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1. BACKGROUND

After the dismantling of the former Netherlands Antilles, October 10, 2010 (10/10/10), the former island territory of Sint Maarten emerged into a constituent country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The structure of the Kingdom of the Netherlands devolves a fair amount of authority to the local governments guided under the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Accordingly, the government of Sint Maarten has since embarked on preparing the systems, institutions and administrators to meet the needs of the citizens. The conception of a National Development Plan (NDP) was one of the strategies envisaged to establish the long-term development directives for the country, to help to clearly define the type of country the population desires as well as the available resources that would allow the government to fulfil the goals within a given period.

The Department of Interior Affairs and Kingdom Relations (BAK1) of the Ministry of General Affairs, in cooperation with the UNDP, initiated and guided the process to formulate a National Development Plan, founded on an all-inclusive and participatory approach.

The all-inclusive2 approach consisted of:

A. Preparation of medium-term sector plans;
B. A series of stakeholder consultations;
C. A detailed Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis;
D. Six community based dialogue sessions;
E. Finalization of a medium-term Sustainable Community Development Country Action Plan;
F. An alignment exercise with the international community’s draft Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
G. Preparation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Acceleration Framework (MAF);
H. Ongoing work on data collection through the SintMaartenInfo data tool.

1 Dutch acronym
2 The private sector, civil society organisations (CSOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), youth groups, women’s groups, the elderly, among others
Each of the abovementioned activities and/or documents provided baseline information for the preparation of a Draft NDP. The formulation of the NDP document, intended to “change the way of working”, required an institutional restructuring with effective and systematic coordination at the centre of the implementation plan. What was absent however was a fiscal framework that linked medium term sector programs to a multi annual fiscal budget. The multi annual budget, under a national plan environment, would become the resource framework that prioritizes and sequences national development goals.

The aforementioned financial and fiscal constraints lead BAK to focus on the formulation, of a VISION (NDV) instead of a PLAN (NDP).

In 2017, a Baseline study was conducted and finalized, and served as a point of departure in formulating a National Development Vision. Working towards a development vision required first having good insight into where Sint Maarten stood at that point in time, in terms of its development and the challenges being faced, to be in a position to steer the Country in the best future direction.

With the passing of hurricane Irma, the need to incorporate and underline the aspect of “resilience” to a higher degree, lead to BAK to revisit the NDV document. BAK, in further recognizing the importance of finalizing the NDV closure roadmap (2018-2020), commissioned a consultant to complete, adapt and adopt, a National Development Vision (NDV) for Sint Maarten. The consultant would be required to use all the aforementioned outcomes derived from the many in-depth consultations conducted and documentations compiled and prepared on the subject matter of national development. A series of meetings/sessions/workshops were also to be conducted with public and private stakeholders to build consensus on the thematic content for the final NDV and incorporate all ongoing development issues on both public and private level, as it relates to long-term national development of Sint Maarten.

The approach to the assignment, although facing ongoing challenges, remained on track and it was projected that a draft NDV would be discussed and fine-tuned in a High-Level Retreat with Key organizations, to reach a consensus on the goals and development themes in the month of April of 2020. Subsequently, in the month of May, it was intended to “Present to the Council of Ministers Vision Sint Maarten 2030 as the Strategic Road Map to guide the
country to achieve its goals of sustainable development.” The aforementioned projected timeline came to a complete standstill with the current COVID-19 Pandemic, paralyzing all ongoing concerns.

However, in view of the current situation, the importance of having a national long-term development philosophy and direction and development policies and strategies to adequately respond to changes in the domestic socio-economic conditions as well as market conditions in the regional and world economy is more than ever imperative.

This draft SINT MAARTEN VISION 2030, National Development Vision 2020 – 2030 (NDV 2030), has thus been prepared and presented to the Council of Ministers, as a long-term Vision will serve as the guide for their 4-year Government Programs (GP), in prioritizing yearly programs/projects within their financial range (Annual budget). The draft allows Government to align, adapt and adjust their short- and medium-term goals and intervention with the long-term vision (or vice versa).

