



Government of St Kitts and Nevis
Ministry of Tourism and International Transport

National Maritime Policy and Action Plan

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National Maritime Policy and Action Plan



Department of Maritime Affairs

Ministry of Tourism and International Transport

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
1 INTRODUCTION	3
2 A VISION FOR THE OCEAN	4
VISION	4
PURPOSE OF THE NATIONAL MARITIME POLICY	4
SCOPE OF THE NATIONAL MARITIME POLICY	4
3 CONTEXT FOR THE NATIONAL MARITIME POLICY	5
ST KITTS AND NEVIS' MARINE ENVIRONMENT.....	5
OCEAN USES.....	5
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT	6
INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT.....	6
4 BASIC POLICY FRAMEWORK	7
GOAL AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES	7
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	8
POLICY STATEMENT	9
5 THEMATIC AREAS	14
MARITIME TRANSPORT.....	14
FISHERIES MANAGEMENT	18
MARINE PROTECTED AREAS	22
MARINE TOURISM	26
6 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	29
GENERAL APPROACH	29
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS.....	29
7 STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN	31
INTRODUCTION.....	31
IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL MARITIME POLICY	31
ACTIONS.....	33
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	41

Executive Summary

St Kitts and Nevis has jurisdiction over an extensive maritime area along with the associated living and non-living resources therein. These resources make a significant contribution to the country's economy and are fundamental to the wellbeing of its citizens. However, the economic potential of the resources in this area remains unassessed and not fully utilized.

While opportunities exist to enhance the contribution made by the marine environment to sustainable development in St Kitts and Nevis, it is unlikely that any one resource will be sufficient to sustain development goals. An approach is needed that coordinates management across different sectors and resources and integrates environmental management directly with economic development, fiscal policy and social goals. Such an approach requires a change in how we view, manage, govern and use the marine environment.

Fundamental changes in the way our marine space is managed and regulated are therefore required at both the Federal and local levels. Central to such a change is the need to transition to a more integrated governance approach that requires all uses, users and values to be considered.

Existing policies will have to be subsidiary to the principles and standards of a common National Maritime Policy. That is to say, the objectives, programmes and measures to manage the marine environment and its resources will be developed in such a way that the different objectives, programmes and measures are mutually compatible across all the agencies in St. Kitts and Nevis that have a role in managing the marine environment.

We need to facilitate a more harmonised front in the work and pursuits of the various agencies charged with responsibility for managing our marine waters on both islands, along with hoteliers, dive operators, fishers and boat operators. In so doing, we must all endeavour to create a culture which seeks to embrace the principles of Agenda 21 of the Rio Declaration of 1992, appealing for an integrated ecosystem management approach to the management of the ocean.

1 Introduction

St Kitts and Nevis has jurisdiction over an extensive maritime area along with significant living and non-living marine resources that make a significant contribution to the country's economy. However, while opportunities exist to enhance the contribution made by the marine environment to sustainable development in St Kitts and Nevis, the economic potential of the resources in this area is largely unassessed and underutilized. In order to fully benefit from the range of resources in the sea around us, there is a need to better coordinate management across different marine sectors and resources and to integrate environmental management directly with economic development, fiscal policy and social goals.

Despite the preparation of a number of strategies and policies of relevance to the governance of the Federation's marine space, no single overarching legislation or national policy exists to harmonise and coordinate these at the national level. The existing policy framework is inadequate for supporting the integrated approach needed in ocean governance. Fundamental changes are therefore required in the way our marine space is managed and regulated. Central to such a change is the need to transition to a more integrated governance approach that requires all uses, users and values to be considered.

The National Maritime Policy is the Government's policy statement for the management of marine ecosystems. The development of the policy has been informed by discussions and consultations with marine stakeholders, other related initiatives, such as the multiple-use marine zoning project, and emerging experience in ocean policy and marine management in the international community.

The National Maritime Policy sets out the new policy direction for modern marine management. The policy includes a Strategic Action Plan which sets out the Government's initial priority areas of focus. This Action Plan will be further refined and implemented by the Government in collaboration with local communities, marine industries such as fishing, shipping and oil and gas interests, environmental organizations and non-governmental organizations.

This document outlines the overarching framework for the National Maritime Policy and seeks to:

- Establish the context within which the National Maritime Policy is being developed and implemented;
- Set out the framework of a new modern approach to marine management for the 21st century; and
- Describe the strategic approach that will be used to achieve the policy objectives.

2 A Vision for the Ocean

Vision

Healthy and richly biodiverse marine environment, sustainably managed to promote socio-economic development and support the livelihoods and aspirations of current and future generations.

Purpose of the National Maritime Policy

The purpose of the National Maritime Policy is to establish a framework that can guide the planning and development of maritime activities in a rational and sustainable manner for the social and economic development of St Kitts and Nevis.

This policy is the basis for effective coordination among all Government agencies with responsibility for maritime and ocean affairs and the harmonisation of national actions in relation to the marine resources of St Kitts and Nevis.

Scope of the National Maritime Policy

The geographical scope of the National Maritime Policy is the coastline and all marine waters within the 200 nautical mile limits of exclusive economic zone of the Federation of St Kitts and Nevis.

While the policy applies to all uses and activities in the marine environment, additional, sector specific policies have been included with regard to maritime transport, tourism, fisheries and the establishment of marine protected areas, in recognition of the significance of these four themes to the overall socio-economic development of St Kitts and Nevis and maintaining the quality of the marine environment on which these sectors rely.

3 Context for the National Maritime Policy

St Kitts and Nevis' Marine Environment

Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, St Kitts and Nevis has rights and responsibilities over approximately 20,400 square kilometers of maritime space - roughly 80 times its land space. Coastal and ocean areas and their marine biological diversity are core national assets that also provide a range of essential environmental services that would be costly or impossible to restore or replace if damaged or lost. If our use of them is well managed, they can meet a broad range of economic, social and cultural aspirations for generations to come.

The Federation's marine and coastal zones support a rich and unique range of habitats, such as coral reefs, sea grass beds, mangroves and salt ponds. The biodiversity of these zones includes a rich diversity of reef and pelagic fish, lobsters, conch, turtles, algae, resident and migratory birds. Offshore waters are home to numerous species of marine mammal and sea turtles as well as deep water pelagic fish species. The coastal zone also supports numerous sites of historic and cultural significance. These coastal resources provide the basis for a range of economic and social activities, including the tourism and fishing industries.

Ocean Uses

The marine environment already makes a significant contribution to the overall economy of St Kitts and Nevis, supporting a diverse network of commercial activities, including commercial and sport fishing, tourism, shipping, yachting, recreation and as a source of building materials. Indeed, the marine environment is the lifeblood that supports many coastal communities and is also the backbone of the global transportation system: safe and secure navigable waters are critical to the effective functioning of the national economy.

The sea and ocean around us must continue to generate significant economic, social and cultural benefits to the people of St. Kitts and Nevis going forward. Every square foot of space within our maritime boundaries, above and below the surface of the sea, is important to the future development of our nation.

Marine industries have excellent potential to contribute to future economic and employment growth and offer an important opportunity where alternative investment and employment opportunities are limited. Opportunities may also exist for further development of existing sectors, particularly fisheries and tourism, and also the development of new activities or sectors such as aquaculture, bio-prospecting (pharmaceutical products), offshore oil and gas production and offshore renewable energy.

