institutional infrastructure to be more efficient and effective.

### 3.3 Laws and policies

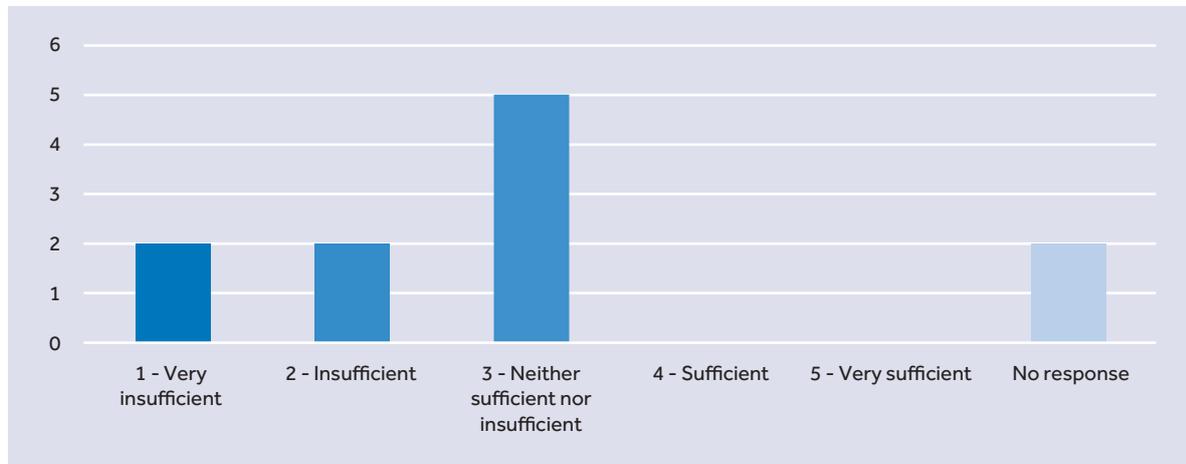
The NOP, in accordance with the ECROP (2013), is designed to guide the development of the SBE in Antigua and Barbuda with a forward-looking sustainable use of ocean and coastal resources. However, while the NOP was drafted in 2021, it has not yet been formally adopted by parliament. There is, therefore, no national framework to accompany a transition to an SBE nor clear guidance (or mandate) for its implementation .

**'There is no legislation to govern the use of marine environment as it relates to tourism. In many instances there are reports [of environmental issues] from operators but these can't be enforced legally.'**

Participant response

Beyond the draft NOP, Antigua and Barbuda has enacted many policies, statutes and regulations in several areas. These have the potential to support the transition to an SBE. Key legislation includes the Maritime Areas Act (1982), the Merchant Shipping Act (2006), the Fisheries Act (2006) and the Environmental Protection and Management Act (MEPA) (2019). Those relevant to maritime security include the Defence Act (2006), and the Maritime Piracy Act (2013). Given that tourism is the dominant sector in Antigua and Barbuda, the lack of specific legislation to govern the use of the marine environment and coastal resources as it relates to tourism is a major concern. For a more extensive list of relevant policies and legislation, see Appendix 2 and the DOALAS draft report.

**Figure 3.1: Participant responses to the question, 'In your view, are existing government structures sufficient to deliver a transition to an SBE?'**



Source: survey data.

The existing legislation is not viewed by participants as sufficiently effective, with specific mention of a lack of implementation or enforcement. Furthermore, as is common for many countries, legislation and policies relating to the SBE are fragmented and lack a coherent, cross-sectoral approach (see section 3.4 on planning and management). There are differing priority areas between the draft NOP and the CMEP, as well as with the indicated emphasis by GoAB to explore deep-seabed mining.<sup>20</sup> Workshop participants did not think this was well aligned to sustainability within an SBE agenda. This indicates the lack of a formally adopted national SBE strategy or priorities to unify the governance framework and to ensure interlinked, coherent laws and policies. That said, the cross-cutting role of the ocean is recognised and reflected across key 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 recognised in the Environmental Protection and Management Act (2019) as are the co-benefits for adaptation, resilience, biodiversity enhancement, food security and sustainable livelihoods.

When considering the expansion of existing sectors or diversification into new ones, regulatory frameworks are needed to safeguard the environment and society prior to activity, to avoid unintended long-term consequences. In Antigua and Barbuda, this is relevant for emerging sectors

such as seabed mining or exploration for marine biopharmaceuticals. There are also notable gaps in the national framework for managing coastal and marine resources as highlighted in the draft Ocean Governance Study by DOALOS (2022) which looks at the national framework in relation to UNCLOS.<sup>21</sup> In this regard, and when considering the national needs of the country, Antigua and Barbuda would benefit from additional legislative drafting resources, training and funding. This would increase capacity to ensure that national frameworks not only support effective transition to an SBE but are also in accordance with international legislation.

**'We are unsure about whether the existing legislation is sufficient to cover the impacts of the new industries proposed in the blue economy such as seabed mining and exploration. At a very minimum, the existing environmental legislation should be applied, but enforcement is currently weak.'**

Participant response

<sup>20</sup> In May 2022, GoAB secured a collaborative partnership with Odyssey Marine Exploration – a US-based company which specialises in deep sea explorations.

<sup>21</sup> Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) (2022), *Antigua and Barbuda ocean governance study*, (draft, unpublished), DOALOS.

There is some despondency among participants regarding the legislative process, where for example, the Environmental Protection and Management Act (2019) took close to 20 years to progress from the Bill stage to enactment, and is still not effectively implemented. In addition, there are concerns that legislated, regulatory processes for decision-making and prioritisation in the marine space are frequently over-ridden or bypassed in favour of economic interest, private sector influence, or short-term gains that lack consideration for long-term sustainability.

### Challenges

- As the NOP remains draft, there is no national framework to sustainably manage ocean and marine resources in an SBE, and thus no clear mandate for its implementation.
- Slow passage of policies and legislation through parliament generates despondency and leads to ineffective management.
- The existing fragmented, sectoral approach to governance is insufficient to manage the numerous, interdependent issues of an SBE.
  - The disconnect between priorities outlined in different strategies and departments (such as those of the MEP and draft NOP) has led to an incoherent approach.
  - There is some misalignment on SBE priorities between Barbuda and Antigua which need to be considered in overarching SBE laws and policies.
  - The repeal of the Barbuda Land Act in 2018 has generated sentiments by Barbudans that their rights are threatened for the sake of development agendas. This decreases the necessary stakeholder buy-in needed to comply with any (new or existing) laws or policies that constrain the use of land or resources.
  - Short-term economic interests often outweigh long-term sustainability in decision-making in both Antigua and Barbuda.

### Opportunities

- The MEP (2021) is cabinet-endorsed, and could act as a good starting point for an integrated, strategic action plan to guide SBE development.
- Legal frameworks for new sectors should be put in place prior to expansion, especially those with significant impacts on the environment and society (e.g. seabed mining). The existing legislation for environmental protection, such as the MEPA (2019) provides the foundation for this, and highlights the commitment by GoAB to ensuring sustainability.
- Further legislative drafting resources, training and funding would help bolster the capacity needed to generate an integrated legal framework.
- Formally adopting the NOP opens up significant opportunities to receive technical, and potentially financial, support from the OECS within the ECROP programme or other donor mechanisms.

## 3.4 Planning and management

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

There is no legislated national integrated marine management framework that includes either Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) or marine spatial planning (MSP) at national level in Antigua and Barbuda. The MEP attempts to outline a starter framework for integrated marine management, and highlights key areas where the intervention of MSP would strengthen the national ocean governance framework. This is, however, yet to be applied.

Barbuda adopted the Coastal Zoning and Management Regulations in 2014. The regulations delimit areas of activity within Barbuda's waters (up to three nautical miles from the coastline), including seagrass and mangrove protection, fishing activity, shipping activity, and research. This was established after a year of intensive community

engagement under the Blue Halo Initiative.<sup>22</sup> Under these regulations, a map is to be maintained with geographical co-ordinates to identify the exact location where activities are allowed.<sup>23</sup> The Barbuda Council continues to struggle with enforcement and compliance. The adopted plans were designed specifically to not require any legal changes at the national level, given complexities in the legal authority of the Barbuda Council. This was needed to prevent delays in the process of developing the zoning regulations but limits the authority of the Barbuda Council to those set out in relevant legislation, and the zoning regulations cannot contradict national laws and regulations.

A Sustainable Island Resources Management Zoning Plan for a System of Protected Areas for Antigua and Barbuda, which aimed to establish a broad network of marine and terrestrial areas, was produced in 2011. The National Land Use Plan and the incorporation of an environmental impact assessment (EIA) process in the development of coastal areas has also sought to better manage and protect areas of the marine area.

While these planning statutes represent important initial steps towards area-based planning, they do not include major or emerging sectors, and have limited consideration for land-sea interface interactions and activities critical to effective integrated marine management. As highlighted in the MEP, MSP or other strategic planning will be essential in evaluating and zoning emerging activities (e.g. deep-seabed mining, increased yachting services) to ensure that expansion and diversification of the SBE can be carried out sustainably.

At national level, there has been some MSP training, but action on this has not progressed as it is unclear where responsibility among ministries for MSP sits. As such, there is no agency leading the MSP process. The CMEP gap analysis (2021), which guides the activity of the DoBE, highlights the role

of the DoBE in taking forward MSP efforts,<sup>24</sup> but there is insufficient technical capacity or knowledge within the team to do so. For this to be effective, the role and mandate of the DoBE need to be clarified to allow it to make progress (see section 3.2 on institutional infrastructure). A central repository or national framework for data is essential (see section 3.7 on data and monitoring).

Access to the coastline is being limited predominantly by the foreign real-estate market and the desire to develop private coastal areas (such as private properties building docks for yachts). Workshop participants expressed concern that while permission and EIAs are needed for these developments, they are often insufficient. The need for development (of any variety) is overemphasised at present for its perceived importance to the economy. However, negotiation of trade-offs is not facilitated by an integrated decision-making process for the sustainable use of coastal resources. A cabinet approved ICZM framework that includes MSP would help inform offsetting activities and mitigation or compensation approaches in the face of needing to develop coastal areas. The Development Control Authority (DCA) has an essential role in this but would require the support of an established integrated multiagency committee to review plans in a collaborative way, ensure effective stakeholder engagement, reduce the time of the approvals process, and ensure post-approval monitoring of developments.