The Vision document will also curb the effects of limited or no collaboration among government ministries and institutions. Currently, Government ministries and departments largely carry out their mandates without adopting a holistic approach to development. This lack of Government cohesion, perpetuated by the lack of a comprehensive national development framework, can lead to undesired outcomes for development on the island. This vision document developed through active collaboration and participation by all stakeholders within and outside of government is of immense value to the country in the allocation of its scarce resources. The Vision will support the taking of realistic and achievable decisions within a thematic framework.

In addition, the private sector looks for a stable environment in which to invest securely and profitably. The NDV 2030 provides the evidence, by showing government’s commitment, for the private sector to make such decisions. The NDV 2030 also allows the private sector to participate more freely in achieving the shared formulated vision for their country Sint Maarten, in which they can see their interest being represented and can even identify how they can contribute to the success of the annual GPs within the bigger picture of “the where” Sint Maarten is heading.
Finally yet importantly, the long-term vision document allows Government simultaneously to conduct focused dialogues with donor funding agencies in advance and gives them more leverage on presenting their medium-term plans of their own priorities within “the bigger picture” of Sint Maarten’s long-term developments.

It should be noted that once things “return to normal” this NDV 2030 will still be presented to the private sector stakeholders and key NGOs. The objective is not solely for vetting purposes, but also to define together with Government a way forward in achieving the vision, goals and anticipations.

2. INTRODUCTION

Sint Maarten, in the aftermath of the passing of the 2017 devastating hurricanes, is still not fully recovered from the extreme damage caused to the infrastructure and livelihood of its people. In addition, the paralyzing effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the economy locally and globally has increased the threat on standard of living and the way of life.

According to the Executive Director of the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) in Washington, DC, “Reports related to the COVID-19 crisis are still largely focused on the toll of the virus and short-term responses to alleviate the human and economic suffering. Given the many unknowns about the pandemic, opinions vary wildly about the long-term medical implications, related solutions, and what will be needed to restore economies slowly and safely. COVID-19 is changing the business environment in practically every country, with most sectors in some form of crisis amid widespread fears of a prolonged economic downturn”.

The importance of a national long-term development philosophy and direction and development policies and strategies to adequately respond to changes in the domestic socio-economic conditions as well as market conditions in the regional and world economy and adapt to changes, is more than ever imperative.

The NDV 2030 aims to guide the development process taking into consideration the current and future needs of all our citizens. As the country’s vision and strategic framework for Sint Maarten’s development to 2030 is outlined and the key development themes and visionary goals defined, current and future Governing Programs will continue to function as multi-annual plans, addressing the more immediate, short-term strategic interventions, but at the
same time laying the groundwork to achieve the long-term National Development Vision of Sint Maarten.

The NDV 2030 incorporates the principles and objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), proposing the taking of bold steps by all segments of society, towards making the socio-economic transformations that are needed to overcome the many developmental and environmental challenges.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF SINT MAARTEN’S COUNTRY VISION

Sint Maarten’s NDV 2030 is founded on the goals of the Constitution of Sint Maarten. The Country Vision therefore builds on a people that,

- “believe in the principle of democracy, the rule of law, the principle of the segregation of powers, the dignity and value of the individual, the entitlement of all persons to the fundamental rights and freedoms”;
- “resolve to work together, with our partners in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, with our neighbors in French Saint Martin and with all peoples of the world on the basis of freedom, equality, peaceful co-existence and international solidarity”;
- “resolve to provide for the continuing preservation of nature and the environment”.

The guiding principle that conforms to those goals, as well as providing a framework for the expression of the Country Vision, is Economic Resilience. This encompasses the ability to prepare for and adapt to changing conditions and withstand and recover rapidly from disruptions, deliberate attacks, accidents, or naturally occurring threats or incidents. Incorporating Economic Resilience into the Country vision involves directly focusing on those features of the economy that expose the country to risk and taking concerted action through policy induced measures to reduce those risks and thus allowing the country to better able to pursue its development aspirations in the event of future disasters and/or crises.

In Sint Maarten’s context, the measures that need to be addressed to reduce risk and build resilience are e.g.:

1. Good political governance, which is essential for the economic and social system to function through institutions that manage the country’s affairs.