Environmental Impacts on the Marine Environment

While the oceans offer great potential in terms of sustainable economic development, they are also under increasing pressure from many uses. Changes in the marine environment resulting from human activities are occurring faster than previously anticipated, affecting especially the most vulnerable marine ecosystems such as coral reefs. Major threats to the marine ecology of St Kitts and Nevis include: impacts associated with climate change and sea level rise; coastal development and the destruction of marine ecosystems such as coral reefs and mangroves; unsustainable fisheries practices; pollution from land-based and offshore sources; rising ocean temperatures; and the increasing intensity of hurricanes and other storm events.

Many stretches of coastline, notably along the important tourism areas in Nevis, have experienced dramatic rates of coastal erosion with considerable economic costs to owners and the national economy. Nevertheless significant areas, particularly on the South-East Peninsula in St Kitts, remain relatively pristine and are targeted for tourism and other development.

The marine environment's ability to maintain its diversity and productivity, and to provide a wide array of valuable services to people, is therefore increasingly being compromised. Designing and implementing effective governance and management strategies is critical to address the challenges posed by the increasing impacts of human activities on the marine environment and to ensure the effective management and sustainable use of living and non-living marine resources.

Integrated Management

Management of our maritime space purely on an industry-by-industry basis is not sustainable in the long run. Activities such as fishing, tourism, shipping and coastal development must be collectively managed to be compatible with each other and with the ecological health of the marine environment.

The Government of St Kitts and Nevis believes that there is a need for an integrated approach that marries environmental management directly with economic, fiscal and social policy and objectives. In other words, a new approach is needed to manage our maritime space - one which is strategic, scientific, pragmatic, and cross-sectoral. Such a paradigm must encompass the need for a healthy, productive and biologically diverse marine environment, including our coral reefs, while at the same time encouraging economic opportunities which can contribute to more sustainable livelihoods, and secure human settlements in St. Kitts and Nevis.

Integrated management should therefore be an essential approach for St Kitts and Nevis' maritime space.

4 Basic Policy Framework

Goal and Guiding Principles

The overall goal for the National Maritime Policy is:

The effective and sustainable management of the marine environment and marine resources of the Federation of St Kitts and Nevis.

The policy framework is intended to guide the co-ordination and management of maritime activities, although all levels of government retain respective legislative and jurisdictional responsibilities and authorities.

Guiding Principles

The National Maritime Policy is based on the following guiding principles that should guide all marine management decision making. They should be considered together and should be applied to all policies, plans, regulations, decisions and actions affecting access to and use of the marine environment.

Sustainable Development - Human development in harmony with the environment is fundamental to achieving sustainable development, so that individuals and societies are empowered to achieve positive social and environmental outcomes. Sustainable development principles should rest at the core of the National Maritime Policy.

Ecosystem Based Management - The diversity, health and productivity of marine ecosystems is fundamental to the management of both the ocean and the land. The marine environment must be treated as a distinctive and indivisible system, recognizing the interrelationships between marine users and ecosystems and between the land, sea and air.

Large scale marine spatial planning and other area-based management measures should be integral parts of an ecosystem approach to marine management.

Precautionary Approach - In the face of uncertainty about potentially irreversible environmental impacts, marine management efforts must err on the side of caution, adopting a risk-averse and precautionary approach to decision making.

Knowledge Based Decision Making - Planning and management decisions should be based as far as possible on the best available information concerning of the natural, social, and economic processes that affect the marine environment. Decision makers should be able to obtain and understand quality science and information in a way that facilitates sustainable use of marine resources.

Integrated Management - There is a need to move away from the sectoral and species-based approaches that characterize existing governance systems. Integrated management

is a commitment to planning and managing human activities in a comprehensive manner, while considering all factors necessary for the sustainable use of marine resources.

Duty of Care & Accountability - All people should act with due care to avoid negative impacts on the marine environment and marine resources. Decision makers and members of the public should be accountable for the actions they take that affect the marine environment and its resources.

Public Participation - Full stakeholder awareness and participation contributes to credible, accepted rules that identify and assign the corresponding responsibilities appropriately. All stakeholders should therefore be engaged in the formulation and implementation of decisions concerning governance of marine uses.

Access and Benefit Sharing - The government should govern marine resource use in a manner that aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of marine resources (including genetic resources) in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies.

User Pays and other Economic Instruments - Access to common marine resources for private profit should be priced to give a reasonable rate of return to the community. Charges for access to, use of and damage to marine resources should reflect the community interest and short- and long-term economic, environmental, social, and cultural costs and benefits.

Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives for the National Maritime Policy are to:

1. Secure rights to marine resources;
2. Reform ocean governance;
3. Preserve and protect the marine environment;
4. Protect underwater cultural heritage;
5. Promote sustainable economic development;
6. Promote public awareness, participation and accountability;
7. Increase knowledge and capacity building;
8. Build resilience and managing for uncertainty; and
9. Promote the development of hydrography.

Policy Statement

1. Secure rights to marine resources

Lack of clearly defined maritime boundaries inhibits the management of maritime space and marine resources and may create obstacles to the exercise of rights accorded under international law. The settlement of unresolved maritime boundaries should therefore be accorded priority and concerted action taken to finalise outstanding boundaries with neighbouring States. This will be critical to enabling St Kitts and Nevis to safeguard territorial integrity, and realise the full economic and developmental potential of the nation's maritime space.

Policy

- 1.1 Negotiate and formalize St Kitts and Nevis' maritime boundaries in order to secure, exercise and protect rights and jurisdiction over marine areas and resources.

2. Reform ocean governance

Governance is an overarching theme that is an essential part of the National Maritime Policy. Well-integrated governance frameworks help to accommodate and resolve conflicts between the vast range of marine-related interests and values, and can highlight any trans-boundary implications of marine developments. The overall aim of reforming the current governance arrangements should be to establish, strengthen, and implement effective governance mechanisms that contribute to the implementation of the National Maritime Policy.

Policy

- 2.1 Establish and implement a National Maritime Affairs Council with responsibility for integrated marine management across relevant sectors such as fisheries, tourism, transport and environment including, where appropriate, partnerships between government, the private sector and civil society.
- 2.2 Update national legal frameworks that give effect to international and regional obligations to reflect an integrated approach to planning and management of marine space.
- 2.3 Strengthen monitoring, compliance and enforcement initiatives at the national and regional level.
- 2.4 Implement multiple-use marine spatial planning and zoning mechanisms for improved planning and control of marine activities.

3. Preserve and protect the marine environment

St Kitts and Nevis' marine waters and resources are a key national asset. The Government recognises that ecosystem health and integrity is fundamental to ecologically sustainable development. They also provide a range of essential services that would be extremely costly or impossible to restore or replace once they are lost. If our use of them is well managed they can meet a broad range of economic, social and cultural aspirations.

Policy

- 3.1 Conserve and enhance the overall quality of the marine environment through protection, maintenance or restoration of natural and physical features, processes and biological diversity and the ecologically sustainable use of marine resources.

4. Protect underwater cultural heritage

Achieving and maintaining healthy marine ecosystems requires a fundamental understanding of the relationships between people and the environment. Cultural heritage, which belongs to all people, emphasizes these connections, whether that heritage takes the material form of, for example, maritime resources (such as shipwrecks), natural resources (such as marine species and habitats), or culturally important places.