In practice, the management and evaluation frameworks of individual policy areas will need to be considered in an integrated way, supported by an ICZM framework with MSP, to deliver a unified and bespoke understanding and vision of the SBE (as indicated as priority in section 3.1 on leadership). Adopting this approach anchors the vision in sector-specific culture and working methods, and helps to identify and communicate short-term wins, both of which will build long-term commitment for, and acceptance of, the transition process.

22 <https://www.waaittinstitute.org/blue-halo-barbuda>  
23 Johnson, AE, McClintock, WJ, Burton, O, Burton, W, Estep, A, Mengerink, K, Porter, R and Tate, S (2020), 'Marine spatial planning in Barbuda: A social, ecological, geographic, and legal case study', *Marine Policy*, 113, 103793.

24 The gap analysis highlights that the DoBE should 'lead on the creation of a new MSP unit, working with ADOMS and the NOGC. The MSP unit should work towards the creation of a national MSP to help manage the country's marine resources and activities in a balanced and sustainable manner over the long term'.

## Challenges

- As in many countries, a fragmented governance framework has led to a lack of coherent, integrated marine management and there is limited progress with ICZM or MSP.
- Overlapping jurisdictions and a lack of clarity regarding which ministry is responsible for planning the defined coastal zone and marine space.
- There is no central repository or national framework for MSP data (see section 3.7 on data and monitoring).
- There is insufficient funding for capacity-building and human resource to support implementation of MSP, and a lack of mandate for its delivery.
- Concerns exist about the adequacy of the EIA process for developments.

## Opportunities

- The DoBE could play an important role in driving forward and co-ordinating MSP, as outlined in the MEP.
- The MEP provides a foundational framework for MSP which could be used as a starting point.
- A national MSP process would provide greater certainty for the private sector to generate investment and steer appropriate development.
- Establishing an integrated, multiagency mechanism, with expertise across economic, environmental and social areas, to support the DCA in a formalised process of approving development applications would increase the integrated nature of coastal land management and could be extended to cover marine space in conjunction with spatial plans.
- MSP is already in place in Barbuda. This can be built upon and guide decision-making at national level, using Barbuda as a champion for the process.
- Some MSP training has taken place. This could be strengthened, and skills and training provided to relevant stakeholders.

## 3.5 Sustainable finance

Much of the funding that is available to support sustainable development in Antigua and Barbuda is grants for time-limited projects, which can restrict and prevent momentum of innovation. Short-term funding also limits the ability to retain the experience and expertise that is built up within project teams, and can lose long-term stakeholder relationships that generate necessary trust in GoAB bodies and public sector officials. Thus, existing financial opportunities and traditional methods of funding are insufficient to maintain what currently exists, and would require significant growth to enable a transition to an SBE. This makes sustainable finance for transition a key issue.

Although several other actors (including the private sector) have power and resources and can therefore influence activity, governments control the distribution of public finance and have the power to create legislation, policy and regulation that can either support or hinder the creation of innovative sustainable finance mechanisms. A regulatory framework is needed to support the ease of doing business, including regulation on transparency and accountability.

The recent OECD re-classification of Antigua and Barbuda as a high-income country (1 January 2022) has made it difficult to access concessional financing, despite the vulnerability of the economy to external shocks such as climate change and pandemics. At present, the main GoAB fiscal mechanisms to support SBE activities include the Consolidated Fund, Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund and debt-for-climate swaps. Expanding revenue collection presents a challenge. The economic climate already has a very heavy tax burden on the GoAB, since tax residents pay no income tax, capital gains tax, inheritance tax nor wealth tax on worldwide income or assets.

The economic dominance of the tourism sector (particularly cruise tourism) has resulted in the de-prioritisation of investment in, and sustainable development of, other sectors that, despite lower contributions to GDP, provide essential national safeguarding through food security, national security and livelihoods (e.g. fisheries, ports and shipping). Some sectors may also be significantly undervalued in terms of GDP, employment and subsistence due to a lack of funding directed towards consistent monitoring and reporting (for

example, fisheries data which are gathered at only a restricted number of sites) combined with insufficient regulation. More accurate evaluation of sectors and socioeconomic and environmental impact studies of expanding or emerging sectors could help to engender political buy-in for rapid action on economic diversification beyond policy rhetoric. Priorities for financing in an SBE should consider sustainable fisheries and tourism, resilient port and coastal infrastructure, marine renewable energy and increasing marine citizenship. The tourism industry should be part of the solution in financing sustainable growth given the critical role of the private sector in this key sector. Public-private partnerships have a critical role to play in the planned expansion of the sector.

A range of investment options to improve sustainability is outlined in plans such as the draft NOP, the 2016 to 2020 Medium Term Strategy (now out of date) and the MEP (2021). Developing a cross-sectoral investment strategy and action plan aligned with an agreed SBE vision should include provisions for ongoing management, enforcement and monitoring. It should be developed via stakeholder consultation to represent the widest range of ocean stakeholder interests, and deliver an equitable distribution of benefits. For this, the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance has an essential role in driving financing options for the transition to an SBE. The blue economy is highlighted in the 2022 budget statement 'Setting the stage for economic rejuvenation', and MoSTBE allocated \$26.8 million for all efforts across social transformation, human resource development and the blue economy. Furthermore, climate resilience is heavily integrated into the budget statement. This is intrinsically linked to an SBE given the dependency of SBE sectors on healthy, resilient ecosystems. Therefore, any developments need to be following a path of resiliency. For example, investment in climate resilience continues to be a priority from donor organisations. Ongoing efforts to leverage donor resources and other international financing are crucial given the large investment needs and limited fiscal space. The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) is expected to be completed by June 2023. This will help co-ordinate and focus donor efforts on key priorities, and incorporate climate resilience considerations into the development strategy and budget process. The transition to an SBE needs to embed its ideas within the details of the NAP to ensure longer-term funding.

As of 2022, Antigua and Barbuda is no longer eligible for Official Development Assistance (ODA). This has had a significant impact on the ability to mobilise financing. However, the country may still access international development aid from countries that do not follow the OECD guidance, namely China, if secured in a manner that ensures national sustainability principles are upheld. Further opportunity exists in that Antigua and Barbuda is eligible for international funding mechanisms, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF), The Adaptation Fund (AF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and ProBlue. However, application processes are burdensome and require capacity and resources that are currently lacking.

## Challenges

- There is a severe and systemic lack of funding for SBE expansion beyond the tourism sector.
- Cycles of funding can weaken long-term relationships with institutions and make it difficult to generate trust.
- Persistent 'parachute' funding makes it difficult to maintain established mechanisms, technical skills and stakeholder buy-in beyond the end of projects, and this limits the nation's ability to encourage investment.
- Classification as a high-income country makes it difficult to access concessional financing while remaining vulnerable to external shocks.
- External funding could be deterred by Antigua and Barbuda's World Bank ease of doing business index score, which needs to improve significantly.
- There is limited data on risks and investment opportunities on the SBE for private sector/ financial institutions.
- The economy was hit severely by COVID-19 meaning lenders may hesitate to provide funding before it comes to a full state of recovery.

## Opportunities

- expanding the role of the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance given its essential role in working across government to develop sustainable financing options to drive the transition to an SBE;

- including the tourism industry in finding solutions to finance innovation and growth;
- harnessing innovative financing mechanisms to expand Antigua and Barbuda's SBE, such as placing natural assets on the stock exchange and payments for ecosystem services;
- developing a regulatory framework to support the ease of doing business, including regulation on transparency and accountability;
- improving socioeconomic evaluation and impact studies of existing and emerging sectors to demonstrate their potential contribution and mobilise investment in sustainable economic diversification; and
- upcoming NAP in 2023 – transition to an SBE can incorporate resiliency in an integrated way that encourages donor investment.

### 3.6 Stakeholder engagement and coalitions

'Sometimes to have a meaningful discussion some individuals lack the competence to have meaningful input. Hence, communities don't feel included. Community groups would see things going wrong but are afraid to speak out or hold government accountable.'

Participant response

Given their leadership and strategic oversight, governments and related public bodies can support the coalition-building needed at national level to catalyse positive change and support progress by sharing knowledge and capacity and seizing opportunities through mutually supportive actions. Within the government, coalitions across different departments, such as the existing NOGC, can develop support and co-ordination for a SBE approach. Broader stakeholder coalitions are needed, and may emerge from the bottom up. These can be supported by governments in their contribution to the SBE. There are a few examples of bottom-up governance, such as local fisheries management in Parham (Antigua), or in Barbuda where there is good representation of local

knowledge, and opportunities for greater local involvement in management, including Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). However, examples are limited and increased inclusion at local level is needed.

Stakeholder engagement requires inclusivity in how it is approached. Participants highlighted that often, stakeholder engagements are done at too high a level to be meaningful for wider society. Engagement is pitched at those with existing knowledge and/or power, excluding those who feel that they are not well enough equipped to express their interests or concerns.

There are several lingering, unresolved conflicts that need to be addressed to create trust and stakeholder support. An example is the construction of a new airport in Barbuda which began without consultation with the residents while they were forcibly evacuated after the island was devastated by Hurricane Irma in 2017. This creates disengagement with stakeholders: they do not feel they are sufficiently valued. Unresolved conflicts can also delay or frustrate progress in the passage of legislation urgently needed to ensure sustainable development.

'Some conflicts go unresolved and linger for a long time; for example, the EPMA stipulation that communities be consulted was fought for over ten years.'

Participant response

There is a need to improve inclusion of Barbudan stakeholders whose inclusion in consultations is minimal and often seen as a 'tick box' exercise only. All stakeholders, at all levels, should have equal access to the growth, benefits and opportunities of an SBE.

A list of key state and non-state actors can be found in Appendices 3 and 4.