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3 Copy of an English translation of the Dutch source text is found in Appendix I
2. Macroeconomic stability, which is manifested by fiscal sustainability, thus providing better coping mechanisms in the event of disasters.
3. Market flexibility that enables the market to quickly adjust and recover in the event of external shocks.
4. Social development and cohesion, which underpins stability through addressing inequities and reducing the risk of civil unrest.
5. Environment governance, which acknowledges the environment as a public good that, requires management to avoid public harm and generate stability.

4. DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS OF SINT MAARTEN’S FUTURE – OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

There is no single methodological approach for measuring resilience. Concrete analysis and recommendations are best developed within specific policy areas. This chapter addresses resilience across four broad dimensions, covering economic, social, institutional and environmental issues. Each of these dimensions is relevant to secure improvements in the quality of life to which this Vision aspires. In addition to achieving an improved quality of life within aforementioned dimensions, eight key challenges/development themes need to be addressed to withstand and recover from shock (resilience).
4.1. Building a governance organization and the need for fiscal sustainability

Development theme:
An efficient government organization with a sustainable financial position is a perquisite to unleash its development potential and achieve economic resilience.

The granting of country status in 2010 was more than just gaining autonomy in the conduct of relations within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. It meant making autonomous decisions to build a solid foundation to unleash the full potential of what autonomous status could bring to Sint Maarten. That meant having to create a new structure and organization of government, with policy, implementation, monitoring and accountability as core duties and achieving financial independence and sustainability. Achieving the aforementioned is the first development priority and a prerequisite to building Economic Resilience.

4.2. Reliance on leisure tourism and the need to economically diversify

Development theme:
Boosting economic growth through greater economic diversification and investment.

The economy of Sint Maarten centers on leisure tourism with nearly 85% of the labor force engaged in that sector. In addition, tourism represents about 80% of Sint Maarten’s GDP. Although this focus on tourism has brought rewards, it also poses significant risk. The sustainability of this form of tourism relies on factors, which are beyond Sint Maarten’s control.

Therefore, we must look at ways to reduce our vulnerability. The occurrence of shocks to our economy can be reduced through good financial management and by taking steps to diversify our economy from its reliance on leisure tourism and attract investment.

4.3 Addressing the needs of the current generation and the needs of future generations

Development theme:
A commitment to the principle of sustainable development will enable Sint Maarten to meet the needs of the current generation without compromising the needs of future generations.
Sint Maarten’s growth has come at a price. The landscape of Sint Maarten that existed four decades ago is almost unrecognizable today.

Development has destroyed environmental features for which the country was once renowned. Lack of environmental governance and the absence of respect for the fact that the environment is a public good, has significantly contributed to harming the quality of life Sint Maarteners are expected to enjoy. The ability for developers to act independently according to their own self-interest, without regard for the common good and regard for the interest of future generations, will end. Sint Maarten’s development path will in future be guided by the principles of sustainability, through effective environmental management, that will take steps to meet the needs of the current generation, without compromising the needs of future generations.

4.3. **Maintaining social cohesion and multi ethnic diversity of Sint Maarten**

**Development theme:**
Understanding the dynamics that profile Sint Maarten as a multi ethnic society having a common identity is essential to support nation building, social cohesion and peace.

The foundation of Sint Maarten’s society and identity is explained in the context of how the island has developed over the last two hundred years. That history has shaped the values and way of life that today defines the identity of the Sint Maarten people. This distinctive heritage, engrained by notions of friendliness, solidarity, generosity and hospitality, has contributed to the extraordinary development of Sint Maarten in recent times and ensuring a level of social cohesiveness within an ever-growing multi-cultural setting. It is by recognizing and displaying the historical and cultural foundation of Sint Maarten in the context of the country’s development, that all people can engage in the process of inclusion, to support nation building and social cohesion.

4.4. **The import of migrant labor and the need to support the local labor market**

**Development theme:**
The development path must be compatible with the import of migrant labor and that which maximizes the work and career opportunities of locals, especially youth.
The development of Sint Maarten has relied on migrant labor, especially within the construction and service sectors of the economy. In many cases, entry into Sint Maarten to work is to satisfy the self-interest of those who wish to engage migrant labor without incurring any responsibility for the social and economic costs that arise from an expanding migrant labor force. On the one hand, Sint Maarten will need to continue to import migrant labor, but the use of migrants must be according to rules that do not unfairly disadvantage the opportunities for locals, especially for youth to engage the workforce. Sint Maarten’s development will be based on a balance between the need to hire migrant workers and that which maximizes the work and career opportunities for locals.

