

# REPORT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development

*Third International  
Conference on Small  
Island Developing  
States - National  
Report*

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is realised when there is an effective implementation of a visionary and proactive development agenda based on integrated development of the three pillars of development - economic, social and environmental. As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) Trinidad and Tobago has adopted this approach and is working towards attaining sustainable development that includes growth, inclusive and equitable development and the effective management of the environment.

As the global debate on the post 2015 development agenda and the SIDS Conference commences, Trinidad and Tobago broadly agrees that an integrated single development agenda that examines the outcomes of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and incorporates the sustainable development goals (SDGs) must be a priority. The special needs of small island developments must also be reconciled keeping in view at all times that countries are at different stages of development and that global development initiatives must not be punitive but developmental.

Trinidad and Tobago's development has been based on an economy that relies heavily on the hydrocarbon sector. The exploitation of the non-renewal and finite resources of oil and gas has been the primary reason that Trinidad and Tobago has recorded high GDP growth and has been ranked as one of the High Developed countries in the Human Development Index. In the case of Tobago there has also been the heavy reliance on its tourism assets and ensuring the sustainability of these resources.

Overall the country is on target towards achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with challenges however in the efforts towards sustainability of the environment, health - infant and maternal mortality, HIV and AIDS and the management of non-communicable and life style diseases.

Notwithstanding the strong economic indicators Trinidad and Tobago as a middle income country has many structural challenges that reveal there are strong pockets of vulnerability. To address the burgeoning challenges associated with sustainability, the Government has undertaken a well-thought-out development path articulated through policy initiatives as follows:

### Development Indicators – Trinidad and Tobago

GDP – \$20,400USD (2012 est.)  
(Mundi Index)

HDI – 67

- ‘Innovation to Lasting Prosperity’ the Medium Term Policy Framework (MTPF) 2011-2014
- Working for Sustainable Development in Trinidad and Tobago 2012
- Human Development Atlas 2012
- Annual Performance Report 2012
- National Performance Framework 2012- 2015

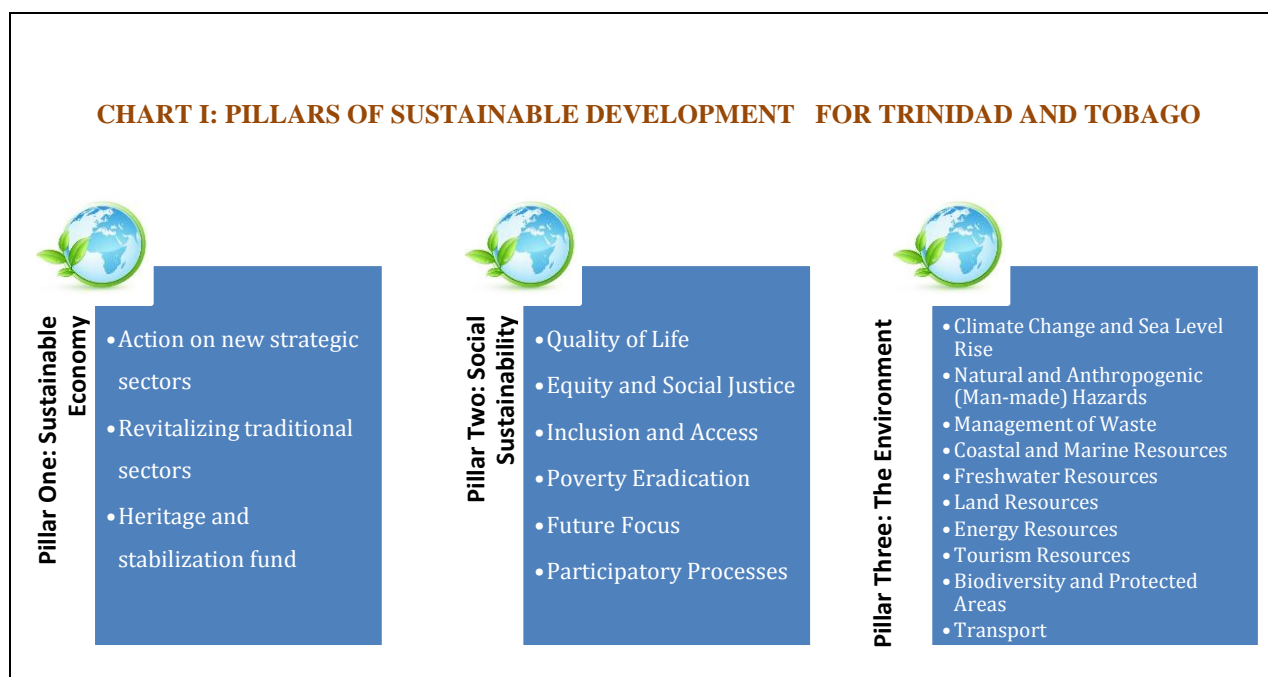
- Public Sector Investment Programme 2013-2015
- Development of a National Spatial Development Strategy (in progress)