#### Challenges

- Stakeholders lack confidence in the existing mechanisms and leadership for the SBE. There is consultation fatigue and a perceived lack of delivery or action, especially in the SBE space.

- Lingering conflicts over land rights and lack of consultation create frustration and tensions in stakeholder engagement processes, particularly in Barbuda.
- While there is an accepted model for stakeholder consultation across GoAB, the process is not mandated and the existing guidelines and processes to encourage representation need significant improvement.
- Barbudan representation is often at a minimum and requires increasing opportunities to participate in decision-making forums and stakeholder consultations.
- The Barbuda Council represents only one vote of 17 in the political system. This means that decisions can easily be made that affect stakeholders in Barbuda without sufficient representation of their needs and interests.
- A lack of transparency and equality in benefit sharing in decision-making processes for the use of coastal and marine resources generates concerns about accountability and diminishes engagement.
- The process to effectively engage all stakeholders is resource-intensive. Local-level stakeholders highlight that time spent is not always compensated for, particularly loss of earnings and/or travel from Barbuda to Antigua, where consultations tend to be held.
- There is a lack of unified understanding around which stakeholders can coalesce and drive action, or of their roles in the SBE. This means stakeholders often do not engage.
- Private sector engagement in consultations is limited.
- Fostering and empowering 'bottom-up' coalitions can lead to better equity in decision-making. The bottom-up coalition and community approach to managing fisheries in Parham can act as an example for similar activities across Antigua and Barbuda. Learning exchanges could help disseminate the processes and challenges.

### 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. Understanding the evidence base and capacity for monitoring and evaluation is needed to identify critical gaps and potential next steps to support progress to an SBE.

Data management and monitoring are perceived as two of the most significant hurdles to progressing towards an SBE in Antigua and Barbuda. Data collection often gets deprioritised below more obvious national issues such as health or education, and has not been publicly funded. There is no formal centralised system for coastal nor marine data storage, limiting data access and exchange. There is a need for harmonised data collection to maximise efficiency in using financial and technical resources.

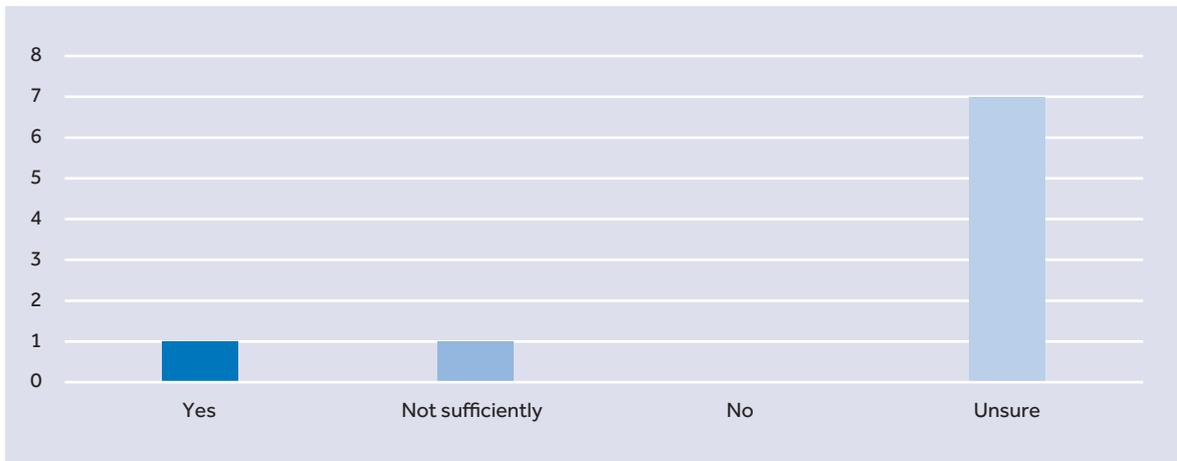
Several actors collate diverse data sources, and could share the responsibility of ensuring data are available. Co-ordinating these sources of data could be the responsibility of the DoBE. For economic data, the Statistics Division in the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance should lead. For environmental data, the Department of Environment and Department of Fisheries should be responsible, addressing the current disconnect in the data shared between the Departments of Environment, Tourism and Fisheries. Insufficient resources (including financial, technical and human) for data and monitoring are a prevailing barrier with the fisheries department indicated as using out-of-date equipment.

In the context of coastal and marine development, data collection, baseline information and monitoring are often undertaken by developers, but such data are generally associated with EIAs and representing 'moment in time' data collection rather than capturing long-term trends. There may not be enough existing data to crosscheck that the results are robust. Limited monitoring is undertaken

### Opportunities

- A stakeholder mapping exercise would support agreement among all those involved in an SBE transition, and generate stakeholder awareness by of their role and how to engage.
- There is an appetite to improve stakeholder engagement, representation and inclusivity with non-state actors, particularly expanding collaboration for progressing objectives of an SBE.
- Actions can be synergised by developing new coalitions and exploring existing coalitions.

**Figure 3.2: Participant responses to the question, 'Are SDG14 (life below water) indicators currently being used/monitored?'**



Source: survey data.

which severely restricts the ability to assess the impact of developments. There is a need to develop programmatic long-term data collection and monitoring, and to encourage a culture of more transparent data-sharing and availability, to enable co-operative adaptive management.

The need for shared access to data has been recognised in Antigua and Barbuda. The DoE is in the process of establishing a monitoring, verification and reporting (MRV) system to compile environmental, social and economic data on NDC implementation and climate finance flows across different stakeholders which can be used for SBE. In addition to this, the DoE is also developing a national environmental information system (NEIS)<sup>25</sup> database to collect environmental data from various agencies and sectors, and the natural resources inventory (NRI), a platform for managing and publishing geospatial data.<sup>26</sup> GoAB has made a case with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the USA to develop a national framework template for marine spatial data to be shared with SIDS for sharing data across multiple agencies. The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) have agreed to support developing this.

Despite these developments, better internal co-ordination and technical capacity is needed for data collection, analysis and interpretation with

harmonised standards in spatial data management. If responsible for delivering MSP, the DoBE could act as a facilitating agent in collaboration with the Ministry of Information which should have a clear mandate of responsibility for maintaining and managing such a platform. Workshop participants suggested that this could be achieved in collaboration with the UWI Centre for Excellence of Oceanography and the Blue Economy, which could act as independent evidence providers to support monitoring and data collection. This platform should have secured and sustainable financing to ensure that it is available for use over the lifespan of the SBE approach.

For monitoring progress towards achievement of SBE-related targets, Antigua and Barbuda updated its NDC in 2021 and has a NAP under development in response to UNFCCC targets. At present, due to the cost of data collection, the DoE relies on the data provided by these conventions. However, in most instances, it is not a refined enough resolution for small islands. The MRV by the DoE will be a key opportunity to support monitoring and reporting. There was limited participant knowledge of whether any SDG 14 (Life Below Water) indicators are being used or monitored. To support this, the NOGC could play a critical role in initiating 'state of the ocean' reporting approaches.

The need for improved and sufficient data should not delay progress towards transitioning to an SBE but should be prioritised to ensure continued stakeholder buy-in. Metrics should be easy to understand, directly relate to policy goals, and

<sup>25</sup> <https://neis.environment.gov.ag/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://nri.environment.gov.ag/>

encompass stakeholders from all relevant areas. Prioritisation of actions needs to be informed by up-to-date data.

### Challenges

- There is a lack of timely information sharing. Workshop participants expressed difficulty in knowing where to find relevant data between departments and ministries.
- There is no formal centralised system for data management in Antigua and Barbuda nor standardised monitoring and evaluation regulations. This limits sharing of data and means that there is a lack of knowledge about where to access specific types of data.
- There is a lack of knowledge in sectors beyond DoE of what ecosystem valuations are or how they would be applied.
- A lack of long-term monitoring of development projects prevents learning and understanding of the impact of projects including coastal development.
- Insufficient resources exist for long-term environmental monitoring, with out-of-date equipment in use, for example by the Fisheries Division.

### Opportunities

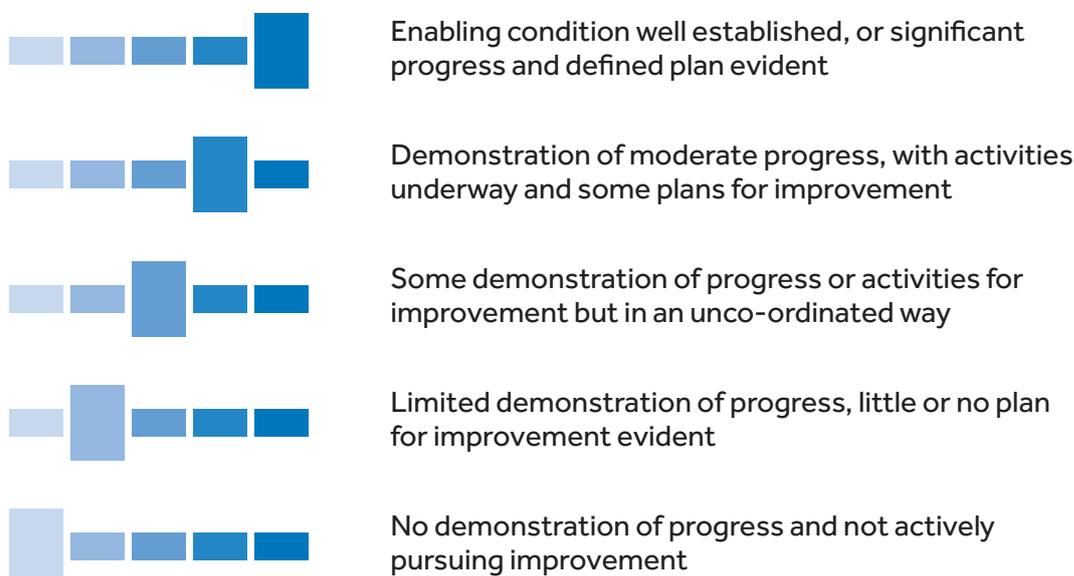
- Generating new data is valuable but time and resources can be spared by retrieving and harmonising datasets that already exist. This can support a culture of transparent data-sharing.
- There is the opportunity to create an MRV system to compile multiple data sources, using the one being developed by the DoE as a basis on which to build, supported by the template framework proposed to NOAA.
- There is the opportunity to engage with UWI to act as an independent evidence provider to support monitoring and data collection, given its technical skills as a research institution.
- The DoBE could play a critical role in co-ordinating harmonised data collection across government, with the Ministry of Information responsible for maintaining and managing the central platform.
- Policy to ensure monitoring and data-sharing and harmonisation would facilitate a central repository, as well as increase transparency. Mandating that data are published within a set time frame (e.g. within two years) has merit.

