

REVISED

Connecting healthy ocean resources to a profitable and sustainable blue economy

Saint Lucia's ocean and coastal resources are financial assets, contributing millions of dollars to our economy every year. Damaging those resources could threaten our economic development and sustainability. Protection and sustainable use of these spaces and their biodiversity are undeniably essential for our well-being and our future.

One of the first steps to understanding the value of our blue economy is understanding what we have, what we're using, and what potential those resources hold if used wisely.

Adopting and investing in a nature-based and nature-positive approach to our island's economic development means a more sustainable, robust economy, secure and profitable livelihoods, and a restored and protected natural environment - something that's absolutely critical in this climate changing world.

With financial support from the Food and Agriculture Organization and through the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism's cross-country BE-CLME+ Project, the Government of Saint Lucia is exploring its blue economy potential through cross-sectoral partnerships and identifying opportunities for collaboration, growth and development. By adopting a data-driven approach to participatory marine spatial planning, we're working with partners and communities to bridge the data gap, allowing us to make informed decisions about Saint Lucia's blue economy.

Follow us to learn more about how our ocean assets and a sustainable blue economy benefits all of us.

Tagline: Saint Lucia's Blue Economy: Ocean Resources for a Sustainable Future

First Post (with above caption)



Healthy coral reefs protect our coastlines and our homes, serving as the first line of defence against storms and strong wave action.

Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
gef
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
IMPLETING OUR PROMISE

Saint Lucia's Blue Economy: Ocean Resources for a Sustainable Future

Caption: Connecting healthy ocean resources to a profitable and sustainable blue economy

Our mangrove systems safeguard us against powerful wave action and storm surges, reduce erosion, and mitigate flooding while still providing critical habitat for some of our most important commercial fish species during the earliest stages of their lives. They're nature's natural breakwaters and nursery grounds.

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**Saint Lucia's Blue Economy:
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With over three thousand Saint Lucian fishers operating in our nearshore waters, they're supporting their families and communities, bringing in much-needed income and food. Sustainably managing our nearshore fisheries resources is essential to maintaining livelihoods and our marine biodiversity.

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Our nearshore waters support the livelihoods of thousands of small-scale fishers as well as our indigenous communities.

iStock
Credit: Rosley Majid

**Saint Lucia's Blue Economy:
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CNF DEVELOPMENT BANK OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

CRFM Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism

gef GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

GOVERNMENT OF SAINT LUCIA

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Fish is one of the healthiest foods we can eat. Full of protein, vitamins, nutrients, and heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids, eating fish nourishes our bodies and our brains. Adopting sustainable harvesting practices will allow generations to come to benefit from this important food source the same way we do today.

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Fisheries play an important role as provider of heart-healthy food and a critical source of high-quality proteins.

Photo by Heather Cowper



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Sea moss farming has been practiced in Saint Lucia’s nearshore waters for more than forty years. But with increased pressure on nearshore fisheries and combined with pandemic-induced economic hardship, the industry has been expanding, supplying both local and international markets and boasting an export market value of US\$7 million every year. Farming of sea moss takes place within some of our most fragile environments – in the same areas as our coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangrove forests. Ensuring that this undeniably important industry doesn’t negatively impact the habitats on which they also rely is something we’re working on with our community and international partners. Sustainable mariculture is possible through careful planning, monitoring, and community collaboration.

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Our sea moss is the cornerstone of a growing mariculture sector - locally harvested and sold around the world as a nutrient-packed superfood.



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The Government of Saint Lucia is committed to sustainably expanding, diversifying and modernizing Saint Lucia’s fishery industry. This involves adopting ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management as well as understanding the state of underexploited fish stocks to support development of underutilised fisheries, including pelagic fish in our deeper waters.

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The rapidly growing eco-tourism industry is one of the most important sectors of the international tourism industry, making up 7 percent of the world tourism market. In Saint Lucia, visitors spend almost \$4 million every year to see our whales and dolphins in their natural environment – in our bays and lagoons and our open ocean. We also know that a sustainable eco-tourism sector can only thrive in a well-managed, healthy and safe marine environment. Creating these spaces is one of our priorities and something we've integrated into our National Ocean Policy.

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DEVELOPMENT BANK OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations** **CRFM** **Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism** **gef** **GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY** **IMPARTING TO NEW PLACES** **Saint Lucia's Blue Economy: Ocean Resources for a Sustainable Future**

OR



\$3.8 million is spent by tourists on whale and dolphin tours annually.



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Less than a kilometre offshore, Saint Lucia's nearshore waters drop off into deep and cool waters that provide the perfect habitat for a range of large fish species – the type that draw thousands of visitors to our shores. Saint Lucia has emerged as one of the top destinations in the Caribbean for catch and release sportfishing, bringing in millions of dollars every year and becoming an important – and sustainable – contributor to our national economy.

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Saint Lucia is surrounded by clear, turquoise waters, lined by shallow patch reefs and seagrass beds that are some of the healthiest in the Caribbean. These nearshore habitats provide the perfect habitat for some of the island's most charismatic species, including sea turtles and stingrays, and draw tens of thousands of visitors every year just to see and experience Saint Lucia's stunning marine life up close and personal.

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Our of all of Saint Lucia’s tourism activities and opportunities, cruise ships arguably bring in the largest number of visitors, with well over half a million visitors arriving on our shores through cruise ports. And we have so much to offer: from our culture and indigenous roots, to our friendly people and delicious food, and our outstanding natural beauty that can take your breath away. But it’s all so carefully balanced and we need to always keep in mind how we can continue to grow and flourish and welcome our visitors without compromising what it is we have to offer. Planning our blue economy means considering the current and future carrying capacity of our coastal and marine environment and understanding the impacts of existing activities – including cruise ship tourism.

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The Atlantic Rally for Cruisers is an annual event that attracts hundreds of sail boats and sailing enthusiasts on a journey that takes them across the Atlantic from Gran Canaria to Saint Lucia. It's not just a boat race, but rather an experience of a lifetime that's showcases the hospitality and beauty of Saint Lucia and that offers yet another opportunity for the island to distinguish itself from other neighbouring Caribbean islands. While it may just be one part of our marine tourism economy, it's an important one that highlights St Lucia as a premier international sailing destination.

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