4.5. Orderly development and uncontrolled expansion

Development theme:
The small size of Sint Maarten means that there must be limits to the extent of spatial development that is desired and possible.

Sint Maarten is a small country covering just 34 km. The population density is one of the highest in the world (ranked 9th) at 1180 persons per km. Space therefore, is at a premium and land use is and will increasingly become more competitive.

Much of Sint Maarten’s development has occurred without enforced rules. Unbridled development has not only spoiled the environment, it has put undue burden on the country’s infrastructure. Sustainable spatial development is essential to resolve competing interests for space and recognizes that not all development is desired or possible.
4.6. Economic growth and environment management

Development theme:
Economic growth and the protection of the environment are two demands neither of which should be sacrificed for the sake of the other.

Unbridled development, spoliation of lagoons and ponds, destruction of terrestrial and marine habitats, pollution of ecosystems, a diminishing biodiversity, and waste pollution is the environmental price Sint Maarten has paid for its development.

This state of affairs has arisen due to a complete lack of environmental governance. Clearly, such an approach to development is outdated and poses serious risk to building a resilient economy. What is needed is an approach where growth does not occur at the expense of social development and the environment.

4.7. A shared prosperity and disparities in wealth distribution

Development theme:
The development of Sint Maarten is a shared task in which the benefits of growth are shared equitably.

Sint Maarten as a small open economy is predominantly dependent on the tourism sector as its main economic pillar and presents itself to the world as a relatively prosperous country. The measure of a country’s wealth is reflected through its per capita GDP. Sint Maarten’s per capita GDP is US$27,525, which ranks the country 38th in the world. Sint Maarten therefore falls within the category of a developed high-income country. Most people in Sint Maarten, however, do not achieve this level of income.

If the benefits of growth are unevenly distributed, as we suspect is the case, then the policy focus should be on both growth and income inequality. Income distribution relates to social justice and perceptions of wealth. If an imbalance exists then it can affect harmony among social groups.

However, with the current global pandemic of the COVID-19 Virus, the economy Sint Maarten is expected to be impacted gravely, for the balance of 2020. For the interim
period, if conditions do not normalize for the balance of the year 2020, the economy is projected to decrease to negative 15.6 percent, which will even create a greater imbalance in the actual distribution of income.

There is, however, no exact information about the distribution of income causing a lack of a realistic understanding of the level and distribution of prosperity. By having this information at hand, government will be better able to discount the consequences of policy for different income groups, thereby ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared equitably.

5. VISION FOR COUNTRY SINT MAARTEN

5.1. Background to the vision

The process of developing the long-term national plans and strategy for implementation, aims by design to ensure a sectoral and thematic approach to development planning and implementation. The NDP adopts a thematic approach to planning, with the objective of tapping into the linkages between and among themes and leveraging the economies of scale gained, and the benefits of pooling resources together to solve joint and cross-sectoral problems.

Sint Maarten’s economy and general national development is based on several sectors. Most of these sectors generate wealth but they also compete for resources to be able to do so. The country’s objectives and priorities in relation to all these sectors in responding to well identified national needs, was analyzed followed by formulating an overall plan in which the role of individual ministries was outlined in a thematic context and contributing to common goals.

Ultimately, the thematic areas/development themes for the first National Vision were further detailed through an extensive consultative process.

5.2. Vision for Country Sint Maarten

The key underlying objective of Sint Maarten’s NDV 2030, is transforming Sint Maarten into a compassionate, strong and decisive country that will be economically resilient
and capable of sustaining its own development and providing an enhanced quality of life and well-being for generations to come.

The words compassionate, strength and decisive have not been chosen at random. They reflect the essence of what it is about in Sint Maarten, a mission for the country.

“Economic development is essential for further social and human development. In view of this, Sint Maarten will maintain and strengthen its position as a prime tourist destination and a commercial, communication and transportation (logistic/transshipment) center in the North Eastern Caribbean”.

“The economic development must continue to benefit the citizens of Sint Maarten, which will then lead to a strong society. Citizens of Sint Maarten will be proud to be a citizen of this country and therefore the country’s policy must be based on improving social development. Human development and compassion are the focal points of the policy”.