## 4. Summary of Readiness

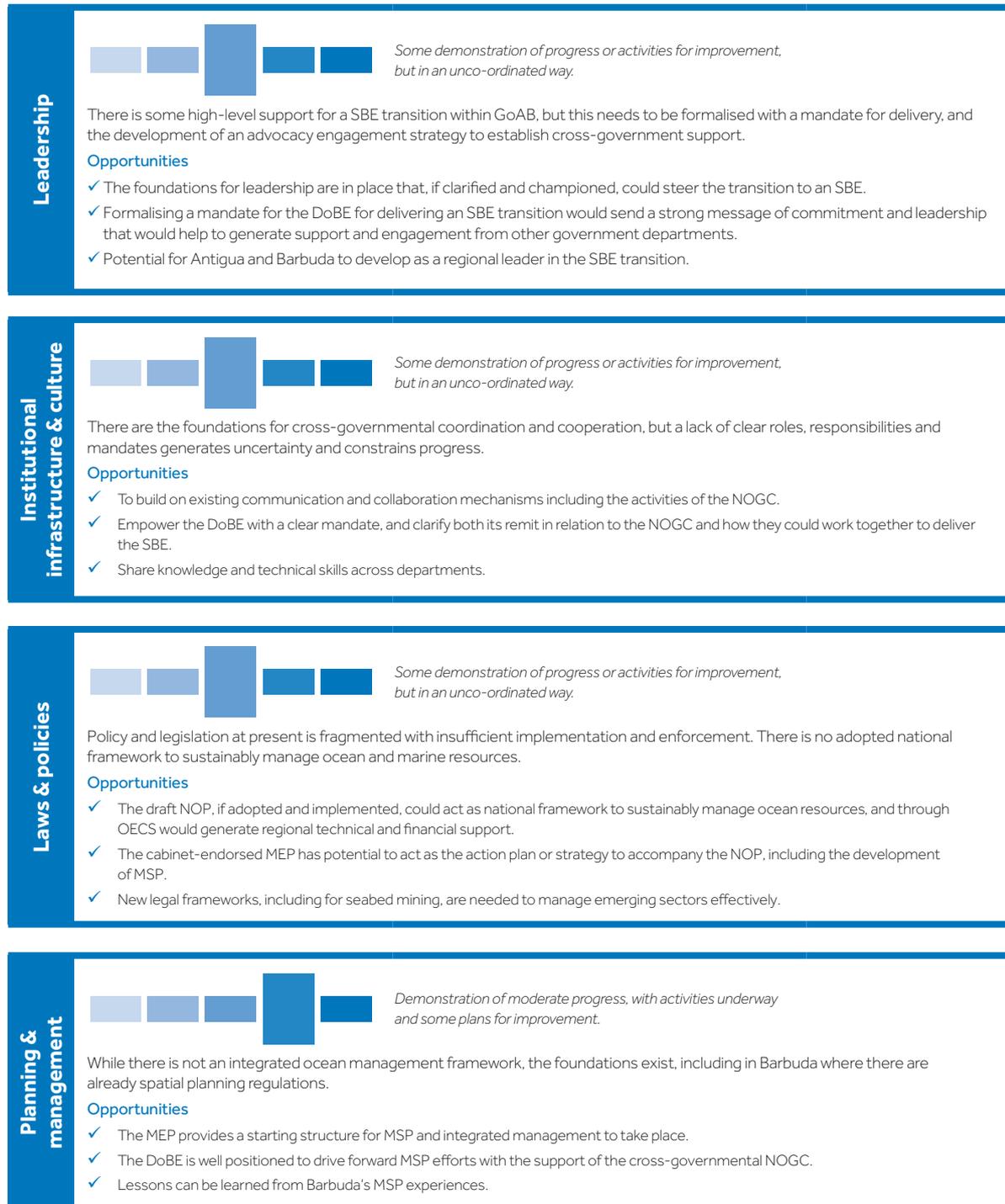
To support transition to an SBE, the RRA process identifies the level to which each of the enabling conditions of the UNEP SBE-TF is established in Antigua and Barbuda, including key challenges and the opportunities that exist for the transition. The degree to which Antigua and Barbuda has established 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 for which these critical enablers need to be in place to transition to a SBE is in Appendix 6.

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



**Figure 4.2: Assessments of the extent to which each of the seven enabling conditions of the UNEP SBE-TF are established in Antigua and Barbuda, including key challenges and opportunities**



**Sustainable finance**



*Limited demonstration, little or no demonstrated plan for improvement.*

Existing financial opportunities and traditional methods of funding are insufficient to maintain what currently exists and would require significant growth to enable a transition to a SBE.

**Opportunities**

- ✓ Specific budget allocation to the blue economy demonstrates the priority to finance an SBE transition and can encourage external funding.
- ✓ The inherent synergies between the SBE and climate resilience opens up opportunities for climate associated financing if the SBE transition is integrated with climate activity as set out in the upcoming NAP development in 2023.
- ✓ Innovative financing instruments can be employed, given the relatively new emergence of the BE in the financial agenda.

**Stakeholder engagement**



*Limited demonstration, little or no demonstrated plan for improvement.*

Stakeholder engagement is challenged by lingering conflicts, inadequate private sector engagement, inconsistent inclusion, consultation fatigue and a perceived lack of delivery or action.

**Opportunities**

- ✓ Some 'bottom-up' approaches can be used as lessons on effective engagement and coalitions, particularly from the Barbuda experience.
- ✓ The appetite to improve stakeholder engagement is evident, and a harmonised SBE approach would give stakeholders something around which they can coalesce.

**Data & monitoring**



*Some demonstration of progress or activities for improvement, but in an unco-ordinated way.*

Data exists, but access across departments is limited, and there is no centralised data repository or harmonised data gathering/monitoring approach. Efforts by the DoE for collecting social, economic and environmental data are planned, but these are limited to the climate agenda and will need expanding to encompass the wider SBE.

**Opportunities**

- ✓ Harmonising and collating existing data would save resources and time in collecting new data.
- ✓ Opportunity to create a MRV system to compile multiple data sources, using the one being developed by the DoE as a basis on which to build.
- ✓ MoU with the UWI Centre of Excellence for Oceanography and the Blue Economy presents a unique opportunity to provide evidence to a central repository given its technical capacity.

# 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 Antigua and Barbuda, 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 included.

## 5.2 Other priorities for consideration

The RRA process also identified several existing priorities relevant to an SBE transition. These are listed below for consideration as part of the development of an SBE SAP or as standalone activities:

- **Sustainable economic diversification:** this could include developing integrated sectoral plans aligned to SBE priorities; developing new regulatory frameworks for emerging sectors; public awareness campaigns to shift consumer preferences and practices (for example, fisheries market).
- **Strengthening waste management infrastructure:** at present, waste management infrastructure is largely insufficient to manage the existing waste generation, with high leakage rates and waste entering the environment. Immediate infrastructure development is recommended, particularly considering that Antigua aims to become a cruise home port which would significantly increase the volume of visitors to the country.
- **Improved valuation of sectors and ecosystem benefits:** for example, 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.
- **Improved alignment with climate efforts and the green economy:** Antigua and Barbuda's efforts on climate-change adaptation need to be considered and the SBE approach carefully aligned with green economy matters to be successful, given that the SBE is heavily interlinked with climate and land. For example, the NAP (due in 2023) will highlight the areas in which Antigua and Barbuda intend to intervene, which the SBE approach will need to incorporate into planning and management.
- **Addressing sociocultural reasons for unsustainable behaviour:** at present, there is no agency responsible for this. In order to deliver advocacy, awareness and understanding of the SBE, it is necessary to understand the existing patterns of behaviour and where they stem from. For example, a political agenda to 'clear your land', clearing land of natural vegetation is seen as a good sign of development, but the wider effects are not conveyed nor accounted for.

**Table 5.1: Recommendations and specific actions to enable readiness for an SBE transition in Antigua and Barbuda**

Recommendations	Specific actions
<p><b>Review (and revise as necessary) the draft NOP to expedite adoption and develop a strategic action plan (SAP)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GoAB to adopt the draft NOP and clarify its role in informing and steering policy development and decision-making.</li> <li>• Develop an SAP and ensure that the actions are relevant to the revised NOP and the monitoring and evaluation actions undertaken to ensure progress, with resources allocated as required. This action plan should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ‘SMART’ deliverables that are aligned to the SBE vision, take account of prevailing conditions and future scenarios, and are supported by sufficient capacity and resources;</li> <li>– a clear implementation timeline, with defined roles and responsibilities to promote accountability;</li> <li>– SBE indicators for monitoring and evaluation and</li> <li>– a financial plan and strategy for capacity-building, research and innovation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Revisit the MEP to ensure coherence with the revised NOP, and provide a supporting road map for the delivery of the NOP. When developing the SAP, this MEP could provide the foundation on which the SAP is built.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Clarify roles and responsibilities for leadership of SBE activities, with mandates</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DoBE requires a clear mandate, TOR and standard operating procedure (linked to an operations manual) that enables it to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– steer the SBE agenda and co-ordinate across relevant stakeholders and sectors, possibly through a secretariat role to the NOGC; and</li> <li>– channel resources to areas where they are most needed, building capacities and facilitating co-ordinated actions by supporting collaborative action.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Amend the structure of the DoBE to reflect that suggested by the CMEP gap analysis<sup>27</sup>, shown in Appendix 1.</li> <li>• Define the remit of NOGC for delivering the SBE and the NOP to support and guide the DoBE with clear MoUs and SoPs in place.</li> <li>• Revisit membership of the NOGC to include further essential actors as outlined in section 3.2.</li> <li>• Support the NOGC with the allocation of sufficient human and financial resources required for SBE agenda co-ordination and leadership.</li> </ul>