Through the national MPA system, cultural relationships among people and historic, natural, and place-based heritage resources can be preserved and perpetuated in ways that recognize and share multiple cultural voices and knowledge systems for the benefit of all.

Policy

- 4.1 Promote the identification and inventory of cultural archaeological property existing in St Kitts and Nevis maritime zones and endorse legislation for the protection of marine archaeological and cultural heritage.
- 4.2 Management of MPAs shall respect, preserve and maintain the cultural and historic knowledge, provided that these do not conflict with the ecological integrity of the protected area and the various conventions and multi-lateral environmental agreements signed by the Government.

5. Promote sustainable economic development

The ocean offers the potential for numerous opportunities to generate significant economic, social and cultural benefits. Examples of the potential are found in fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, transportation, oil and mineral production, education and research. Developing this potential in a sustainable manner presents the Government of St Kitts and Nevis with opportunities to create new jobs, achieve a higher rate of growth, reduce poverty, and secure international biodiversity and sustainability obligations.

Policy

- 5.1 Sustainable use of marine resources, taking into account social, economic and environmental needs, is promoted and incorporated into national development policies and planning framework to ensure long term social and economic development.
- 5.2 Optimize opportunities from existing resources, while identifying and encouraging new and emerging opportunities for marine industries and marine-related development.

6. Promote public awareness, participation and accountability

The care of the marine environment is the responsibility of everyone. However, lack of awareness and environmental education results in low levels of personal responsibility. Public participation is a key to promoting and instituting a duty of care for the marine environment.

There is also a need to make available accurate, timely and documented official information on proposed ocean governance activities through media coverage and public fora, meetings and discussions, and information education campaigns.

Policy

- 6.1 Raise public awareness, understanding and appreciation of the importance of the ocean, while accommodating the needs and aspirations of communities through active public participation in the development of new policies.
- 6.2 Ensure that all citizens have access to information concerning the marine environment, as well as the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes.

7. Increase knowledge and capacity building

Modern ocean management requires integrating social and environmental information so that human activity is better factored into decision-making. For this reason, a system should be developed to integrate and provide marine-related information now dispersed among different organisations, with a view to organizing such information efficiently and rationally in a user-friendly manner.

Policy

- 7.1 Increase our understanding of the marine environment, its natural processes and our cultural marine heritage and develop our capacity for informed decision-making.
- 7.2 Develop a clear marine research strategy that identifies key data requirements for decision making and supports investment for new and emerging opportunities.
- 7.3 Promote formal and informal training and capacity building for scientists, technicians and professionals at various levels in marine science, marine affairs and related disciplines.

8. Building resilience and managing for uncertainty

Planning and management for use of marine resources, particularly living marine resources, must be able to respond to considerable uncertainty. Understanding the impacts and effects of climate change and other stressors is key to maintaining a healthy environment. This will influence how we use and value our coasts and seas both now and in the future. Adaptation, including in the marine environment, is necessary to deal with the potential impacts of these changes which are already in train.

Policy

- 8.1 Recognise and manage the increasing risk of coastal hazards and climate change through the incorporation of appropriate adaptation and resilience-building strategies into sustainable development, conservation and governance actions.
- 8.2 Adopt and implement National Disaster Prevention and Response Plans in relation to risk management in maritime space and coastal areas. The implementation of the Plan should be accompanied by protection programmes (rehousing, protection and adaptation) for communities settled in high- risk areas on the coasts.

9. Promote the development of hydrography

The economy of St Kitts and Nevis is heavily dependent upon the safe operation of maritime trade, maritime tourism and management of the maritime environment. A detailed knowledge, understanding and application of hydrography is the foundation of maritime safety and development for any maritime state. Failure to make adequate provision for hydrography will, eventually, result in marine accidents causing extensive pollution, uncontrolled coastal zone management resulting in the destruction of marine ecosystems and many other adverse and likely irreversible effects on the marine environment.

Policy

- 9.1 Develop, in association with relevant international partners, a hydrographic data gathering programme for the OECS to raise the safety of navigation within the region to internationally required standards and provide vital data for a wide range maritime based regional and national government programmes.
- 9.2 Support the establishment, within the OECS, of a regional hydrographic capability able to maintain regional hydrography to a high standard in the long-term without recourse to foreign agencies.

5 Thematic Areas

Maritime Transport

Like all island nations, St Kitts and Nevis' economy is dependent on shipping. Approximately 95% of all goods imported to the country arrive by sea and most agriculture products are exported by sea. Thus, shipping and the supporting infrastructure such as ports and harbours are vital to the economic growth of the country.

Since St Kitts and Nevis operates a sizeable register of international ships, it also derives significant revenue from ships listed on the National Register of Ships. Domestic and regional shipping is also an important marine activity sustaining socio-economic development in St Kitts and Nevis.

The Department of Maritime Affairs is the National Maritime Authority executing government policy on maritime matters. It directs, coordinates and monitors maritime activities, exercising its competence as a port State, flag State, and coastal State administration. It is the jurisdictional authority for the investigation of matters relating to maritime disasters and the administrative authority for investigating and sanctioning violations of merchant marine standards under its jurisdiction.

Under the coordination of the Ministry of Tourism and International Transport, the Department shall represent the Government in international forums and conferences relating to maritime activities, and shall act as a consultant to the Government in all matters relating to maritime transport.

The Government is committed to promoting shipping and regulatory reforms to ensure that access to efficient and competitive shipping services is maintained. Our international economic competitiveness requires that we be in step with international approaches to shipping regulation.

The goal for maritime transport is to have:

A safe, secure, clean and internationally competitive maritime transport sector.

Strategic Objectives

The Strategic Objectives for the Maritime Transport Sector are to:

1. Facilitate and enhance the expansion of international trade, particularly tourism and exports.
2. Promote an efficient, effective and internationally competitive maritime industry.
3. Ensure safety, security and protection of the marine environment.

Policy Statement

1. Facilitate and enhance international trade, particularly tourism and exports

Issue

Trade is important to St Kitts and Nevis in terms of job creation and economic activity. Shipping is essential to the promotion and preservation of fixed trade links between nations, while trade is essential to a healthy shipping industry.

Cruise shipping and recreational yachting are gaining increased importance in St Kitts and Nevis' economy as a result of the continued expansion of cruise shipping within the Eastern Caribbean region.

Policy

1. Promote and develop regular shipping services and related infrastructure as well as a well-defined regulatory framework.
2. Promote St Kitts and Nevis as a premier cruise ship destination and ensure the provision of effective support services and related infrastructure as well as a well-defined regulatory framework.
3. Ensure that all ports fulfil requirements regarding depth, width, harbour channel markings and other navigational safety items.
4. Increased the resources of the Department of Maritime Affairs to enable it to deal satisfactorily with all maritime matters, including Port State Control.
5. Continue the establishment of bilateral agreements to support maritime developmental activities.

2. Promote an efficient, effective and internationally competitive maritime industry

Issue

The maritime transport sector is critical to the economic development of St Kitts and Nevis. It contributes significantly to the country's foreign exchange earnings from both cargo and cruise shipping activities. St Kitts and Nevis also maintains, and wishes to grow, a significant international register of ships.

