



BELIZE 2016 - 2019 Summary Strategy



GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE
MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FOREWORD

Thirty four years ago, we attained independence. Since then we have dreamt of prosperity; but for thirty-four years our efforts have not been sufficient. A long term plan was needed; a beacon to illuminate the pathway to the development we seek. In Horizon 2030 we stated this vision: "a country of peace and tranquillity, where citizens live in harmony with the natural environment and enjoy a high quality of life". We articulated our aspiration to be an "energetic, resourceful and independent people looking after our own development in a sustainable way"; but this guiding vision was only the first step.

Now we have created an actionable strategy that will propel Belize towards the development we envisioned. Today, I have the honour of presenting Belize's **Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (GSDS), 2016-2019**.

This GSDS ushers in a new era of enlightened development planning for our country. Flowing from the Horizon 2030 vision, this strategic plan now charts the path to a better quality of life for all Belizeans, living now and in the future. It places at the fore sustainable development, reflecting a whole-system approach, and acknowledging increasing prosperity, eradicating poverty, improving social cohesion, caring for our natural resources, and securing peace and justice for all Belizeans as inter-connected goals. In the words of Ban Ki Moon (UN Secretary General), *"Saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth... these are one and the same fight. We must connect the dots between climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and women's empowerment. Solutions to one problem must be solutions for all."*

The GSDS therefore strives to bring economic, social, and environmental policies into synergistic balance, so that policies work well together to produce optimal outcomes. It supports the country in coping with resource constraints, and helps to increase its resilience in the face of a volatile global economy and a changing global climate. It outlines four critical success factors, subsidiary goals that also provide an organizing framework for the underlying objectives and actions ("Necessary Conditions" or "NCs", and "Actions").

The GSDS is truly the substance of Horizon 2030, clearly defining where we want to be by the year 2019. It is a map for our nation, explaining how we can attain prosperity for all our people. However, no amount of development planning will be successful unless we are individually and collectively committed to fulfilling the goals and objectives articulated in those plans.

We are a young, developing nation and, while we must dream big, we must also remain cognizant that we cannot afford to make costly mistakes. So, let us continue to dream of greatness; but let us also plan carefully and move together.

I acknowledge my team of hardworking staff of the Policy and Planning Unit, who with the guidance of a team of consultants, and with support from sister Ministries and Agencies have produced this document.

I humbly commend to you the **Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy, 2016-2019**; an action plan for pursuing our vision.

Thank you.



Hon Erwin Contreras
Minister for Economic Development, Petroleum, Investment, Trade and Commerce

March 2016

PURPOSE OF THE GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

This Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (GSDS) for Belize aims to rise to the challenge of guiding overall development for the nation for the period 2016-2019. It adopts an integrated, systemic approach based on the principles of sustainable development, and on three notable drivers that are common to successful developing countries:

1. A Proactive Role for the State
2. Tapping into Global Markets
3. An Innovative Social Policy

Key features of the GSDS

The GSDS encompasses issues covered by previous medium-term economic development plans

The GSDS incorporates, for the first time, both poverty reduction and long-term sustainable development issues

The GSDS builds on previous documents including, especially, Horizon 2030: National Development Framework for Belize 2010-2030

This GSDS is the nation's primary planning document which:

- provides detailed guidance on priorities and on specific actions to be taken during the planning period, including actions that contribute to longer-term development objectives beyond 2019; and
- refers to, and should be considered to include, many other sectoral and ministerial planning documents which are to guide development activity during the planning period insofar as they are consistent with the GSDS goals and priorities unless otherwise specified.

The GSDS is a “living document” which contributes to the realization of the overall goal.

At the core of the GSDS is a hierarchical framework of inter-related goals and objectives called the “Belize Framework for Sustainable Development” (BFSD), which is described in detail in Section III.

The BFSD provides the structure for the “Program of Action”, which in turn describes the actions to be taken in realization of the goals and objectives, which are referred to as “Critical Success Factors” (CSF) and “Necessary Conditions” (NC) for the attainment of the Overall Goal: “To improve the quality of life for all Belizeans, living now and in the future.”