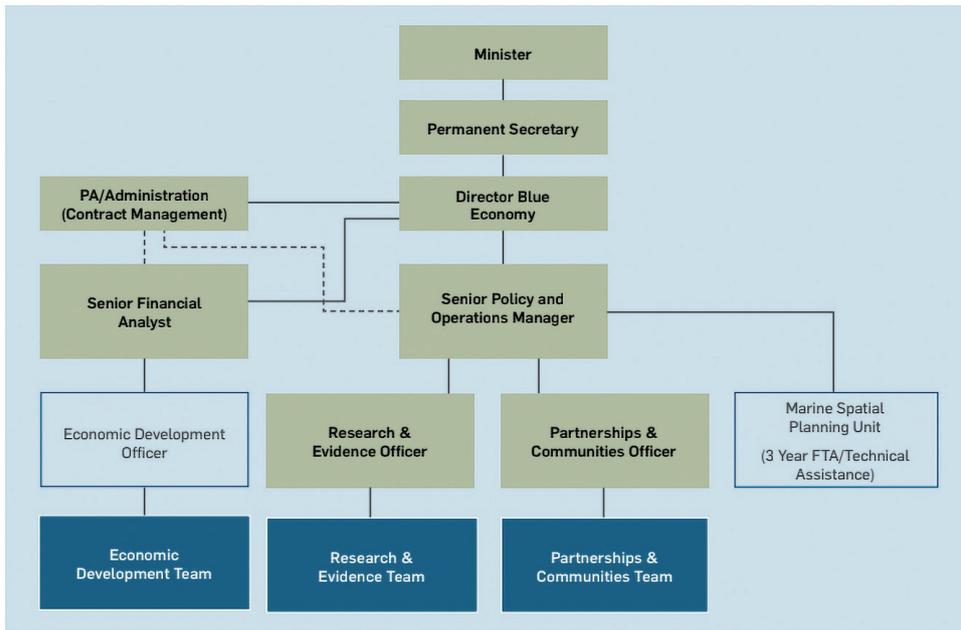
27 Commonwealth Marine Economies Programme (2021), *Maritime economy plan: Antigua and Barbuda*, Department of the Blue Economy Gap Analysis.

Recommendations	Specific actions
<p><b>Deliver awareness raising across the ocean governance system</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DoBE, with the support of the NOGC, to focus on improving cross-governmental understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the scope of the SBE;</li> <li>– the range of sectors and actors that intersect, and their role in decision-making;</li> <li>– the idea that environmental sustainability (or a 'SBE') does not mean no economic development; and</li> <li>– the longer-term benefits to the national economy, environment and society;</li> </ul> <p>This can be tackled through workshops and relationship-building exercises.</p> </li> <li>• The DoBE could place team members on postings within other SBE active departments (especially DoE, ADOMS, ABDFCG, MoT, MoF) to foster relationships, build technical knowledge and gain a better understanding of the existing activity across government, and the critical issues and gaps the DoBE could support.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Agree on a unified SBE definition and vision</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a workshop or wider engagement process, led by the DoBE and with the support of the NOGC to agree on a unified definition and vision, in consultation with non-state actors to ensure representation and non-government buy-in.</li> <li>• The current vision in the draft NOP (2019) and CMEP (2021) could be used as a starting point for developing a unified vision that could focus the mandate of the DoBE and other stakeholders.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Better utilise existing legislation to support the SBE transition</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure adoption of the NOP to provide a legal basis for considering SBE principles and sustainability throughout decision-making.</li> <li>• Apply and effectively enforce existing legislation (such as the MEPA, 2019; Fisheries Act, 2006; Marine Areas Act, 1972; Beach Protection Act, 1993; Barbuda Regulations, 2014) to traditional sectors would increase their sustainability until formalised integrated marine management options and a cabinet approved NOP can drive the sustainability agenda.</li> <li>• Process existing draft legislation, particularly the NOP, would generate increased trust in the legislative process and high-level buy-in to new SBE policy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strengthen stakeholder engagement and 'bridge-building'</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a series of stakeholder workshops to further understand each other's interests and needs, their responsibilities and influence, and how they relate to each other, including between both islands of Antigua and Barbuda.</li> <li>• Embarking on a participatory MSP process would facilitate this by providing a framework and focus on specific development scenarios in Antigua and Barbuda.</li> </ul>

Recommendations	Specific actions
<b>Review and harmonise existing data to identify gaps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GoAB to establish a mandate for the Ministry of Information to provide data collection and storage relevant to the SBE, and to ensure accessibility to all relevant actors for immediate consideration in decision-making.</li> <li>• The DoBE to co-ordinate a nationwide assessment of existing data repositories to understand availability of key data for the SBE, considering the assessed needs of the MSP process and the monitoring and evaluation framework associated with the NOP.</li> </ul>
<b>Better use existing as well as innovative financing options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold further workshops to develop technical capacity for grant and proposal writing for opportunities such as the GCF, GEF-8 (pending), AF and the GEF Small Grants Programme.</li> <li>• Guided by the NOP and working with the NOGC, the Ministry of Finance could explore innovative opportunities (such as public-private partnerships in nature-based businesses, blue bonds, blue carbon offsetting, payments for ecosystem services) to support the transition to an SBE.</li> </ul>
<b>Capitalise on regional collaboration and synergies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with OECS and other regional mechanisms to capitalise on the regional opportunities to support the SBE transition in Antigua and Barbuda, including learning exchanges between different island nations, and collaborative development of capacity for funding applications.</li> <li>• Endorsing the NOP (which is in line with the objectives of OECS), with budgets set against the policy to allow for financial support to flow from OECS to support the SBE agenda in Antigua and Barbuda.</li> <li>• Direct efforts at engaging with OECS on a regular basis, through the Ocean Governance and Fisheries Unit. This will also help Antigua and Barbuda benefit from the OECS role in delivering regional climate-change resiliency support.</li> </ul>



Figure A.2: Proposed structure of the DoBE as suggested by the CMEP Gap Analysis



Source: Commonwealth Marine Economies Programme (2021), *Maritime Economy Plan: Antigua and Barbuda*, Department of the Blue Economy Gap Analysis.

# Appendix 2: Key Policy and Legislation Relevant to the SBE, by Area

## Land use

1. Town and Country Act (Cap 432, 1948)  
Town and Country Planning Regulations (SRO No. 24, 1953)
2. Land Development and Control Act (Cap. 235 of 1977)
3. Crown Lands (Regulation) Act (Cap 120, 1917)  
The Crown Lands (Land Settlement) Regulations (SRO No. 24, 1930)
4. The Physical Planning Act (Cap. 620, 2003)
2. The National Parks Act (Cap. 290, 1984)  
National Parks (Amendment) Act (Cap.548, 2004)  
The Marine (Restricted Areas) Order (SRO No. 47, 1973)
3. The Marine Areas (Preservation and Enhancement) Act (Cap 259, 1972)  
The Marine Areas (Preservation and Enhancement) Regulations (SRO No. 25, 1973)
4. The Turtle Act (Cap.449, 1927)

## Marine

1. Maritime Areas Act (Cap. 260 of 1986) (formerly Territorial Waters Act)
2. The Fisheries Act (Cap. 173, 1989)
3. Draft Fisheries Act (2004)
4. The Fisheries Regulations (No. 2, 2013)
5. Draft High Seas Fishing Act (2004)
6. The Antigua and Barbuda Merchant Shipping Act (Cap. 28, 1986) and various amendments between 1998 and 2003
7. The Boats Regulation Act (Cap. 55, 1933)
8. The Carriage of goods by Sea Act (Cap. 76, 1926)
9. The Defence Act (Cap. 239, 2006) and The Defence (Amendment) Act (Cap. 253, 2007)
10. The Disaster Management Act (2002)

## Environment and protected areas

1. Draft Environmental Protection and Management Act (2014)

## Beaches

1. Beach Control Act (Cap. 45, 1959)
2. Beach Protection (Cap. 46, 1957)  
Beach Protection (Amendment) Act (Cap. 113, 1993)

## Trade

1. The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Act (Cap.302, 1986)
2. The Port Authority Act (Cap. 333, 1973) and The Port Authority (Validation of Regulations) Act (Cap. 334, 1985)
3. The Petroleum Act (Cap. 326, 1949)
4. Petroleum Industry (Encouragement) (Cap. 327, 1963)
5. The Minerals (Vesting) Act (Cap. 282, 1949)
6. United States Bases Territorial Sea (Navigation restriction) (Cap. 456, 1946)

## Waste management

1. Dumping at Sea Act (Cap. 141 of 1975)

## Barbuda specific

2. The Barbuda Local Government Act (Cap.44, 1976)
3. The Barbuda (Coastal zoning and management) Regulations (no. 34, 2014)
4. The Barbuda (Fisheries) Regulations (2014)
5. The Barbuda (National Parks Authority) (Establishment) Regulations (2014)

Source: Abridged from CMEP (2021), Annex 3.<sup>28</sup>

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28 Commonwealth Marine Economies Programme (2021). *Maritime Economy Plan: Antigua and Barbuda*. Department of the Blue Economy Gap Analysis.

