



## TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy for the development of the baseline  
for the SARSEA Project

## I. Background information

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<b>Job title</b>	Development of the Baseline for SARSEA Project Indicators.
<b>Country/region</b>	Remote working with possible travel to the main countries of intervention (Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines).
<b>Contract type</b>	Beaded expertise
<b>Desired start date</b>	05/01/2026
<b>Max. duration of the mission</b>	12 weeks
<b>Project reference</b>	23DDU0C328

Since 2011, the massive and recurrent influx of pelagic sargassum across the Caribbean has generated significant economic, environmental, and public health impacts. Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face increasing challenges related to monitoring, collection, storage, disposal, and valorisation of sargassum, while attempting to minimise its socio-economic and ecological consequences.

Limited coordination mechanisms, fragmented management approaches, data gaps, and insufficient scientific cooperation highlight the need for regional strategies to strengthen institutional, technical, and community resilience to sargassum-related disruptions.

The SARSEA project, funded by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and implemented by Expertise France, responds to this need by promoting integrated, ecosystem-based, regional solutions and multi-stakeholder cooperation.

## II. Project Description

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### A. Expertise France

Expertise France is the public agency for the design and implementation of international technical cooperation. It operates in four main thematic areas:

- Democratic, economic and financial governance
- Peace, stability and security
- Climate, biodiversity and sustainable development
- Health and human development

In the Caribbean, the agency implements regional programmes focused on climate resilience, biodiversity protection, and sustainable development. Notable initiatives include:

- Euroclima Caribbean: Supporting green transition and biodiversity protection.
- RESEMBID: Strengthening resilience, sustainable energy and marine biodiversity.
- Green Overseas: Supporting energy transition and climate resilience in overseas territories.

The SARSEA, Sargassum regional strategies for ecosystem-based actions, project is implemented within this cooperation framework.

## B. Description of the SARSEA Project

The general objective of the SARSEA project is to minimize and limit the negative impacts of stranded sargassum on local economies, coastal communities and marine ecosystems.

To achieve this, the project comprises three main components and one cross-cutting gender outcome:

### Component 1. Strengthening regional cooperation

This component aims to facilitate knowledge exchange and capitalization of experiences among public, private, scientific and community actors on:

- prediction and monitoring of sargassum influxes,
- collection and pre-treatment methods,
- characterization, transport, storage,
- valorization into sustainable products.

### Component 2. Supporting operationalization in four Caribbean SIDS

Implemented in partnership with the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission, this component focuses on:

- strengthening institutional and technical capacities,
- developing early warning mechanisms,
- equipping and training operational teams,
- supporting private actors in structuring value chains,
- launching a Call for Projects for business models in the four targeted countries.

### Component 3. Strengthening regional scientific cooperation

Activities include:

- a Collective Scientific Expertise led by Institute of Research and Development (IRD),
- a Call for Research Projects for universities, laboratories and research hubs,
- dissemination and communication of scientific evidence to decision-makers.

### Cross-cutting outcome: Gender mainstreaming

Ensuring gender-responsive approaches in the management, operationalization and valorization of sargassum.

Main implementing partners include:

- **OECS Commission** (public policy, governance, and technical capacity strengthening)
- **Private and public-private actors** (via a Call for Projects)
- **Institute of Research and Development (IRD) and regional research centers** (scientific knowledge generation)

## C. Objective of the assignment

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### 1. Overall Objective

SARSEA seeks to engage a consultant to undertake the baseline study for the SARSEA project, including the OECS grant component.

The purpose of this baseline study is to collect, verify and document baseline values for all indicators included in the SARSEA logframe before project implementation begins (the full list of indicators to be informed by the baseline is provided in Annex 1). This baseline analysis will provide a robust, comparable and comprehensive reference point for future monitoring, evaluation and learning activities.

### 2. Specific Objectives

More specifically, the consultant will:

1. Review SARSEA strategic and MEAL documentation (Logframe, Theory of Change, MEAL plan, Indicator Reference Sheets).
2. Conduct national-level assessments in the four beneficiary countries: Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and the Commonwealth of Dominica.
3. Collect, verify and triangulate quantitative and qualitative data through field missions, interviews and desk review.
4. Collect qualitative testimonies, short case studies or stakeholder portraits that illustrate the current situation and help contextualise quantitative baseline values. These stories will support future communication, learning and comparison at mid-term and end-line.
5. Establish baseline values for all indicators at national and regional levels following the definitions and methodologies specified in the Indicator Reference Sheets.
6. Identify measurement constraints, risks and data gaps, and propose mitigation measures or methodological recommendations.
7. Develop a structured and well-documented baseline indicator database compliant with Expertise France and AFD MEAL standards, including metadata and data quality notes.