The Government needs to use its resources, both human and financial, in order for St Kitts and Nevis to become a premier shipping centre incorporating the inter-related activities of:

- *Port facilities*
- *International Ship Registry*
- *Crewing and Maritime Skills Pool*

- *Ship Ownership and Ship Management*
- *Ship Repair and Maintenance*
- *Yacht Marinas*

Policy

1. Implement measures to attract ship owners to register their vessels in St Kitts and Nevis through a vibrant ship registry that is internationally respected and profitable.
2. Promote St Kitts and Nevis as a crewing nation by ensuring that education and training continue to comply with international standards and will support, possibly through legislation, the hiring by shipping companies of St Kitts and Nevis nationals.
3. Promote the expansion of ship repair and maintenance activities to support the maritime sector.
4. Facilitate the development of marina facilities to tap into the growing nautical tourism market.

3. Safety, security and protection of the marine environment

Issue

The sustainable development of the shipping sector is hinged on the existence of safe, secure and environmentally sound transportation of goods and passengers which adheres to acceptable local and international standards of maritime safety, security and marine environment protection.

Policy

1. Ensure that St Kitts and Nevis' flagged ships and those foreign ships operating in St Kitts and Nevis' waters operate in accordance with local and international maritime safety, security and environmental protection standards.
2. Promulgate appropriate legislation to govern safe operation of St Kitts and Nevis flagged ships worldwide and foreign ships operating in St Kitts and Nevis' waters.
3. Preserve and protect the marine environment by eliminating pollution by oil, garbage and other harmful substances and minimizing the accidental discharge of such substances through the implementation of MARPOL 73/78 and other relevant conventions.
4. Continue to fulfil international obligations under multilateral and bilateral agreements regarding maritime security.
5. Regularly review and update shipping related legislative frameworks in conformity to St Kitts and Nevis' international obligations.
6. Continue to effectively implement the key international treaties affecting shipping.

Issue

Port State Control (PSC) is a mechanism instituted through the IMO by which a state may conduct limited safety inspections of all foreign vessels calling at its ports to ensure their conformity to maritime safety, security and pollution prevention standards. PSC has demonstrably reduced the incidence of substandard ships calling at ports where it is rigorously enforced.

Policy

1. Collaborate with the Caribbean and other Regional MOUs to eliminate sub-standard shipping through continued implementation of a Port State Control regime for foreign ships calling at St Kitts and Nevis' ports.
2. Ensure the PSC inspection targets are met, currently set at 15% of all ships making a port call and will ensure that resources required are adequate.

Issue

Ferry services can provide freight and passenger links between coastal communities.

Policy

1. Promote the development of domestic ferry services as an alternative transport mode, where practicable.
2. Ensure that appropriate regulations are developed to achieve safe usage of the waterways.

Fisheries Management

While commercial fishing activities do take place in St Kitts and Nevis, they are predominantly local and small scale. Fish is usually sold at landing sites, direct from boats, except for the main fisheries centers in Basseterre and Charlestown. With the exception of queen conch, which has significant exports, all harvested fishery products are marketed and consumed locally. However, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing that takes place in eastern Caribbean waters represents a threat to the future security of fish stocks in St Kitts and Nevis and the wider eastern Caribbean.

The local fishing fleet includes vessels of varying sizes and capacities, using a variety of gear types and fishing methods. There are four major fisheries in St Kitts and Nevis: demersal/reef/bank; coastal pelagic; ocean pelagic; and conch. Demersal/reef fishery is the largest in terms of vessels (80%), fishers (75%), and gear (fish traps, hand line, spear gun). Coastal pelagic fishery employs 10% of registered fishers, <3% registered vessels, and accounts for over 40% of total annual landings.

The Department of Marine Resources and the Department of Fisheries are the national agencies executing government policy on fishery matters on the islands of St Kitts and Nevis respectively, pursuant to the St Christopher and Nevis Fisheries Act and subsidiary regulations. The Government is committed to the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources for the benefit of the people of St. Kitts and Nevis.

The goal for fisheries management is:

To develop and increase the potential of marine living resources to meet social, economic and nutritional needs.

Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives for fisheries management are to:

1. Maintain or restore populations of marine species at levels that can produce the optimal sustainable yields.
2. Achieve economic growth through development of underexploited pelagic fisheries and exporting fish.
3. Preserve rare or fragile ecosystems, as well as habitats and other ecologically sensitive areas and other spawning and nursery areas.
4. Ensure effective monitoring and enforcement with respect to fishing activities, including the prevention and control of IUU fishing.

Policy Statement

1. Maintain or restore populations of marine species at levels that can produce the optimal sustainable yields

Issue

Coastal fisheries have declined sharply in recent years, while storms and anchoring have heavily damaged the reefs. Anecdotal evidence from fishers suggest that catches of conch, lobster, and large pelagic and demersal fishes have all declined in recent years.

Policy

1. Rebuild the stocks of conch and spiny lobster and identify targets for each fishery in order to: stabilize the net incomes of the operators in the fisheries; ensure sustainable harvests; and promote co-management of the fisheries.
 2. Rebuild the reef, bank and deep slope fish stocks and identify targets for the fishery, in order to: stabilize the net incomes of the operators in the fishery; maintain biological diversity; ensure that the maximum sustainable yield is not exceeded in any of the species of this multi-species fishery; and, promote co-management of the fisheries.
2. Achieve economic growth through the development of underexploited pelagic fisheries and by exporting fish

Issue

Currently there are no regulations controlling the harvest of large pelagics for commercial fishing within national waters, but attention is normally paid to the management recommendations from ICCAT. Opportunities exist to develop this fishery further both as a high value sport fishery for the tourism industry and as a source of export revenue.

Policy

1. Promote the sustainable development of the commercial long line and sport fisheries for large pelagic species including through the development of appropriate regulations for the fishery.
2. Develop capacity for optimizing the catches of large pelagic species inhabiting or migrating through the EEZ.
3. Establish management linkages with international regulatory bodies, such as ICCAT, in order to access vital information to properly manage these fishes.

Issue

Fisheries in rural areas are important in the socio-economic development of local communities in both St. Kitts and Nevis.

Policy

1. Small scale fisheries represent a significant proportion of the total fish harvested from marine waters. Emphasis will be given to supporting the small scale fisher folk communities in the coastal areas.
2. The Government will work with private and public sector stakeholders to develop a strategy for promotion of recreational and sport fisheries.
3. Preserve rare or fragile ecosystems, as well as habitats and other ecologically sensitive areas and other spawning and nursery areas

Issue

Fisheries cannot be sustained in the absence of a healthy marine ecosystem. Local fisheries are already threatened by many factors including habitat damage and loss, pollution and siltation. In addition, healthy fisheries are dependent on the maintenance of spawning and juvenile growth habitats that are most vulnerable to coastal development.

Successful development of the fisheries sector therefore requires coordinated collaboration between the various agencies responsible for marine management, and the primary resource users.

Policy

1. Implement policies relating to the establishment of marine protected areas in St Kitts and Nevis.

4. Ensure effective monitoring and enforcement with respect to fishing activities, including the prevention and control of IUU fishing.

Issue

Effective monitoring of fishing activities and enforcement of regulations is crucial to ensuring high compliance with fisheries regulations so that fish stocks are exploited in a sustainable way to assist the long-term economic survival of the fishing industry and to protect a valuable natural food resource. IUU fishing is a significant issue worldwide and in St Kitts and Nevis an unknown quantity of large pelagics is caught illegally by foreign vessels in the waters of St. Kitts and Nevis

Unfortunately the Government's ability to perform these functions is constrained poor coastal surveillance; lack of the ability to assess stocks; and overall, limited financial resources.