“The further development of human potential - Sint Maarten’s sole and most important natural resource - and the building of a compassionate society will be a joint effort. The government will share this responsibility with citizens, social organizations and enterprises in Sint Maarten”.

“The private sector, civil society and the government will work together and take decisive actions to achieve these goals for the benefit of all”.

The strategic course has been reflected in a few words. The basic words strong, compassionate and decisive form the basis for the vision document, in which different components will be specified further. The different components should be seen as a coherent unity. They are inextricably linked and reinforce each other.

This represents the course of Sint Maarten in main lines. In the following chapters, these main lines are specified further.
5.3. Development Themes

To build the best future, the Vision for Country Sint Maarten is built on three pillars/development themes of development that represent its unique competitive advantages.

I. A Compassionate and Vibrant Society.
II. A Strong and Resilient Economy.
III. A Decisive and Ambitious Country.

This first theme, a Compassionate and Vibrant Society, is vital to achieving the Vision and a strong foundation for economic prosperity. Sint Maarten, different than most nations and cultures, is usually referred to as the “melting pot”, as Sint Maarten is home to over 104 nationalities.

The second theme, a Strong and Resilient Economy, provides opportunities for all, by building an education system aligned with market needs and creating economic opportunities for the entrepreneur, the small enterprise as well as the large corporation. Therefore, investment tools will be developed to unlock promising economic sectors, diversify the economy and create job opportunities. It is also envisioned to grow the economy and improve the quality of services, by privatizing some government services, improving the business environment, attracting the finest talents and the best investments globally, and leveraging Sint Maarten’s unique strategic location in the eastern Caribbean, combined with our free port status and multi-language population.

The third theme, a Decisive and Ambitious Country, is built on an effective, transparent, accountable, enabling and high-performing government. This also involves preparing the right environment for the citizens of Sint Maarten, private sector and non-profit sector to take their responsibilities and take the initiative in facing challenges and seizing opportunities.

Development of the perfect strategies to address the opportunities and challenges across the themes of the National Development Vision would hold little effect if key governance and public administration go unresolved. Fundamental systems of checks and balances must be made clear and accountable. Policies to redress transparency in government
dealings and relationships must form the core of human development progress for Sint Maarten. Accountability to the island’s citizens is the key path forward.

5.3.1. A COMPASSIONATE AND VIBRANT SOCIETY

As aforementioned, a key challenge in Sint Maarten being a compassionate and vibrant society is to recognize that the foundation of Sint Maarten society and identity is explained in the context of how the island has developed over the last two hundred years. That history has shaped the values and way of life that today defines the identity of the Sint Maarten people.

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5.3.1.1 With Strong Roots

Sint Maarten’s relatively strong economy is attractive both regionally and internationally—leading to a number of significant changes over the last decades including large-scale immigration. With such a large immigrant population, addressing and managing immigration flows will be central for national development.

It is therefore imperative to understand the dynamics that profile Sint Maarten as a multi ethnic society having a common identity to support nation building, social cohesion and peace. It is by recognizing and showcasing the historical and cultural foundation of Sint Maarten in the context of the country’s development, that all people can engage in the process of inclusion to support nation building and social cohesion.

Nation-building, social cohesion and identity development through education, culture and sports.4

Visionary Goals:

- Foster social cohesion
  - Social inclusion and participation.
  - Social Cohesion within Sint Maarten’s multicultural communities and migrants is adopted as the driver of long-term prosperity and competitiveness.
  - A social cohesive society, a good life in a beautiful environment, protected by caring families and supported by an empowering social and health care system; Cohesive societies are also politically stable and focus on economic growth and business development as it allows everybody in society to share its prosperity.

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4 Ministry of ECYS will ensure inclusive and equitable quality education as a means of providing that there are ample opportunities for the people of Sint Maarten to be life-long learners - SDG 4 Sustainable Development Goal
**Strengthen pride in our national identity**

- The identity of the Sint Maarten people is shaped and clear definition is given to Sint Maarten being the “melting pot” of over 104 nationalities.
- All “Sint Maarteners” are aware of,
  - their national identity,
  - their ancient cultural heritage, and
  - their strengths as a people and the assets of the country.