In addition, the baseline study will also include the collection of **non-indicator qualitative information** to describe the prevailing conditions in the region and in each of the four beneficiary countries regarding Sargassum management and valorisation. This broader contextual information should help interpret the baseline values, refine indicator definitions where necessary and strengthen the overall MEAL framework.

The consultant must ensure that all baseline data are disaggregated, where relevant and feasible, by:

- country or island,
- sex (male, female),
- and type of stakeholder (e.g. national public institutions, private sector firms, civil society organisations, local communities, academic or research stakeholders, media, etc.).

## D. Scope of work

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The consultant will be responsible for carrying out a comprehensive baseline study covering the four beneficiary countries, and region-level components. The scope of work includes, but is not limited to, the following tasks:

### 1. Inception Phase

- Review of project documentation:
  - Analyse all SARSEA project design documents and OECS grant documentation,
  - Review national-level strategies, policies, reports and research related to Sargassum management and coastal ecosystem governance,
  - Identify the availability, quality and gaps in existing secondary data.
- Refinement of methodology and data-collection tools
- Stakeholder mapping and engagement:
  - Map key national and regional stakeholders involved in Sargassum monitoring, collection, management, valorization, environmental protection, and disaster risk management,
  - Prepare stakeholder engagement plan for data collection,
  - Coordinate with national authorities and local partners to validate the data collection schedule.
- Detailed workplan and schedule
- Validation of the inception report by Expertise France and OECS

### 2. Data Collection in the Four Countries

- Field missions in the four beneficiary countries:
  - Conduct on-site visits to relevant ministries, agencies, coastal zones, community groups and operational sites,
  - Hold interviews and focus group discussions if relevant with public authorities, private sector actors, civil society organisations, academia and other stakeholders.
- Review of national protocols, systems, and institutional capacities
- Collect qualitative information describing the current status of Sargassum strandings, existing management and response systems, coordination mechanisms, valorisation initiatives, environmental, social and economic impacts.
- Document how each Member State currently manages Sargassum operationally, institutionally and financially.
- Identification of data limitations and country-specific challenges.

### 3. Analysis and Baseline Establishment

- Validate data accuracy through triangulation
- Calculation and justification of indicator values
- Comparative analysis across the four SIDS
- Identification of common trends and regional gaps

## 4. Reporting and Consolidation

- Drafting of four national baseline reports
- Consolidated regional analysis
- Production of validated structured indicator database (Excel) including metadata, data sources, methods and data quality notes.
- Presentation of findings to EF, OECS and AFD

## E. Expected deliverables

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The consultant will provide the following deliverables:

Deliverable	Content	Indicative dates
<b>Inception report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Refined methodology</li><li>▪ Data collection tools and interview guides</li><li>▪ Detailed workplan and mission schedule</li><li>▪ Preliminary stakeholder mapping</li><li>▪ List of required documents and data</li></ul>	Mid of January 2026
<b>Baseline database</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Baseline values for all indicators</li><li>▪ Metadata (definitions, units, sources, dates, methods)</li><li>▪ Data quality notes</li><li>▪ Disaggregated datasets</li><li>▪ Log of missing or unverifiable data</li></ul>	Mid of February 2026
<b>Four national baseline reports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Preliminary findings and indicator tables</li><li>▪ Contextual analysis</li><li>▪ Gaps, risks and limitations</li><li>▪ Recommendations for strengthening the MEAL framework for outputs and outcomes at national level</li></ul>	Mid of march 2026
<b>Consolidated regional baseline report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Preliminary findings and indicator tables</li><li>▪ Contextual analysis and trends</li><li>▪ Gaps, risks and limitations</li><li>▪ Recommendations for strengthening the MEAL framework for regional dimension outputs and outcomes</li></ul>	End of March 2026
<b>Validation workshop</b>	Presentation of key findings to Expertise France OECS and national partners	End of march 2026
<b>Final baseline reports</b>	Integration of comments from stakeholders Annexes	End of march 2026

## F. Consultant profile

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### Academic Qualifications

- Master's degree or higher in environmental sciences, climate change, coastal management, MEAL, public policy or related fields.