# Appendix 3: Key State Actors Relevant to the SBE Transition, by Sector

## Blue economy

Ministry of Social Transformation and the Blue Economy

## Ocean governance

National Ocean Governance Committee

Ministry of Finance, Corporate Governance & Public Private Partnerships

Ministry of Education, Science & Technology

## Shipping & ports

Antigua and Barbuda Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping (ADOMS), of the Ministry of Finance, Corporate Governance & Public Private Partnerships

Antigua Port Authority

## Sustainability & environment

Department of Environment of the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment

National Parks Authority

Ministry of Works and Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance

Central Housing and Planning Authority of the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Urban Renewal

Antigua and Barbuda Marine Ecosystems Protection Area Trust

## Fisheries

Department of Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs

## International relations & treaties

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Immigration

Ministry of Legal Affairs, Public Safety and Labour

## Maritime security

Designated Authority

ISPS Code Maritime Safety and Security Committee

Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force

Department of Immigration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Immigration

Customs and Excise Division of the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance

Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda

Office of National Drug and Money Laundering Control Policy

## Tourism

Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority of the Ministry of Tourism and Investment

## Ocean energy

Ministry of Public Utilities, Civil Aviation and Energy

Source: Abridged from DOALOS, 2022<sup>29</sup>

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29 Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) (2022), Antigua and Barbuda ocean governance study, (draft, unpublished), DOALOS.

# Appendix 4: Key Non-State Actors Relevant to the SBE Transition

## NGOs and other institutions

- Environmental Awareness Group (EAG)
- Elkhorn Marine Conservancy
- Parham Alliance
- Sir Andy Roberts social foundation (fishing)
- Barbudan GO
- The GARD Center
- University of the West Indies

## Community groups, civil society organisations, etc.

- Fisher associations
- Fisheries Advisory Committee

## Private sector

- Antigua Hotels and Tourism Association (AHTA)
- Antigua Cruise Ports
- Yachting associations
- West Indies Oil Company Ltd
- Major marinas at port of entry
- Shipyards and boat yards
- Major hotel developers outside the AHTA
- Dive centres
- Antigua and Barbuda Sport Fishing Association

# Appendix 5: Survey Responses

## Leadership

Figure A.3: Participant responses to the question, 'Are there high-level statements (e.g. a minister or PM) in support of a blue economy?'

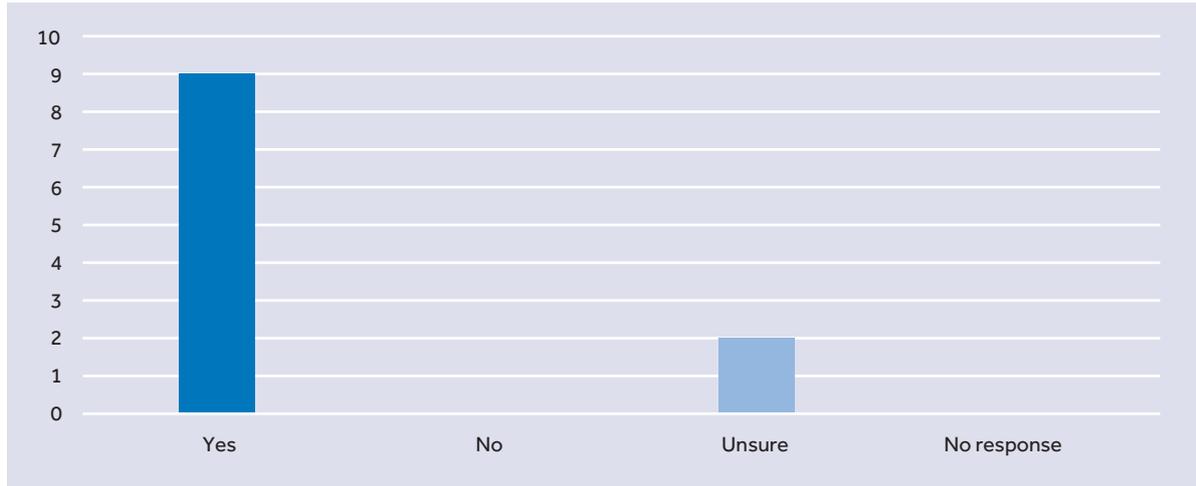


Figure A.4: Participant responses to the question, 'Have any blue economy meetings or conferences been held in the country?'

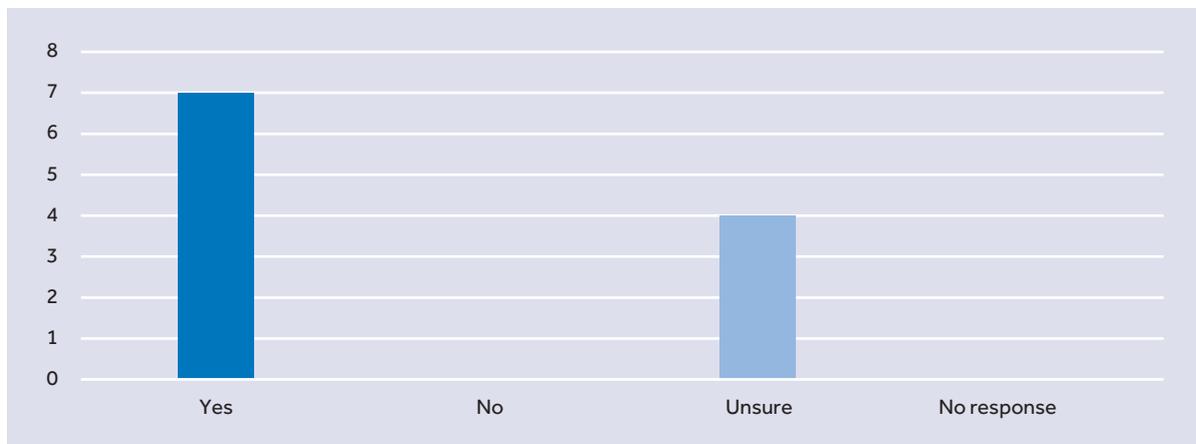
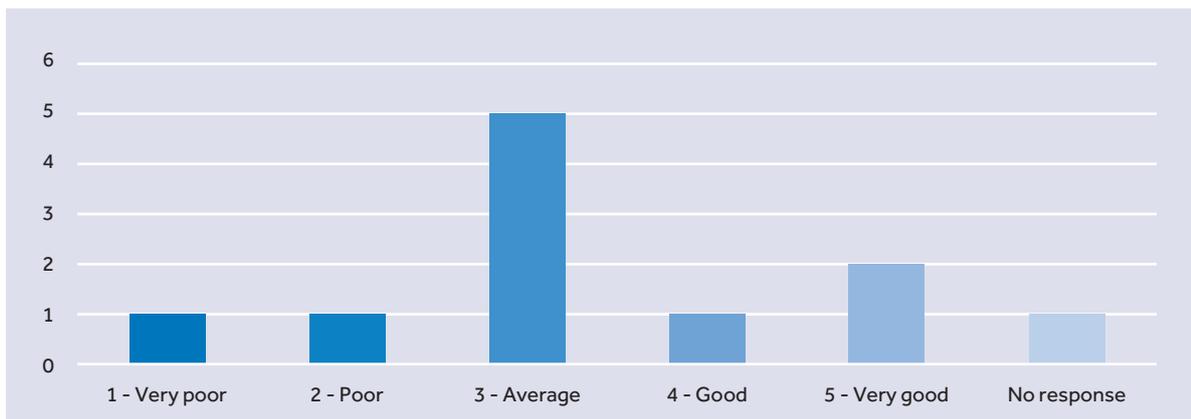


Figure A.5: Participant responses to the question, 'How much follow-up was there in your estimation?'



## Institutional infrastructure and culture

Figure A.6: Participant responses to the question, 'Is there a government ministry/ department/agency/office responsible for SBE transition?'

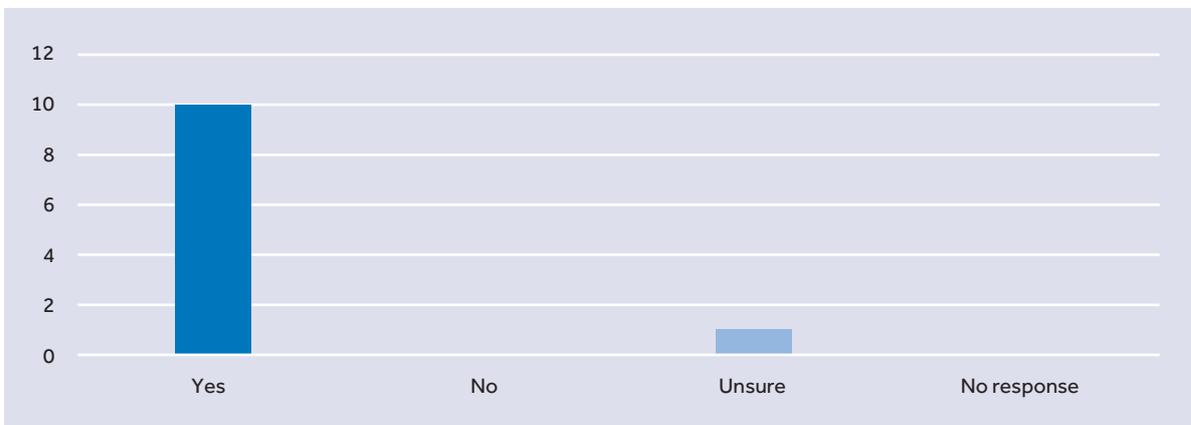
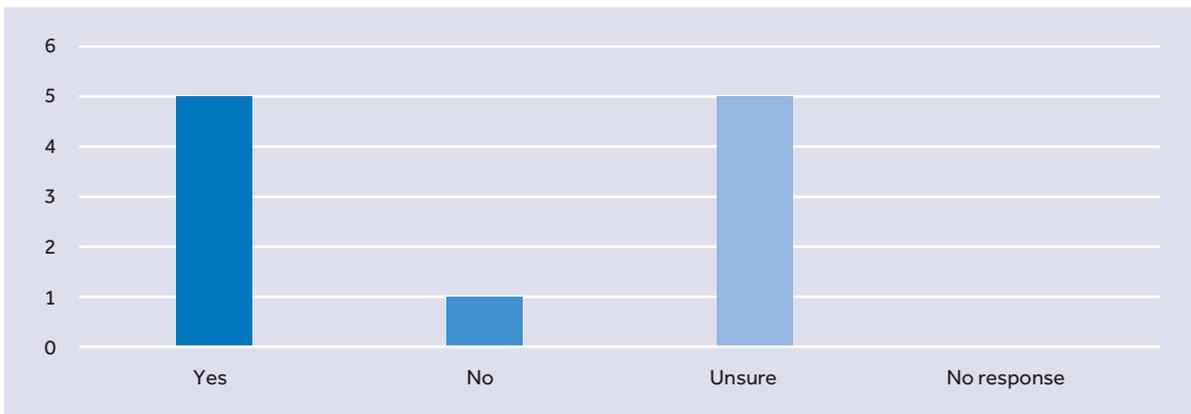
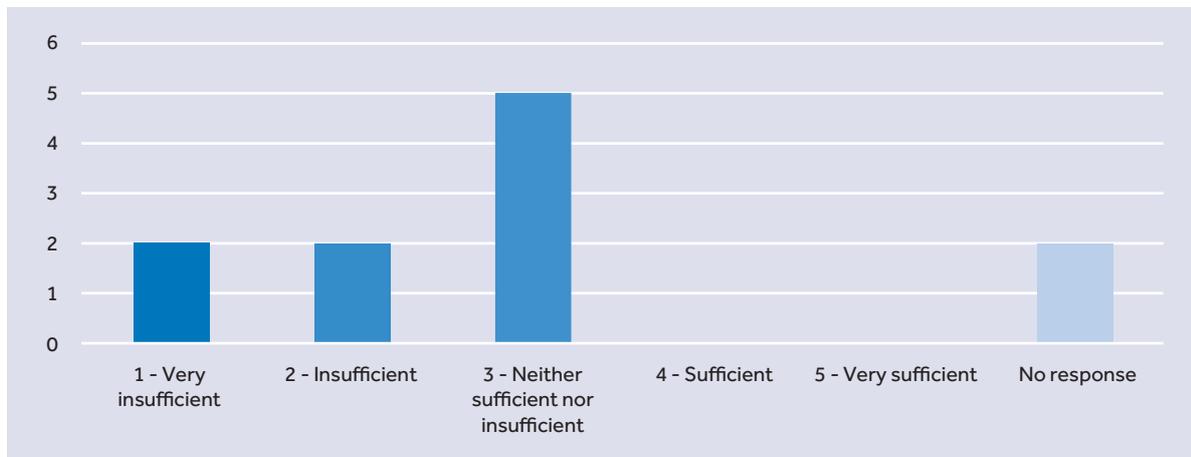