**Among our 2030 targets**

The sustainable development goals aligned with the aforementioned development, theme and visionary goals is GOAL 10: REduced INEQualities. “To reduce inequalities, policies should be universal in principle, paying attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations”.

**Specific targets** highlighted under this SDG 10 geared towards social cohesion are:

- By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.
- Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.
- Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.
- Another important factor in achieving social cohesion and pride in a national identity is managing the foreign relations of Sint Maarten, especially with countries from which the majority of the migrants come. Such as the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Dominica, Guyana and Saint Lucia. The government will give special attention to strengthening bilateral relations with these countries in particular, and in managing the inclusivity of immigrants with the already existing groups towards a Sint Maarten concept of nationality and vibrant society.
- Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.
5.3.1.2 With Fulfilling Lives

At the heart of our Vision is a society in which all enjoy a good quality of life, a healthy lifestyle and an attractive environment. The happiness and fulfillment of all people is important. This can be achieved through promoting physical, psychological and social well-being.

To realize an optimal living, working and recreational environment for Sint Maarten, the planned policy cycles must incorporate and “promote sustainable development, focused on the themes of: spatial planning and development, environmental management and nature conservation, mitigating the effects of climate change, preservation of tangible cultural heritage and strengthening the ability to control and enforce legislation”.

The three approaches to sustainable development used in defining the current Spatial Development Strategy 2016 - 2026 “Creating a sustainable spatial development for Sint Maarten” are:

a. Economic: maximizing income, while maintaining a constant or increasing stock of capital.

b. Ecological: maintaining resilience and robustness of biological and physical systems.

c. Social: maintaining stability of social and cultural systems.

The latter links with approach, interlinked with “a strengthened health system, comprehensive social care in the home environment and well-being of the people, that embodies no poverty, no unemployment and underemployment, social inclusion and active participation of citizens, no inequality, empowered people and communities, green living and global and regional supported climate change agendas”.

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5 Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure (VROMI)
6 Vision statement VSA for the Vision of the ND/document prepared for SG session with consultant
Visionary goals:

- **Foster a healthy population physically and mentally**
  - Ensure a healthy lifestyle with the citizens, while actively participating in physical activities.
  - Safe, adequate and qualified sports facilities (according to international standards) are available for all residents of Sint Maarten.
  - Form partnership with the private sector to establish additional dedicated facilities and programs for the residents of Sint Maarten.

- **Promote Sint Maarten cultural heritage**
  - The residents are aware of the Sint Maarten tangible heritage and the responsibility to actively participate in the development of the culture as their common foundation for current and future generations.
  - Sint Maarten’s Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) are identified, recorded and safeguarded.

- **Promote environment protection, including addressing climate change, through strengthened environmental governance**
  - Ensure sustainable spatial development/spatial planning and development, environmental management and nature conservation.
  - Preservation of tangible cultural heritage and Protection of areas of natural and cultural heritage value, to preserve our Cultural heritage via zoning plans.
  - Legislation and measures on nature, environment and cultural heritage, strengthened by e.g. implementation of an Environmental Policy Plan.
  - Provision of physical and social infrastructure as a means to lay the foundation for long-term sustainable development e.g. connecting sewage from households to sewage lines going to a cleaning installation.
Among our 2030 targets

The sustainable development goals aligned with the aforementioned development themes and visionary goals are: Sustainable Development Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

Targets

Combined with SDG3, is Sustainable Development Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable with the focus on Target 11.4: Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.

Also aligned are,

✓ Sustainable Development Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts and last but not least.
✓ Sustainable Development Goal 15 (SDG 15): Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

5.3.1.3 With Strong Foundations

Our vision is to promote and reinvigorate social development, involving an empowered and sustainable health and social care system in order to build a strong, productive and vibrant society. It is envisioned to foster a strengthened health system, comprehensive social care in the home environment and well-being of the people, that embodies no poverty, no unemployment and underemployment, social inclusion and active participation of citizens, no inequality, empowered people and communities, green living and global and regional supported climate change agendas”.

Visionary Goals:

- An educated population
  - Technology linked to Education.
  - Offer preparation and training to those unable to find employment, so they can smoothly join the workforce whenever possible.