Policy

1. Engage with local communities to develop a voluntary nationwide monitoring network and encourage reporting of illegal fishing activities.
2. Increase awareness among fishers of existing regulations and the economic impacts of unsustainable fishing practices on livelihoods.
3. Work with other OECS member Governments to progress the concept of the harmonized maritime monitoring control and surveillance programme in the region.
4. Ensure effective enforcement of existing regulations.

Marine Protected Areas

Marine protected areas (MPAs) play a key role in biodiversity conservation and the sustainable utilization of marine resources. This is strongly underlined by the international attention they have received. The 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development called for a representative global network of MPAs by 2012, and the 2010 Biodiversity Target established under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) urged member states to effectively conserve at least 10% of each ecological region, including marine environments.

MPAs may be established for a wide range of purposes, including protecting marine species and habitats, conserving marine biodiversity, restoring fish stocks, managing tourism activities and minimising conflicts between diverse resource users. The management of each MPA varies depending on the nature of the resources, their utilisation and the human activities occurring within them. A range of management tools must therefore be applied: in some areas protection may be given from all the activities which could give rise to environmental damage, whereas in other areas, protection may be provided by limiting the allowed types of activities.

The Government is committed to establishing a well-managed network of MPAs in our seas. The goal for Marine Protected Areas is:

To establish a nationally representative system of marine protected areas that contributes to social, economic and environmental development goals by 2020.

Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives for marine protected areas are to:

1. Pursue appropriate measures to manage biological resources and, where necessary, restore biological diversity.
2. Manage and administer MPAs in a professional manner ensuring that benefits arising from their management accrue to all citizens.
3. Establish sustainable sources of funding to support the ongoing management and administration of MPAs.

Policy Statement

1. Pursue appropriate measures to manage biological resources and, where necessary, restore biological diversity

Issue

Many marine habitats and species are subject to pressure from human activities. Some important habitats and species are declining and a number of commercial fish stocks are under pressure. The Government of St Kitts and Nevis is committed to substantially completing an ecologically coherent network of MPAs by 2012 as part of a broad based approach to nature conservation.

This network of MPAs will be a key tool in allowing damaged ecosystems to recover in order to realise the benefits from the marine environment particularly in ensuring biodiversity is protected, conserved and where appropriate recovered, and loss of biodiversity halted.

Policy

1. Ensure that biological resources are conserved in collaboration with regional and global initiatives.
2. Implement the measures contained in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) for St Kitts and Nevis.
3. Protected areas shall be established on the basis of, *inter alia*, ecosystem functions, environmental services, representativeness, critical habitats, natural genetic resources, and scenic values.
4. All protected areas shall be integrated under the national Marine Zoning Plan and a consolidated protected areas system;
5. Declaration, designation and management of marine protected areas shall involve consultation with the relevant stakeholders.
6. Improve appreciation of protected areas and their biodiversity at all levels through communication, education and public awareness.

2. Manage and administer MPAs in a professional manner ensuring that benefits arising from their management accrue to all citizens

Issue

Building and developing effective management is crucial to achieving the objectives for marine protected areas. Once MPAs have been designated, the necessary institutional instruments, the availability of human resources, infrastructure, and other necessities must all be established.

Local stakeholders' perceptions of MPAs are an important indicator of their success and these perceptions will significantly influence their behaviour. The inclusion of locals in management of MPAs is therefore one of the major mechanisms for effectively improving MPA operations and, at the same time, enhancing activities within existing financial and human resource constraints.

Policies

1. Management of St Kitts and Nevis' system of MPAs shall be accountable and transparent.
2. Participatory mechanisms which are vital to optimising socio-economic benefits, such as collaborative management agreements shall be encouraged to maintain the cultural and ecological integrity of MPAs.
3. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms shall be established for the on-going assessment of MPAs and shall be based on compatible methods, indicators and site-specific standards to ensure management effectiveness and biological and cultural integrity.
4. MPAs shall support the sustainable economic development of the local communities that buffer these areas.
5. MPAs shall facilitate environmental education, research, monitoring, recreation and ecotourism for tourists and the general public.

3. Establish sustainable sources of funding to support the ongoing management and administration of MPAs

Issues

There are multiple sources of financing for MPAs, including domestic government budgets, international assistance, visitor fees, and more. While each source plays a vital role for sites worldwide, they can also be subject to fluctuation: Domestic budgets can be cut; International donors can change their area of interest; Tourism rates can rise and fall. These variations create instability for MPA management.

There is therefore a need to ensure and manage a sustainable funding stream to assure the long term viability of marine protected areas in St Kitts and Nevis.

Policy

1. The MPA system shall seek to maintain itself financially and to contribute to national development.
2. Funding of MPAs shall be encouraged through collaboration with relevant stakeholders.
3. The concept of cross-subsidization shall be recognised as a means of funding since some protected areas have more revenue generation potential than others.
4. The management of MPAs shall be geared to maximise socioeconomic benefits, cost recovery and revenue generation schemes without undermining their cultural and ecological integrity.

Marine Tourism

The marine tourism sector has now become the largest single maritime economic activity in St Kitts and Nevis. A range of economic activities such as yachting, boating and cruising are specific to marine tourism. While many tourists may not venture far from the shoreline, open water activities are on the increase. Yachting is expected to growing in the Eastern Caribbean region and the cruise industry is also growing.

Tourism is heavily reliant on the marine environment in terms of cruise ship tourism, beach side hotels and beaches, scuba diving and recreational yachting. The quality and status of the marine environment therefore has a significant impact on the value of this sector, depending how tourists perceive the quality of the marine environment and the experience it offers, relative to other islands in the region.

Tourism policy, together with initiatives taken in the overall context of the National Maritime Policy, such as integrated management, promoting maritime spatial planning, as well as promoting maritime heritage, will provide the basis to support the sustainability and competitiveness of the marine tourism sector.

Strategic Objectives

The Strategic objectives for marine tourism are to:

1. Facilitate the sustainable growth of the marine tourism sector in St Kitts and Nevis, whilst providing further employment opportunities
2. Promote economic diversification of new and existing marine sectors which can cover tourism activities.

Policy Statement

1. Facilitate the sustainable growth of the marine tourism sector in St Kitts and Nevis, whilst providing further employment opportunities

Issue

Although marine tourism represents a significant economic activity to St Kitts and Nevis, if not properly managed tourism activities can potentially pose significant problems in terms of environmental sustainability.

Policy

1. Develop a long term strategy for the development of sustainable coastal and marine tourism.
2. Promote and support programmes and actions to direct and stimulate the development of tourist activities associated with the marine environment and coastal zone.
3. Adopt measures to ensure that impacts of tourism activities are avoided, minimised or mitigated, ensuring for example that:
 - tourism infrastructure is not located in environmentally sensitive areas and the impacts of tourism infrastructure are minimized, both on- and off-site (e.g., impacts from the extraction of building materials, waste disposal, etc).
 - species and habitats are not disturbed or damaged by inappropriate practices such as approaching whales and other marine animals too closely, approaching breeding sites, reef walking, or destructive anchoring.
 - collection and sale of souvenirs (e.g., shells, corals, etc) follows all relevant national regulations, as well as international and regional obligations.
4. Facilitate the establishment of community-based tourism ensuring that the local community has substantial control over, and is involved in the development of, tourism in an area and that a major proportion of the benefits accrued remain within the community.