Adapted from the Sustainable Development Framework of the United Nations Task Team 2012

RELATIONSHIP OF THE GSDS TO THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)



To achieve its goal, the GSDS provides:

- A Strategic Framework
- A set of clear Policy Aims
- A considered mix of highlighted and prioritized Action Areas
- Guidance on the necessary institutional arrangements and procedures

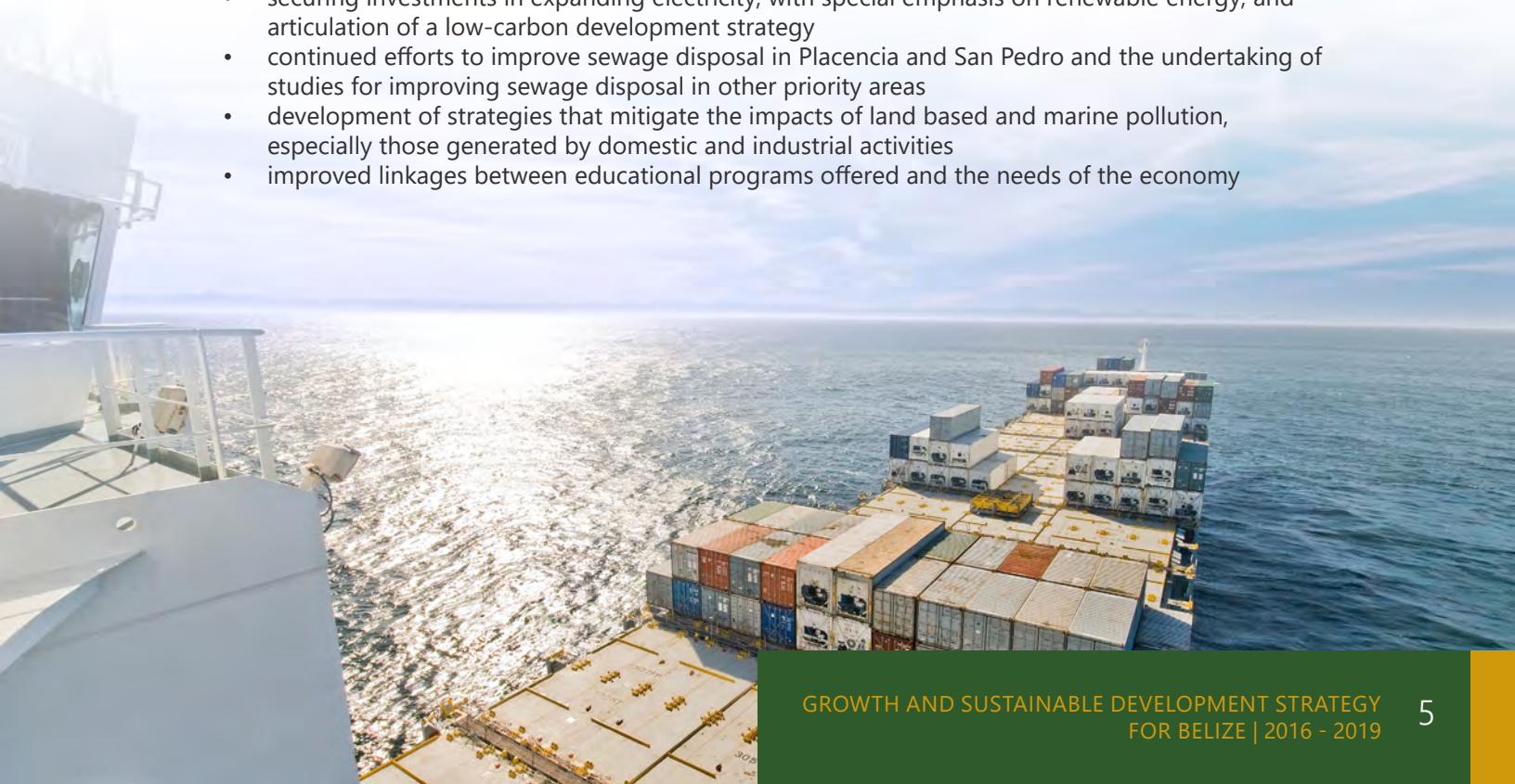
Specifically, the GSDS identifies four "Critical Success Factors" (CSFs), subsidiary goals that also provide an organizing framework for the objectives and actions grouped underneath them (under the headings of "Necessary Conditions" or "NCs", and "Actions"). Each CSF is also linked to a set of measurable targets. These factors are outlined in the following pages.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR 1: OPTIMAL NATIONAL INCOME AND INVESTMENT

Belize will seek to achieve real output growth of 5% annually over a prolonged period. Assuming population growth remains at about 2%, this level of targeted output growth will lead to a sustained improvement in per capita income of approximately 33% over a ten year period. Belize is not expected to reach the 5% growth target in the short term, but efforts will commence during the GSDS planning period (2016-2019) to raise GDP-measured economic growth to that level.