7 Vision statement VSA for the Vision of the ND/document prepared for SG session with consultant
Ensure that there are ample opportunities for the people of Sint Maarten to be life-long learners (SDG 4).

The engagement of parents in their children’s education is one of the main principles of success.

- Foster care for our families and vulnerable people
- Support Youth development
  - Our youth will thrive and reach their full potential to become active citizens with a sense of shared responsibility.
- Strengthen our Social protection system
  - Sustainable Social security system.
  - The safety and well-being of its citizens secured.
  - An effective social welfare system to cushion the inability of citizens to provide for themselves, particularly in the vulnerable conditions of youth, old age, sickness, disability and unemployment.
  - Modernize the social welfare system to make it more efficient, empowering and just.
  - Collaboration and Integration between health and social care.
  - Enhance the standard and quality of health care services.

**Among our 2030 targets are:**

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned Development Themes and Visionary goals is Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4): “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

As outlined in in **target 4.3 and 4.4. of SDG 4:** Education is linked to “*reduction in youth unemployment *....”*:

**4.3: “By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university”**.

**4.4: “By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship”**.

Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8): “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”, highlights the importance of supporting youth development in building a strong, productive and vibrant society.
1. Our youth will thrive and reach their full potential to become active citizens with a sense of shared responsibility.
2. We will ensure that there are ample opportunities for the people of Sint Maarten to be fully employed.

5.3.2. **A STRONG AND RESILIENT ECONOMY**

The two weightier challenges in St. Maarten being a strong and resilient economy, is its heavy *dependence on tourism, with little to no economic diversity, closely related to the island’s lack of orderly development and uncontrolled expansion.*

Although this focus on tourism has brought rewards, it also poses significant risk. The sustainability of this form of tourism relies on factors, which are beyond Sint Maarten’s control. On the other hand, due to the demands that the Tourism sector brings with it, much of Sint Maarten’s development has occurred without enforced rules. Unbridled development has not only spoiled the environment, it has put undue burden on the country’s infrastructure. Diversification is necessary to **build a strong and resilient economy, whereas sustainable spatial development is essential to resolve competing interests for space and recognizes that not all development is desired or possible.**

**DEVELOPMENT THEME II: A STRONG AND RESILIENT ECONOMY**

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**Visionary goals**

- Develop a capable and motivated work force
- Promote an open and flexible economic/business structure capable of competing in a changing world
- Maximize Investment Competences to attract foreign funds and technologies linked
- Mainstream sustainable development and resilience practices
- Strengthen Sint Maarten as a regional logistic hub
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5.3.2.1 That Rewards Opportunities

The skills and competencies of our youth are one of the most important and cherished assets. To make the most of their potential, we will promote and reinvigorate a culture that rewards hard work and determination, provides opportunities and helps everyone acquire the necessary skills to achieve their personal goals. To this end, we will reinforce the ability of our economy to generate diverse job opportunities.

In addition, boosting our Small Businesses sector is imperative, as Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) are among the most important agents of economic growth; they create jobs, and support innovation.

Visionary Goals:

- Develop a capable and motivated work force
  - Close the gap between the outputs of higher education and the requirements of the job market, by working closely with the private sector to ensure higher education outcomes are in line with the requirements of job market.
  - Form strategic partnerships with apprenticeship providers, and large private companies, towards developing the job specifications of every education field.

- Boost Small and Medium-sized Businesses and Entrepreneurship
  - Establish an SME Authority or Administration to review laws and regulations thoroughly, remove obstacles, facilitate access to funding, and enable youth and entrepreneurs to market their ideas and products.

attract foreign funds and technologies linked to national investments
o Establish business incubators, specialized training institutions and venture capital funds. These will aid entrepreneurs in developing their skills and networks.

o A business trade environment that allows for innovation and entrepreneurship.

Enhance employment opportunities

o All students graduating from the formal education system possess the required knowledge, skills and competencies to enter the labor market or to pursue higher education.

o Continuous development of human capital for economic growth through quality education, culture and sports is supported and promoted.

o Continuous education opportunities are provided for all residents to acquire skills needed to be more productive members of the society.

Among our 2030 targets

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned Development themes and Visionary goals is Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4): “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

Targets to be achieved SDG 4:

4.3: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

4.4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

Aligned with Enhance employment opportunities for women and girls is Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 5)5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls with the target.