2. Promote economic diversification of new and existing marine sectors which can cover tourism activities

Issue – Cruise Ship Tourism and Yachting

The majority of tourist visitors to St Kitts and Nevis arrive by cruise ship, a sector that continues to grow in the Caribbean with more, larger vessels visiting the region on an annual basis. With a shift away from the traditional sailing areas in the Mediterranean to the Caribbean, yachting is a lucrative economic sector in other neighbouring Caribbean jurisdictions and has been identified as a key component of the strategy for future growth of tourism development in St Kitts and Nevis.

As tourism increases the water sports sub-sector will become an important component of the overall tourism sector. Thus investment in infrastructure and support services to enable growth of this sub-sector will be important.

Policy

1. Optimize the opportunities in cruise shipping through the provision of adequate cruise ship berths and support to facilitate the development of support services.
2. Optimize the opportunities in recreational yachting and cruising through the provision of adequate marina facilities, anchorages and support services.
3. Support the establishment of well-designed yacht and cruise ship moorings in particularly sensitive areas.

Issue – Marine Protected Areas

Tourism can benefit MPAs and local communities by providing income, both directly to local people and for covering the running costs of MPAs.

Policy

1. The Government will work with tour operators and their suppliers to determine the level of contributions that should be made towards the management of marine protected areas. Contributions can come from various sources, for example:
 - entrance fees charged to visitors for access to MPAs
 - user fees charged to visitors undertaking specified activities, or for use of specified facilities (e.g. fishing, diving, boating)
 - concessions and lease contracts between MPAs and businesses operating within the area
 - investment and sponsoring of specific facilities by the tourism industry
 - offering opportunities to visitors to support MPAs through voluntary donations

6 Implementation Arrangements

General Approach

Management of marine activities already exists in St Kitts and Nevis, whether adequate or not. A key to successful implementation of the National Maritime Policy is to build on what already exists — improving the management and making it more efficient and effective. A key step, therefore, in the implementation of the National Maritime Policy is to compare the status quo with the vision and objectives defined in this policy. In particular, this will focus on institutional and legal arrangements needed to fulfil the policy objectives.

Implementation of the National Maritime Policy requires an orderly process of planning and assessment, consultation and collective decision making, policy making, coordination and management. Implementation of the National Maritime Policy must be guided by a high-level government entity. This is required to ensure the necessary political engagement and to establish effective coordination mechanisms with other competent entities and the community in general. Considering this context and the critical importance of integration in the management of oceans, it is clearly necessary to modify the present institutional structure.

An important step therefore will therefore be the establishment of an effective multi-sectoral institutional framework, within existing organisational structures, to progress the implementation of the policy.

Institutional Arrangements

An important first step in the process is the nomination of a lead national agency. Such an agency must be explicitly mandated to take on this role and to provide a coordination role among all national agencies with a mandate for the management of ocean space and resources.

The Government of St Kitts and Nevis will therefore establish a National Maritime Commission (NMC), to be co-chaired by the Department of Maritime Affairs and the Department of Marine Resources, composed of representatives drawn from those agencies that have responsibility for some aspect of maritime affairs and marine resource management. Likewise, representatives from the Nevis Administration, the private sector, local NGOs and key marine user groups should participate.

The main tasks of the NMC will be to:

- coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the National Maritime Policy with other cross-cutting strategies, planning instruments and programmes;
- contribute to the coordination, implementation and monitoring of Government-approved cross-cutting actions, measures and policies related to maritime affairs;

- promote favourable conditions for the attraction of private investment to marine-related activities, in coordination with the competent bodies, making it possible to develop a strong and modern maritime policy, that makes a wise use of the country's resources and assets; and
- stimulate the participation of public and private institutions, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and civil society in the implementation of the National Maritime Policy.

The National Maritime Policy provides the basis for a new strategic management framework to involve all levels of government and interested parties to work towards a set of common objectives. A mechanism for stakeholder engagement is also necessary. Initially, an advisory group of major stakeholders, including key marine user groups and civil society, may be most useful in the implementation of this policy.

Private sector

The Eastern Caribbean supports a diverse network of private sector activity, including commercial and sport fishing, aquaculture, boat maintenance, oil and gas exploration and extraction, marine aggregate extraction, tourism and recreation, boating, marine transportation and ports, marine navigation, and communications.

The development of an integrated ocean governance framework should aim to promote the development of private/public partnerships and standards that will support existing and emerging ocean industries, and ensure the conservation and sustainability of ocean resources.

Civil society

There are also non-government organizations, interest groups and academics with a wealth of expertise that can provide informed advice on matters such as economic, environmental and social issues, science and technology, community living, jobs and growth, and public education. The regional ocean governance framework should actively encourage the participation of these groups and individuals in its evolution and implementation.

Broader community based participation

Local communities should be encouraged to participate in planning and management strategies and share responsibility for the management of ocean resources. As such, the public should have sufficient opportunities for informed community contributions to decisions and management and ocean management decision making should be open for public scrutiny.

7 Strategic Action Plan

Introduction

The purpose of this Strategic Action Plan is to propose the next series of actions to materialize the vision and strategy for St Kitts and Nevis' maritime future for the period 2013 until 2020. It contains a number of short and medium term actions designed to enhance the implementation of the policy objectives of the National Maritime Policy.

The Strategic Action Plan is designed to serve as a guide for implementation rather than as a prescriptive work plan. However, it is expected to contribute to sector specific work plans in different government agencies, to help direct the work they undertake on behalf of the Government of St Kitts and Nevis.

Implementing the National Maritime Policy

Implementing the National Maritime Policy will involve new initiatives as well as existing and on-going activities. Implementation requires action under each of the strategic policy objectives:

1. Secure rights to marine resources;
2. Reform ocean governance;
3. Preserve and protect the marine environment;
4. Protect underwater cultural heritage
5. Promote sustainable economic development;
6. Promote public awareness, participation and accountability;
7. Increase knowledge and capacity building;
8. Build resilience and managing for uncertainty; and
9. Promote the development of hydrography

For the foreseeable future, the government will apply increased priority to the following key components:

- Resolving outstanding maritime boundaries
- Reforming the ocean governance framework including institutional arrangements
- Implementing measures for the preservation and protection of the marine environment and underwater cultural heritage
- Considering options for optimising the economic opportunities from marine resources including integrated marine planning

- Raising awareness among stakeholders and creating opportunities for increased stakeholder participation in decision making processes
- Increasing our understanding of the marine environment and capacity building
- Building resilience and managing for uncertainty
- Supporting the implementation of an OECS-wide hydrographic data strategy

These are the areas of activity that require new or additional focus in the future, particularly to address the key challenges facing the marine environment. They do not represent all issues and further elaboration will be required to develop this plan further to address the full range of issues identified in the National Maritime Policy.

Actions

Priority 1: Maritime Boundary Delimitation

It is in the national interest that St Kitts and Nevis deposits with the United Nations, base-point coordinates, charts and other information delineating its maritime zones in order to establish and secure rights and responsibilities over the Federation's marine waters and the resources therein.