These documents provide the platform for sustainable development.

The **MTPF 2011-2014** which is the foundational document to these initiatives and is based on the five (5) priorities for action (1) Crime and Law and Order; (2) Agriculture and Food Security; (3) Health care Services and Hospitals; (4) Economic Growth, Job Creation, Competitiveness and Innovation; (5) Poverty Reduction and Human Capital Development and the four (4) main principles, geared towards achieving sustainable development which are:

1. Generate productivity-led growth on the basis of a more diversified production structure with emphasis on value and wealth creation. Seven primary areas have been identified for implementation in identified geographic growth poles in both Trinidad and Tobago;
2. Create the conditions for greater inclusiveness and equity in socio-economic development;
3. Build the knowledge and talent of our human resources including support to innovation and research and development; and
4. Socio-economic development in the context of prudent spatial management and environmental limits, conservation, regeneration and restoration as cornerstones of the management of these resources.

To give effect to this agenda is the Government's strategy for sustainable development which was articulated through the - **“Working for Sustainable Development in Trinidad and Tobago”** document and which presented an assessment of this country's development progress in its pursuit of sustainable development. Chart I below depicts the agenda



As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) it is equally imperative that there is a robust policy agenda that would deal with the constraints of size. A national consultative process is on-going to discuss the **National Spatial Development Strategy** to support the bottom up approach to development and the effective use of limited land resources thereby seeking alignment to the economic and social development initiatives.

**The Human Development Atlas 2012** was the first attempt to analyse key indicators across regional boundaries in Trinidad and Tobago. As a planning tool the Atlas provides instructive data on human and physical conditions across regions highlighting both positive and critical areas for attention so as to address possible inequities in the fourteen (14) regional areas.

**The National Performance Framework 2012-2015** has set the parameters to measure both effectiveness and efficiency in the utilisation of resources and the achievement of results. Targets and indicators have been established and will be measured over the period. The Annual Performance Report (APR) 2012 is the first instalment of this measurement process, which highlights both achievements and challenges to progress.

The **Public Sector Investment Programme 2013-2015** outlines the three year programming strategy that would ensure the achievement of these results by the allocation of resources and monitors the efficient utilisation of these resources for development impact.

This Report will take stock of Trinidad and Tobago's implementation of the Barbados Plan of Actions (BPOA), and the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation (MSI). Mention will be made of the actions that are needed by the Government and its partners for further implementation of the BPOA and the MSI. An analysis of the new and emerging challenges facing the country including the country's priorities for Sustainable Development will be articulated. The report will conclude with the key messages of recommendations from Trinidad and Tobago for the Pacific Preparatory meeting, SIDS conference in 2014 and the Sustainable Development Goals/post 2015.

## 2.0 NATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The United Nations has been assisting and extending cooperation to SIDS in their sustainable development efforts through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States finalized at the Global Conference held in Barbados in 1994, known also as the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA). Specifically the **Barbados Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS (BPOA)**, is a 14-point programme that identifies priority areas and specific actions necessary for addressing the special challenges faced by SIDS. The priority areas are: climate change and sea- level rise; natural and environmental disasters; management of wastes; coastal and marine resources; freshwater resources; land resources; energy resources; tourism resources; biodiversity resources; national institutions and administrative capacity; regional institutions and technical cooperation; transport and communication; science and technology; human resource development

This programme was reviewed and revamped at the five-year review held at the Twenty-second special session of the General Assembly in 1999, and the ten-year review held in Mauritius (10-14 January 2005). The latter outcome is known as the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (MSI). The “Mauritius Strategy for the further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States”, **The Mauritius Strategy** is structured along five (5) different clusters: natural resources and environmental threats; economic issues; social issues; governance; and issues relating to implementation.