### Professional Experience

- Minimum 10 years of relevant professional experience in environmental or coastal ecosystem management (Sargassum experience is an asset),

- Proven experience in conducting baseline studies, evaluations, environmental assessments or institutional diagnostics,
- Strong analytical (qualitative and quantitative) skills,
- Demonstrated experience in conducting fieldwork in the Caribbean region,
- Knowledge of AFD or Expertise France MEAL standards is an asset,
- Full command of English (written and oral); knowledge of French is an asset.

## Soft Skills

- Strong coordination and facilitation abilities,
- Capacity to work independently across multiple countries,
- Excellent communication skills.

## G. Duration and workplan

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Estimated total duration: 12 weeks, including:

- Inception Phase: 2 weeks
- Data Collection: 4 weeks
- Analysis and Reporting: 4 weeks
- Validation and Revisions: 2 weeks

## H. Supervision and coordination

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The Consultant will work under the supervision of:

- The SARSEA Project MEAL Expert (Expertise France) – main technical focal point

Final validation of deliverables will be ensured by Expertise France and AFD.

## I. Budget and payment terms

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The financial proposal should include:

- Consultant fees
- Travel costs and per diem
- National sessions/workshops
- Data collection and processing costs
- Production and editing of reports

All costs must comply with Expertise France's financial standards. Payments will be released upon acceptance of deliverables.

## J. Quality assurance requirements

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The Consultant must ensure:

- Rigorous and transparent methodology
- Data reliability and triangulation
- Alignment with OECD-DAC criteria
- Integration of Expertise France MEAL standards

- Gender-sensitive and ethical approaches
- Data protection and confidentiality

## K. Application procedure

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Applicants must submit on GEX:

- CV
- Motivation letter
- Technical offer (maximum 4 pages): approach, methodology and workplan
- Financial offer detailing daily fees and estimated costs

Location: Caribbean + remote work





## Annex 1 – List of SARSEA logframe indicators to be informed by baseline study

Logframe	Associated result	Title of indicator
<b>EF global logframe</b>		
<b>Overall objective</b>	The negative impacts of sargassum strandings on the quality of life of coastal communities, local economies, and ecosystems are limited and minimized.	% of coastal areas affected by sargassum strandings that have effective mitigation and adaptation measures in place to minimize economic, environmental, and social impacts.
		Number of Caribbean states and islands whose economies are less affected by sargassum by the end of the project.
<b>SO 1:</b>	States affected by sargassum collaborate on planning and management approaches, contributing to increased international awareness of this issue.	Number of coordinated multi-country actions on sargassum discussed among local or national stakeholders following regional and international events on climate, oceans, and biodiversity.
		Number of Caribbean states and islands actively participating in a coordinated multi-country alert system.
<b>Output 1.1</b>	Regional public and private stakeholders share their experiences and good practices in sargassum management, particularly in detection and alert systems.	Number of participants in the regional thematic workshops organized by the project (disaggregated by sex and type of stakeholder).
		% of decision-makers participating in regional workshops who report implementing new public policy practices based on knowledge sharing and the exchange of good practices.
		% of completion of the steps required to make the coordinated alert system operational.
<b>Output 1.2</b>	The sargassum issue is discussed at the international level within the framework of negotiations on climate, oceans, and biodiversity.	Number of interventions on the sargassum issue made by representatives of Caribbean states and islands participating in regional and international events supported by the project.
<b>SO 2</b>	The small island states of the Caribbean (Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) implement integrated operations for the management and valorization of sargassum.	Number of small island states with effective and sustainable sargassum management in line with their respective roadmaps.