Action 1.1: The Government of St Kitts and Nevis will negotiate, agree and delimit maritime boundaries with all neighbouring States bilaterally or in conjunction with the OECS.

Priority 2: Reform Ocean Governance

The National Maritime Policy stems from the desire to achieve responsible ocean governance. Governance is an overarching theme that is an essential part of the National Maritime Policy. The overall aim of reforming the current governance arrangements should therefore be to establish, strengthen, and implement effective governance mechanisms that contribute to the implementation of the National Maritime Policy.

Integrated marine management

Traditional sector-specific approaches to management have proved limited in their ability to address the complexities of marine ecosystems. One of the main goals of integrated marine management is therefore the harmonisation of the multiple sectoral activities in order to achieve common and agreed management goals so that all the activities in marine areas share common objectives.

Integrated marine management involves comprehensive planning and regulation of human activities towards a complex set of interacting objectives and aims at minimising user conflicts while ensuring long term sustainability. It recognizes the need to protect the marine environment taking into account the effects of multiple uses and acknowledges the limitations of the sectoral approaches and the linkages between inland, coastal and ocean uses.

Action 2.1: The Government will promote a shift from the traditional sector-specific approaches to management to a more integrated 'whole of government' approach to development and management of marine resources across relevant sectors such as fisheries, transport, tourism, minerals and environment, through harmonised institutional, policy and legal arrangements.

Institutional arrangements

Embracing an integrated national approach to ocean governance requires institutional reform seeking to avoid duplication and clarifying responsibilities in the interest of cost effectiveness and efficiency.

Action 2.2: The Government of St Kitts and Nevis will establish a National Maritime Commission (NMC) by mid-2015. The Commission will be co-chaired by the Department of Maritime Affairs and the Department of Marine Resources and be composed of senior representatives of the Ministry in charge of Maritime Affairs, Fisheries, Environmental Protection, Tourism, Energy, Foreign Affairs, Attorney General's Office, Defence and Customs, the Civil Society and others from both the Federal Government and Nevis Island Administration to function as a high-level advisory committee to the Minister responsible for Maritime Affairs.

Activities:

- Establish an organizational structure that supports the programmes established by the National Agency and facilitates consultation with private stakeholder
- Clarify, where necessary, the competencies attributed to the different agencies dealing with maritime affairs
- Promote efforts to build coordination, create greater capacity and reduce duplication by pooling resources to reduce costs

Regulatory reform

The overall goal for regulatory reform is to ensure that the key policy aims can be pursued with a legal backing and that there is consistency in laws and regulations across all sectors that use and impact the marine environment.

Action 2.3: The Government will review, strengthen and/or establish policy, legal and planning arrangements in accordance with national and regional needs and capacities.

Activities:

- Accede to and implement all relevant international and regional instruments
- Develop and enact national legislation and guidelines on marine environmental protection and harmonise conflicting legislation and agency regulations
- Improve existing legislation and guidelines on marine environmental protection and maintain an on-going review and assessment of the adequacy of environmental standards
- Explore mechanisms for strengthening compliance with relevant international agreements
- Effectively participate in relevant regional ocean governance initiatives

Surveillance and enforcement

Effective surveillance and enforcement of legal and planning arrangements within the Federation's marine jurisdiction is fundamental to protecting our national interests. The Government of St Kitts and Nevis will continue to employ various measures to guarantee the integrity of its marine space and resources. These measures include the protection of marine borders and marine resources by the St Kitts and Nevis Defence Force Coastguard, the Department of Maritime Affairs, the Department of Marine Resources, Customs and Excise Department, and the Royal St Christopher and Nevis Police Force, as well as national and international measures that reaffirm St Kitts and Nevis' jurisdiction over its marine, island and mainland territory.

Action 2.4: The Government will provide increased support for the maintenance of maritime sovereignty and security and amend relevant laws to make surveillance and enforcement of marine activities more effective.

Activities:

- Promote national and international collaboration to prevent illegal activity and enforce national and international obligations
- Coordinate existing resources held by the various agencies with competences in surveillance and enforcement, optimizing their use and effectiveness
- Support capacity building initiatives to strengthen monitoring, surveillance and enforcement

Marine spatial planning

Marine spatial planning (MSP) is a practical way to create and establish a more rational organization of the use of marine space and the interactions between its uses, to balance demands for development with the need to protect marine ecosystems, and to achieve social and economic objectives in an open and planned way. The principal output of MSP is a comprehensive spatial management plan for a marine area or ecosystem, which is usually implemented through a zoning map(s) and/or a permit system. Individual decisions made within individual sectors (for example, the fisheries or tourism sector) should be based on the zoning maps and the comprehensive spatial plan.

Action 2.5: The Government will build on and promote marine zoning and spatial planning mechanisms for improving management of maritime space to achieve economic development and environmental objectives.

Activities:

- Implement the Marine Zoning Project
- Map existing and possible future uses of the marine environment by different activities
- Conduct an audit to ascertain existing availability of marine data

- Facilitate a workshop to evaluate and synthesise the data and to start generating a Marine Spatial Plan

Priority 3: Preserve and Protect the Marine Environment

The marine ecosystems of the eastern Caribbean and their marine biological diversity are a key asset for all eastern Caribbean states including St Kitts and Nevis. They also provide a range of essential services that would be extremely costly or impossible to restore or replace once they are lost. If utilisation of these resources is well managed they can meet broad range of economic, social and cultural aspirations. The Government recognises that ecosystem health and integrity is fundamental to ecologically sustainable development.

Action 3.1: The Government of St Kitts and Nevis will establish a network of marine protected areas, implementing, where practicable, the Caribbean Challenge Initiative to which it has signed up.

Activities:

- Undertake an assessment of existing MPAs in St Kitts and Nevis
- Develop a strategy for a national network of Marine Protected Areas
- Strengthen management systems and capacities
- Establish management plans for MPAs/Zones
- Establish mechanisms for sustained financing of MPAs including through the establishment of a national biodiversity fund

Action 3.2: The Government will ensure that activities undertaken in the marine environment meet all relevant international and regional standards and do not cause environment damage or harm to social and economic values.

Activities:

- Incorporate Environmental and Socioeconomic Impact Assessments into planning and decision making frameworks
- Incorporate sound environmental and social practices into economic development activities
- Reduce the impact of all sources of pollution on the marine environment

Action 3.3: The Government will strengthen the protection of cultural heritage resources by enhancing the current legal framework.

Activities:

- Encourage public awareness and the dissemination of information concerning cultural and intangible archaeological sites to raise appreciation of marine archaeological and cultural heritage

Priority 4: Promote Sustainable Economic Development

A strong and sustained maritime economy is only possible if the mechanisms that enable investors to support maritime activities are created. To do so it is essential to promote a transparent and competitive investment environment for the creation and attraction of maritime industries and the exploitation of existing natural resources. In this vein, the Government will work with all sectors to manage the use of living marine resources, in order to highlight the importance of marine activities in national and international trade. These activities include exploitation of fishery and mineral resources, shipping and tourism, all of which play a role in the country's socio-economic development.

However, while marine sectors contribute significantly to the overall economy, this contribution comes largely from traditional industries such as fishing, transport and tourism. Emerging industries, including marine-related biomedicine, power, chemicals and seawater utilization, are not currently pursued in St Kitts and Nevis

Action 4.1: Support and promote business development in the oceans sector.