Trinidad and Tobago is committed to playing its part as a responsible member of the global community, by continuing efforts geared towards pursuing policy and development of initiatives to increase the use of new and innovative technologies that have lower levels of emissions; encouraging the use of clean energy technology such as natural gas technology and clean production technology; encouraging the use of renewable energies that have zero emissions; and, adopting more energy-efficient technologies and practices. To this end, and consistent with the provisions of the National Environment Policy 2006, the Government is pursuing a policy framework towards the development of a programme of work to address greenhouse gas emissions and towards the development of a low-carbon economy and developmental path.

### 2.1 KEY AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Some of the key initiatives undertaken to address climate change management issues since the ten (10) year assessment report on the SIDS POA include:

- The National Climate Change Policy (2011) which was developed and laid in Parliament;
- The approval of the Second National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change which was approved and forms the basis of this country’s assessment of the greenhouse gas emissions;
- Increasing the number of service stations retailing Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) throughout the country to promote less carbon intensive and environmentally friendly, cleaner and cheaper fuel;

- Elaboration of a Strategy for the Reduction of Carbon Emissions in the Power Generation, Transportation and Industrial Sectors which will result in a strengthening of the institutional framework for carbon reduction; an identification of clear strategic elements and policies for reducing carbon emissions from target sectors; and the development of a framework for strategy implementation. This project is now underway;
- Mainstreaming Climate Change into National Development and a Feasibility Study on Carbon Capture and Storage. The components of this strategy include:
  - Legislative and Policy Review
  - Feasibility of Carbon Capture and Storage
  - Institutional Strengthening
- Low Emission Capacity Building Project inform low emission development strategies for Trinidad and Tobago;
- To strengthen the institutional capacity for trading on the carbon market a project is under review in accordance with the Clean Development Mechanism Activities of the Kyoto Agreement;
- Development of a pilot project to make one of the main transportation thoroughfares the Priority Bus Route, a CNG route, through policy and legislation analysis and the development of fiscal incentives for conversion of traditional fuel use to the use of CNG;
- Utilizing solar power for the illumination of police surveillance bays along the nation's highways. It is intended that the new extension of the south bound highway to Point Fortin will be lit with solar lights;
- Applying to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for monies to facilitate work on the Third National Communication and the First Biennial Update Report in keeping with our obligations under the UNFCCC;
- The establishment of Multilateral Environmental Agreements Focal Point Network has been established. Currently 124 contacts in Ministries, CBOs and NGOs have been identified. Industry and fiduciary institutions would also be included in this initiative;
- Establishment of the Green Fund to provide financial assistance to community groups and organisations for activities related to reforestation, remediation, environmental education and public awareness of environmental issues and conservation of the environment;
- The Governments of Trinidad and Tobago and the United States have commenced discussions to establish a Regional Renewable Energy Centre in Trinidad and Tobago to foster green initiatives for the region.

## 2.2 CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES

While there has been some measured progress there remain key constraints and challenges to implementation which include:

- Uncertainties in the present assessment of climate change and sea level rise impacts in Trinidad and Tobago
- Inadequate or absence of data relevant to climate change, particularly historical data

- Institutional and technical capacity constraints in identifying possible impacts of climate change on human, biological and physical resources through the conduct of vulnerability assessments
- Lack of programmes and institutional capacity to support research, development and acquisition of renewable energy technology
- Need to mainstream climate change issues into government policies in order to increase adaptive capacity to climate change through the development of hazard maps, land use policies and building codes
- Establishment of incentives to promote the use of clean technologies, alternative fuels and recycling initiatives
- Lack of formal educational programmes to enhance public awareness on climate change. The Office of Disaster Preparedness has conducted a National Preparedness Survey, which is a comprehensive baseline assessment of the citizens' knowledge of hazards, knowledge of damage and losses, and awareness of preparedness measures to guide education and training in this area

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