Figure A.7: Participant responses to the question, 'Are there any ministerial or agency-level committees or fora in place to support cross-sectoral collaboration?'



**Figure A.8: 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:

- an official committee (with legislative backing) that incorporates representatives from all relevant agencies;
- technical capacity of the lead agency not fully realised;
- resources and tools to help enforcement agencies;
- improved multistakeholder co-ordination mechanism and information-sharing mechanism on SBE issues and priorities;
- sound national framework; and
- proper co-ordination.

## Laws and policies

**Figure A.9: 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)?'**

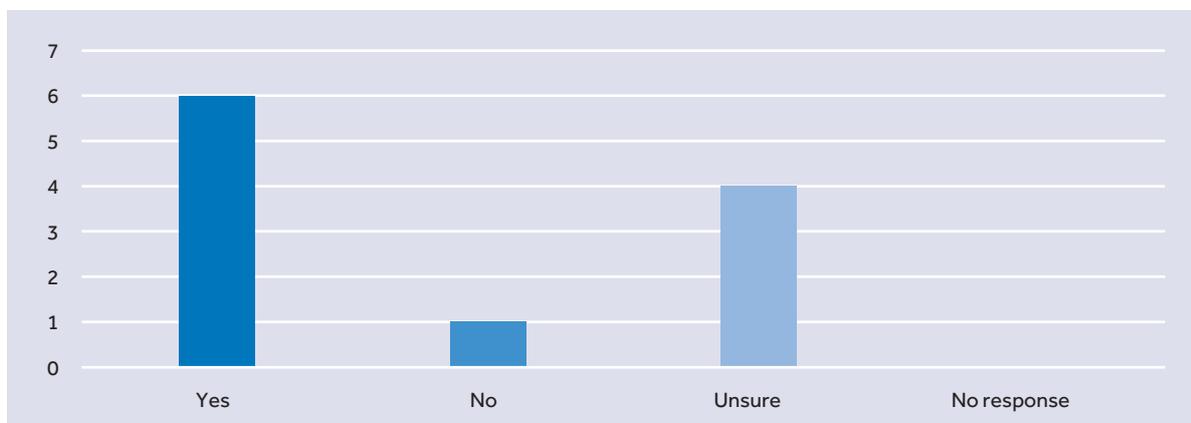


Figure A.10: Participant responses to the question, 'Are there additional laws, policies, plans or programmes being discussed/developed that address the blue economy?'

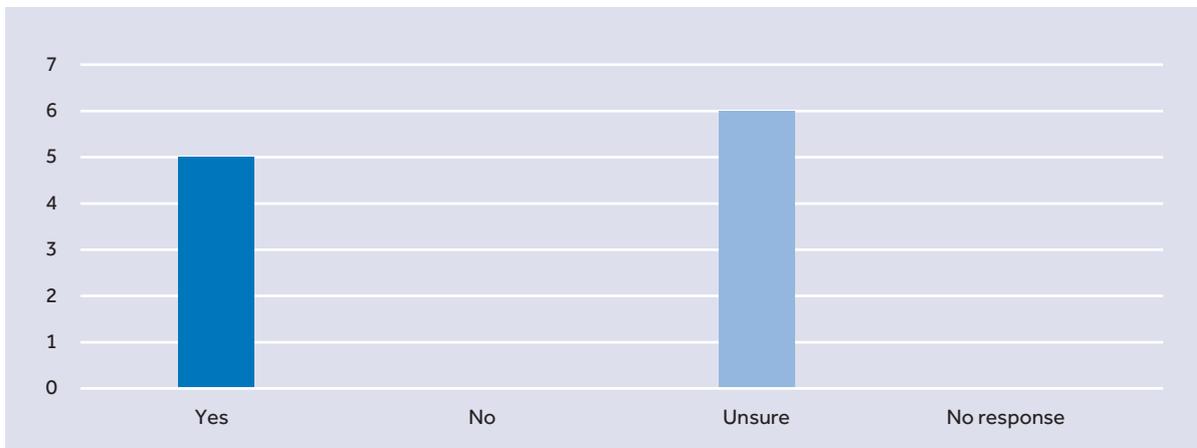
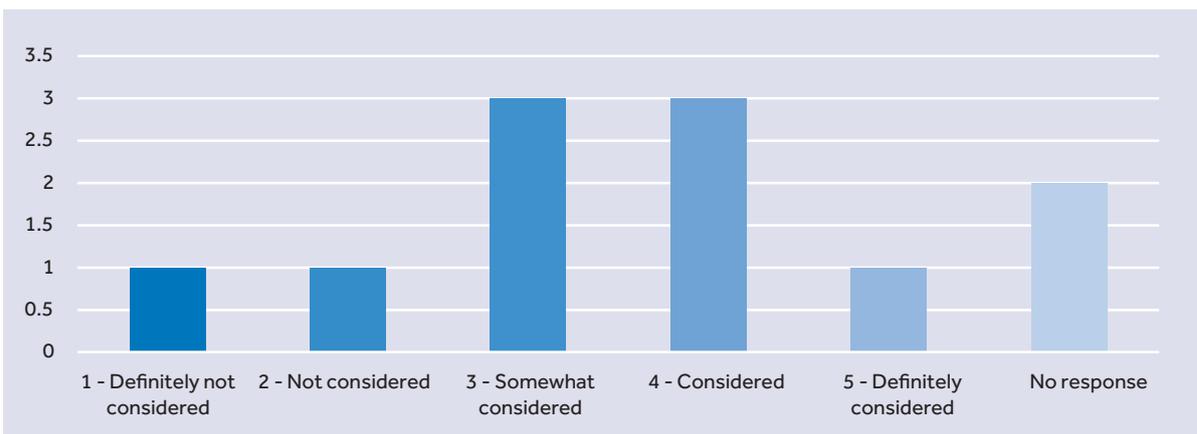
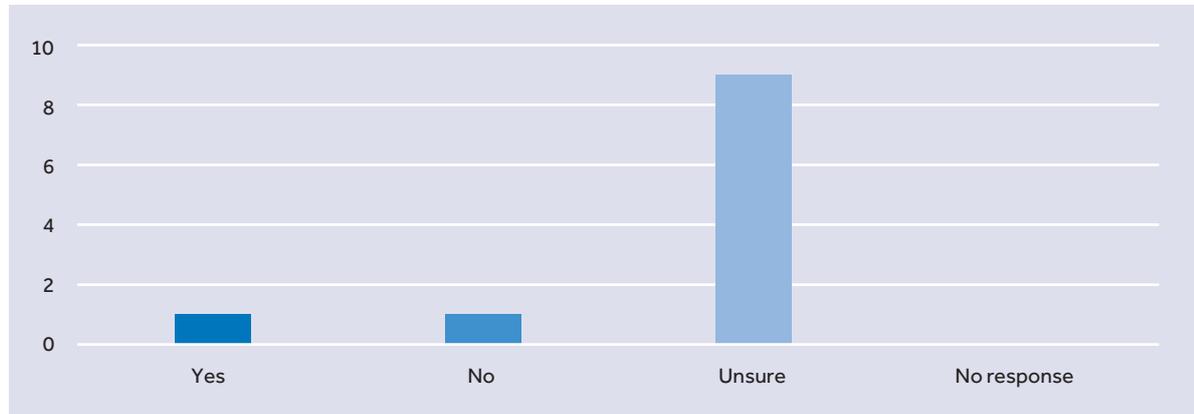


Figure A.11: Participant responses to the question, 'As far as you are aware, is the ocean considered in plans and policies across other sectors related to the blue economy (i.e. climate, tourism, gender, health, education, research and development)?'