Activities:

- Undertake a systematic analysis to quantify the value of the 'ocean economy' and the potential value of key marine resources/activities
- Promote the ocean as a key element in the tourism sector, creating conditions for the best use of the ocean and coastal zones and supporting the quality and diversity of the range of tourist products
- Promote and enhance St Kitts and Nevis' port and marina facilities, by examining the viability of value added services, to enhance the opportunities they present
- Evaluate opportunities to derive revenue from the portfolio of marine resources and activities that more accurately reflect their 'value' (e.g. levies, user fees, licence and permit fees etc.)
- Support economic diversification in coastal communities to ensure participation within the larger oceans economy

Action 4.2: Evaluate and support new and emerging opportunities for oceans industries and oceans-related coastal development.

Activities:

- Support new and emerging fisheries and aquaculture developments, marine eco-tourism operations and tourism services to enhance cruise ship passengers' experience
- Identify one or two (maximum) key emerging opportunities and develop strategies to attract investment to support their development

Priority 5: Promote Public Participation and Accountability

One of the main difficulties associated with the implementation of a National Maritime Policy is the lack of appreciation and awareness of the importance and role of the marine environment by the wider community. Few citizens look at the ocean as a life, investment, or business opportunity. To achieve that goal it is necessary to invest in medium- and long-term measures that provide a way of increasingly mobilizing society to the importance of the marine environment in the nation's development.

Action 5.1: Support and promote strategies to build public awareness of the importance of the sea and its resources, protection of the marine environment and cooperating to find environmental and sustainable development solutions.

Activities:

- Engage with and sensitise the media regarding the marine environment and marine activities
- Encourage education and outreach programmes aimed at promoting ocean-related activities in schools
- Support and promote public awareness of oceans and ocean issues and engagement in stewardship initiatives

Action 5.2: Establish a process to identify and stimulate the participation of local communities and local industries in planning and management strategies and to share responsibility for the management of ocean resources.

Activities:

- Encourage local communities and local industries to participate in planning and management strategies and share responsibility for the management of ocean resources
- Develop mechanisms to identify and engage all stakeholders, especially local communities and the private sector on management of marine resources and activities
- Provide support to empower communities to take on resource management and monitoring responsibilities
- Ensure that marine management decisions and how they are made are open for public scrutiny

Priority 6: Increase Knowledge and Capacity Building

To ensure effective governance of marine space, a whole array of information and knowledge will need to be called upon. Governance requires factual information about the ecosystems being governed. It requires knowledge of geographical occurrence and abundance of ecosystems as well as information on how human actions affect these ecosystems. Only through a consistent and sustained investment in scientific research will it be possible to create a solid basis for management decisions, in a sustainable development and integrated management perspective. A key challenge will be to make the national structures effective and this will require capacity building. Awareness creation, participation and consultation will assist in upgrading skills and understanding of decision makers and professional in all sectors.

There is also a need to devise new ways of working that leverage greater capacity from current systems. Increased cooperation on such issues, coupled with greater coordination across Governments will help reduce costs and speed up the transition to more sustainable governance and management arrangements.

Action 6.1: Improve marine scientific knowledge base for management of the marine environment.

Activities:

- Improve co-operation in the collection, monitoring and disseminating of information, including the integration of local knowledge
- Promote the integration of existing marine databases, management of marine data and use of historical information
- Facilitate/support research to increase understanding of the marine environment, its natural processes and cultural marine
- Develop a marine research strategy that identifies and prioritises information needs and the cooperative mechanisms for acquiring accessing and disseminating information

Action 6.2: Support and promote strategies to build technical capacity among decision makers and resource managers.

Activities:

- Determine training needs related to marine science, marine affairs and marine management that is relevant to coastal and ocean management
- Support training of decision makers and planners in marine science, marine affairs and marine management that is relevant to coastal and ocean management
- Explore opportunities for technical cooperation and knowledge sharing between other OECs member countries concerning matters related to marine management

Priority 7: Building Resilience and Managing for Uncertainty

The protection of coastal areas under threat of natural phenomena such as hurricanes, sea surge and flooding, sea-level, loss of coastal areas and other events due to climate change, is a priority for the Government of St Kitts and Nevis. Accordingly, the Government will promote the adoption of appropriate adaptation and resilience strategies to minimise the effects of such events. Implementation of the other policy areas in this policy will contribute substantially to this effort.

Action 7.1: Identify and ensure the incorporation of appropriate adaptation and resilience building strategies for incorporation into sustainable development, conservation and governance actions to reduce risk of coastal hazards and climate change.

Activities:

- Protect naturally resistant or resilient areas. Examples include coral reefs that still have high coral cover , mangroves and coastal wetlands
- Integrate climate change into MPA planning, management & evaluation
- Establish controls on the removal of beach sediment that contributes to coastal erosion and loss of protection
- Ensure that adaptation in coastal and marine areas is taken into account in the implementation of this policy

Priority 8: Implementation of a Hydrographic Data Strategy

Most areas of the Eastern Caribbean do not have accurate nor adequate nautical chart coverage. Modern nautical charts are essential for safe navigation through a country's waters and along coasts and entry to its ports. A lack of adequate nautical charts prevents the development of maritime trade in the waters and ports of the concerned nations. Accordingly, the Government will promote and fully support the development of a regional hydrographic services in the Eastern Caribbean.

Action 8.1: Actively support the development of an Eastern Caribbean Hydrographic Service to fulfil the long-term recurring maritime spatial data requirements of the eastern Caribbean region.

Glossary of Terms

Marine Environment - The oceans, seas, bays, estuaries, and other major water bodies, including their surface interface and interaction, with the atmosphere and with the land seaward of the mean high water mark.

Marine Zoning Project – Refers to the USAid funded marine spatial planning process project led by The Nature Conservancy, that has developed a draft marine zoning design for St. Kitts and Nevis

MARPOL 73/78 – the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (1973) as amended by the 1978 Protocol thereto

MoU – Memorandum of Understanding (relating to Port State Control)

MPA – Marine protected area

PSC – Port State Control - the process of inspection of foreign ships in national ports to verify that the condition of the ship and its equipment comply with the requirements of international regulations

NMC – the National Maritime Commission established by the Government of St Kitts and Nevis

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry, no matter how small, should be recorded to ensure the integrity of the financial data. This includes not only sales and purchases but also expenses, income, and any other financial activities.

The second part of the document provides a detailed breakdown of the accounting process. It starts with the identification of the accounting period, followed by the collection and classification of data. The next steps involve the recording of transactions in the journal, the posting of these transactions to the ledger, and the preparation of financial statements.

The third part of the document focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the financial statements. It explains how to use the balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement to assess the financial health of the organization. It also discusses the importance of comparing the current period's performance with the previous period and with industry benchmarks.

The fourth part of the document addresses the role of the accountant in the organization. It highlights the need for the accountant to be not only a technical expert but also a strategic advisor. This involves understanding the business operations and providing insights that can help management make better decisions.

The fifth part of the document discusses the challenges and opportunities in the field of accounting. It notes that while the profession has become more complex due to technological advancements, it also offers significant opportunities for growth and specialization.

The sixth part of the document provides a summary of the key points discussed and offers some final thoughts on the future of accounting. It concludes by emphasizing the importance of continuous learning and staying up-to-date with the latest developments in the field.