The key actions for CSF 1 that will fuel this growth rate include:

- coordinated implementation of the National Export Strategy (NES), the National Sustainable Tourism Master Plan, the National Climate Change Policy, Strategy and Action Plan, and other planning documents within the wider national planning efforts
- identification of enterprises with potential to become more competitive enhancement of efforts to encourage cooperation among firms improvement of the ease of doing business
- development financing instruments – venture capital and export financing
- identification and development of activities that can provide significant employment and earning opportunities to the poor and the vulnerable
- building institutional capacity to encourage technological adaptation and innovation while also taking into account climate change resilience considerations
- maintaining the existing primary (highway) and secondary road networks in a good state of repair
- enhancing and upgrading the road network (according to the National Transportation Master Plan)
- development of a domestic transportation policy
- securing investments in expanding electricity, with special emphasis on renewable energy, and articulation of a low-carbon development strategy
- continued efforts to improve sewage disposal in Placencia and San Pedro and the undertaking of studies for improving sewage disposal in other priority areas
- development of strategies that mitigate the impacts of land based and marine pollution, especially those generated by domestic and industrial activities
- improved linkages between educational programs offered and the needs of the economy



CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR 2: ENHANCE SOCIAL COHESION AND RESILIENCE

The general aim will be to build a society in which individuals feel a sense of belonging, a society that is inclusive and that provides opportunity for social mobility. Toward this end, the country will seek to:

- reduce at least by half the proportion of people living in poverty by 2030
- achieve more equitable income distribution
- reduce homicides to under 10 per 100,000 inhabitants annually (as a minimum target)
- provide universal access to basic and early childhood education
- provide universal access to health care
- maintain or raise life expectancy beyond the current level of 74 years
- reduce the incidence of morbidity and mortality resulting from a selected set of ailments

Focus will be placed on targeted actions to attain CSF 2, including:

- studying mechanisms for health care financing
- educating and influencing young people to change eating habits for improved nutrition
- monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of recently launched social protection initiatives and the social assistance framework in general; and reviewing the social protection framework
- strengthening of community-driven approaches for the implementation of livelihood programs
- developing strategies that could simultaneously promote greater labor productivity and better worker compensation



CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR 3: SUSTAINED OR IMPROVED HEALTH OF NATURAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL ASSETS

The intrinsic value of this factor is to ensure the following:

- maintenance of the right balance of the use of the country's assets in the furtherance of its economic growth
- recognition that the varied assets of Belize contribute to a sense of national identity and their unique characteristics contribute to the profile of Belize in the international community
- acknowledgment and appreciation that the country's assets also have extraordinary economic and social importance and these must be safeguarded to sustain the promise of future economic growth

Milestones that would demonstrate progress towards the achievement of CSF 3 are:

- an implemented National Land Use Policy and Integrated Planning Framework
- completion of a Water Master Plan, a National Ground Water and Surface Water Assessment and a Water Vulnerability Profile
- implementation of sustainable forest management, including protected areas management as a tool to ensure watershed protection for water and food security
- continued implementation of the solid waste management initiative
- continued mainstreaming of climate change considerations into national development planning
- implementation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZMP), including the development of a marine spatial plan
- establishment of the National Protected Areas System and its related Policies and Plans of Action
- implementation of the National Environmental Policy and Strategy 2014-2024; and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
- completion and implementation of other critical policies, plans and projects in the area of forests, fisheries, oil spill contingency, land-based and marine pollution, readiness for the Green Climate Fund, sustainable livelihoods, and technology for climate change mitigation and adaptation



CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR 4: ENHANCE GOVERNANCE AND CITIZEN SECURITY

Attaining this success factor will involve:

- reducing the inefficient use of government resources, and strengthening national procurement system, while generally improving public sector management, including budgeting practices, hiring practices, and accountability mechanisms
- pursuing a philosophy of “engaged governance” by setting up institutional arrangements that link citizens and representative organizations more directly to the decision-making process of the state to positively impact their social and economic lives
- fostering a respect for individuals’ human rights
- promoting respect by citizens and visitors for the rule of law
- ensuring the proper administration of justice

Actions that will contribute to the attainment of CSF 4 include:

- fully implemented program budgeting
- pursuit of budget efficiencies and synergies
- continued implementation of other public finance reform initiatives
- strengthened and broadened representation on the Economic Development Council (EDC)
- provision of adequate basic equipment and training to law enforcement officials to conduct surveillance



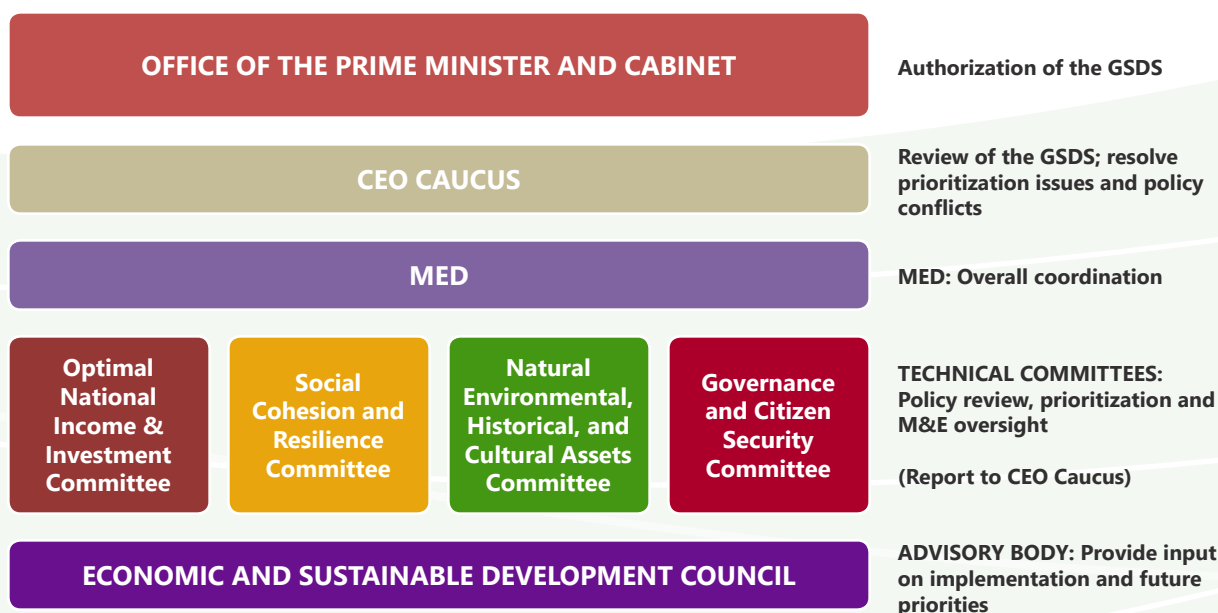
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR GSDS

Features of the implementation plan:

- the plan combines elements of a medium-term development strategy with elements of an overarching long-term plan;
- some prioritized actions are expected to be completed during planning period (2016-2019); other elements will stretch over several planning cycles;
- it will require enhanced levels of cooperation and collaboration among all ministries and statutory agencies, as well as non-governmental stakeholders;
- it will require continuous improvement and enhancement in the capacities and skills of governmental organizations as well as civil servants who work with them; and
- its success is dependent on availability of financial and human resources; if these are insufficient then efforts will be sequenced based on priority.

Coordination of the implementation will be ensured through the following structure:

- the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet will approve and authorize the GSDS
- the Ministry of Economic Development will coordinate the implementation of the GSDS, in line with its overall planning function
- the CEO Caucus will have general oversight on implementation and policy advice
- a set of inter-ministerial Technical Committees will support the process and report to the CEO Caucus
- work groups called “Working Tables” chaired by representatives of the Statistical Institute of Belize will develop and maintain adequate data to support the process; these groups will report to the Technical Committees



GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GROUND FLOOR, SIR EDNEY CAIN BUILDING, BELMOPAN CITY

PHONE NO: (501) 822-2526-2527