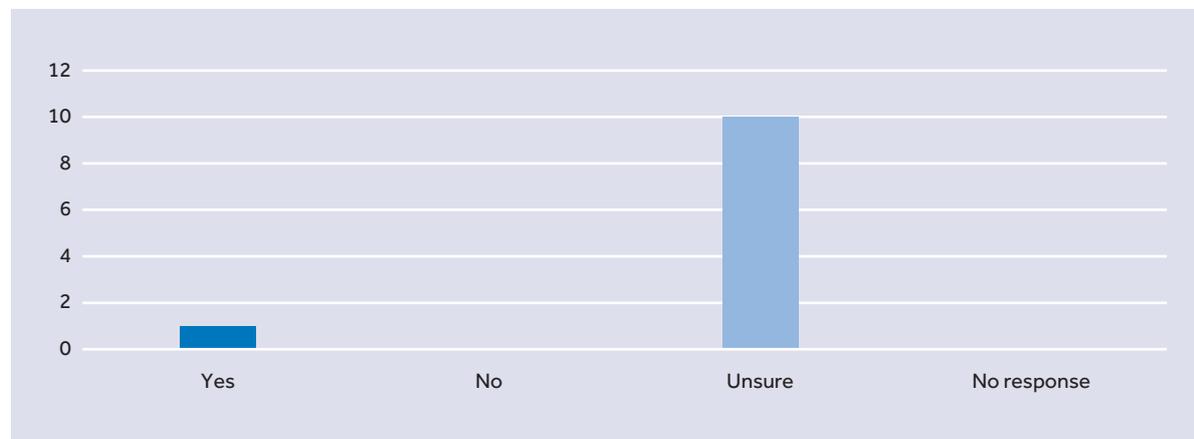
## Planning and management

Figure A.12: Participant responses to the question, 'Is there related policy or legislation that would support an SBE, e.g. requiring the implementation of marine special planning (MSP) or Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)?'



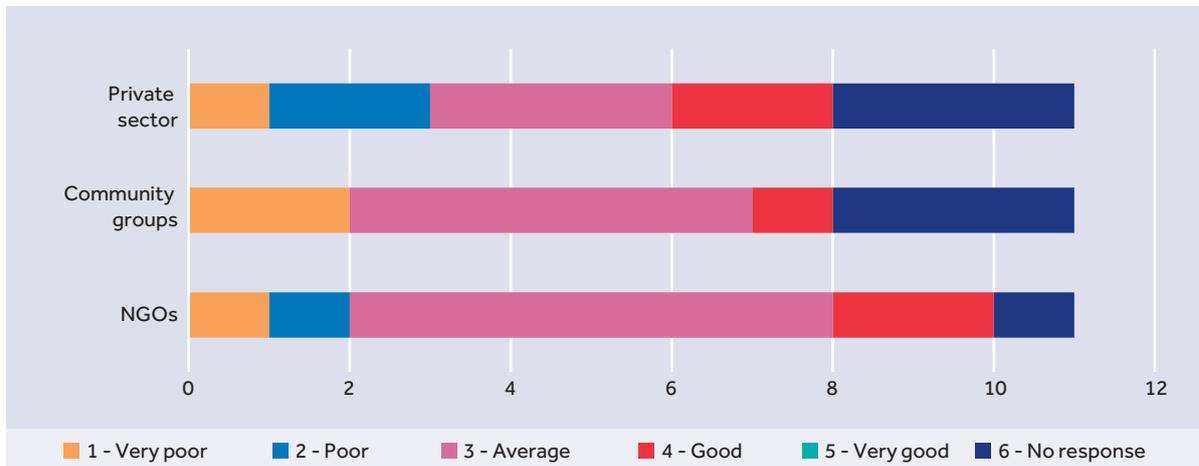
## Sustainable finance

Figure A.13: 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.14: 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.15: Participant responses to the question, 'Have the following key data needs been identified?'

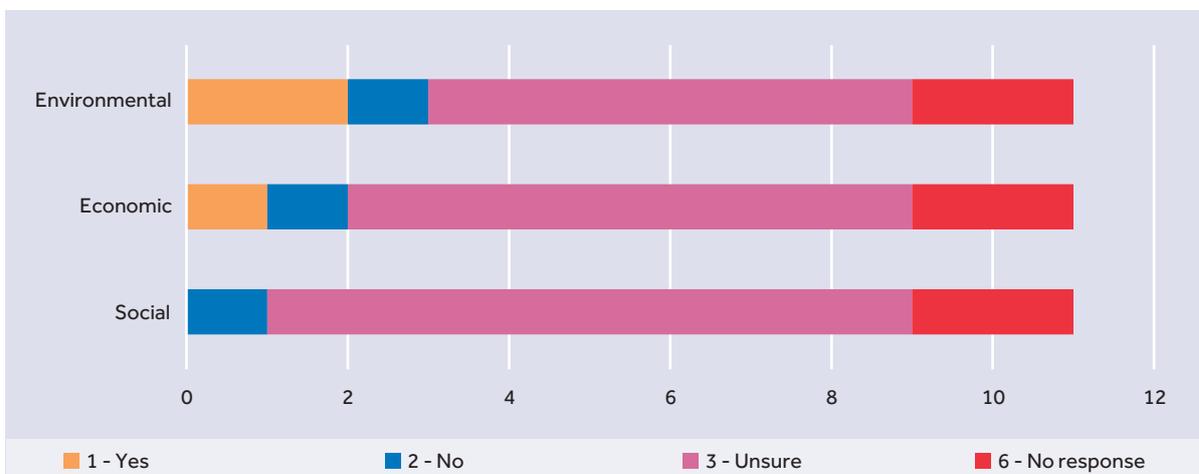
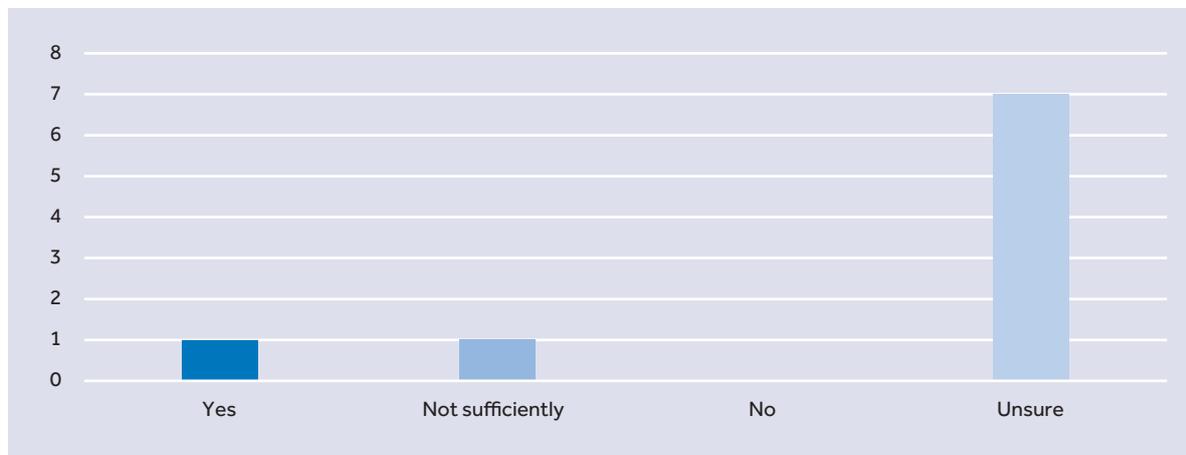
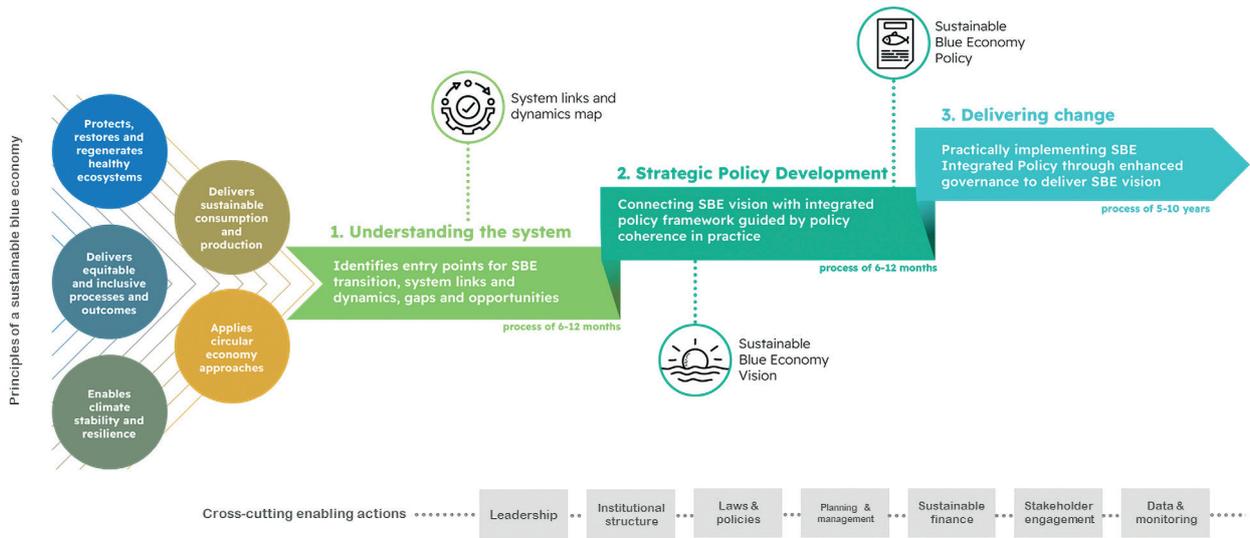


Figure A.16: Participant responses to the question, 'Are SDG14 (life below water) indicators currently being used/monitored?'



# Appendix 6: SBE Overview and Activities

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
<b>1. Understanding the system</b>	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
<b>2. Strategic policy development</b>	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
<b>3. Delivering change</b>	3.1 Integrated marine management 3.2 Knowledge and innovation 3.3 Capacity-building 3.4 Monitoring and evaluation 3.5 Review and adaptation

**Commonwealth Secretariat**

Marlborough House, Pall Mall  
London SW1Y 5HX  
United Kingdom

[thecommonwealth.org](http://thecommonwealth.org)