		Percentage of sargassum collected before decomposition or shore stranding
		Proportion of supported project promoters who have developed viable business models for sargassum valorization that incorporate gender considerations.
		% of women working in recipient organizations who have improved their socio-economic conditions.
		Revenue generated by the supported organizations involved in sargassum valorization.
<b>Output 2.1</b>	Sargassum management operations are better planned and organized through the establishment of alert and adaptation mechanisms for coastal communities, the activation of an operational chain of actors for collection and storage activities, and the integration of environmental and social risk considerations	Number of national roadmaps and action plans on sargassum that incorporate social inclusion and gender considerations, validated and implemented.
		Number of public and private stakeholders benefiting from capacity building on sargassum management (disaggregated by sex and type of stakeholder).
		Number of early warnings triggered by the alert system that led to concrete preventive actions among the population.
<b>Output 2.2</b>	Private actors and coastal communities, including women's organizations, are equipped, trained, and supported in structuring sargassum valorization value chains.	Number of entities (businesses, CSOs, cooperatives) supported and strengthened by the project (disaggregated by entities owned/led by women or men).
		Share of stranded sargassum valorized by project promoters in accordance with environmental and social standards.
<b>SO 3</b>	Regional scientific cooperation strengthens the overall understanding of the sargassum phenomenon and supports the development of research-informed public policies.	Number of Caribbean research institutes contributing to sargassum research efforts.
		% of informed Caribbean policymakers who integrate the knowledge gained into their public policies.
<b>Output 3.1</b>	Existing scientific knowledge is synthesized and made available to decision-makers.	Number of policy briefs, normative documents, best practice guides, capitalization reports, and scientific studies on sargassum produced that include sex-disaggregated data.
		Number of researchers participating in scientific network meetings.

		Number of policymakers sensitized to research findings (disaggregated by sex).
<b>Output 3.2</b>	Research and knowledge production are supported, including community-based participatory science, to improve understanding of the phenomenon and its multiple impacts.	Number of research projects funded.
		Number of scientific articles published as a result of the funded research projects.
<b>OECS logframe</b>		
<b>SO</b>	Member States (Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint-Vincent and the Grenadines and Commonwealth of Dominica) operate evidence-based Sargassum management systems that are functional at national level and integrated within regional coordination mechanisms	Number of tonnes of Sargassum collected and directed to nationally chosen pathways (valorisation or safe disposal) in each of the 4 MS.
		Number of Member States that have formally adopted a costed, multi-year National Sargassum Management Strategy
		Number of Member States actively participating in the regional Sargassum coordination mechanism (e.g., data sharing, joint protocols, use of early warning systems, joint responses, etc.)
<b>Output 1</b>	Multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms for Sargassum management are established and functional in each Member State	Number of National Sargassum Management Strategy developed or revised by the project.
		Number of Member States with TORs, Standard Operating procedures (SOPs) and national action plan.
		Average number of stakeholder groups participating regularly in national Sargassum coordination meetings
Output 2	Public and private stakeholders co-construct updated national Sargassum management plans	Number of public and private stakeholders participating in the co-construction process in each Member State.
		Number of Member States with an updated national Sargassum management plan.
		Number of Member States with a monitoring mechanism established for the national Sargassum action plan.
Output 3	Key data for Sargassum monitoring and forecasting are collected, made available and used in each MS.	Number of Member State with an assessed and documented national data collection system
		% of required monitoring and forecasting equipment delivered to Member States, based on the needs assessment

		Number of stakeholders trained on technological equipment for surveillance/monitoring and forecasting use & maintenance
		% of stakeholders who use information to take decisions pertaining to sargassum management.
		Existence of a validated regional system for Sargassum data collection, consolidation and processing
Output 4	Relevant stakeholders are equipped and trained to structure the sargassum value chain	% of identified capacity needs addressed through targeted training for relevant stakeholders in the four Member States.
		Number of stakeholders trained on technical aspects of the sargassum value chain, including environmental and social risk mitigation.
		% of required equipment for the sargassum value chain delivered to Member States, based on identified needs.
		Number of stakeholders trained on the use, operation and maintenance of the equipment provided.
		% of stakeholders reporting improved skills or confidence in structuring the sargassum value chain after training
		Number of national workshops delivered on business development for sargassum valorisation ventures, including PPP opportunities.
Output 5	Member states collaborate and contribute to the OECS regional strategy for Sargassum management.	Number of technical inputs or recommendations provided by Member States during the OECS regional strategy for Sargassum management process.
		Number of Member States participating in the regional workshop on the action plan and implementation mechanism.
		Number of communication products produced and used to disseminate the OECS regional strategy (e.g., briefs, infographics, summaries, videos).