5.5: Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.
5.6 C: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

Aligned also is Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8): Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

**Targets to be achieved SDG 8:**

8.3: Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

8.5: By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

8.6: By 2030, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.

8.9: By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

5.3.2.2 That is Open for Business

Opening Sint Maarten further for business will boost productivity and smooth our journey to retain our reputation and competitiveness as a prestige tourist destination. We will improve our business environment, build resilient infrastructure, energy efficiency and methods of waste disposal and management, with special regard to ensuring that our most valuable asset, the natural environment, is protected.

**Visionary Goals:**

- Promote an open and flexible economic/business structure capable of competing in a changing world
- improving the business environment e.g.:
  - The quality and reliability of Government services improved.
Current regulations reviewed with the aim of improving the business environment; less red tape and more transparent processes and procedures.

- Enhanced productivity and competitiveness.
- E-Zone sector defined and created.

- Build a sustainable energy sector
  - Lesser dependency on imported fuel.
  - Strategic actions Renewable Energy.
  - Private development investments projects (IPP Individual Power Projects) encouraged e.g. in the area of Solar Power.
  - Waste to Energy plant as qualified as a renewable energy project fine-tuned.

- Develop an efficient and safe method for waste disposal.
- Deregulate the Energy Market - more Competitive.
- A Developed Digital Infrastructure to attract investors.
  - Develop the telecommunications and information technology infrastructure, especially high-speed broadband, expanding its coverage and capacity and improving its quality.
  - Improve our regulations and establish an effective partnership with telecom operators to better develop this critical infrastructure.
  - Support local investments in the telecommunications and information technology sectors.

**Among our 2030 targets**

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned Development Themes and Visionary goals is Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7): Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

**Targets to be achieved SDG7:**

7.1: By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.

7.2: By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

7.3: By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.
7.3 A: By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.

7.3 B: By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, Small Island Developing States, and land-locked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programs of support.

5.3.2.3 That invests for The Long Term

Diversifying our economy is vital for its sustainability and resilience. Although tourism is an essential pillar of our economy, we need to expand our investments into additional sectors. We understand that there are complicated challenges ahead through the recovery from Hurricane Irma, but Sint Maarten’s future development depends on promoting the country as a safe and attractive market for investment. Sint Maarten’s growth will capitalize on the country’s exceptional qualities as a tourist destination and strategic location as the regional hub of the north eastern Caribbean.

Visionary Goals:

- Maximize investment capabilities to attract foreign funds and technologies and encouraging national investments.
- Achieve a reasonable and sustained rate of economic growth that secures a high standard of living for this and future generations.
- Expansion of sectors with competitive advantages from the tourist industry.
  - An increased awareness of sports to promote tourism.
  - Networks of support for talented persons are established for promoting careers in sports and for ensuring quality representation, participation regionally and internationally of Sint Maarten.
  - Create attractions that are of the highest international standards,
  - Improve visa issuance procedures for visitors, and formalize previous endeavors towards US clearance.
  - Prepare and develop our historical and heritage sites.
Promote macroeconomic stability characterized by:

- a sustainable financial position;
- low inflation rates;
- an unemployment rate close to the natural rate, and
- a favorable external debt to GDP ratio;
- Promote a knowledge-based economy characterized by innovation, entrepreneurship, excellence in education, and the efficient delivery of public services.
- Technology linked to Education/State of the art Information and Telecommunication services sector.
- Increase our investments in technology - the digital economy.
- A structured and professional approach to nation building in educational curriculum for first and secondary education and culture, youth and sports programs.
- Build capacity for future growth and development/empowering of the people.
- Exposure of the people of Sint Maarten to best practices, innovations and developing trends is ensured.
- Legislation, policies and curriculum are in place to determine the required knowledge, competencies for early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary education and after school programs.

**Among the 2030 targets**

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned Development Themes and Visionary goals is **Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4):** “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

**Targets to be achieved SDG 4:**

**4.4:** By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

**4.6:** By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.
4.7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned Development Themes and Visionary goals is **Sustainable Development 8 (SDG8):** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

**Targets to be achieved SDG 8:**

8.2: Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors.

8.3: Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

8.9: By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

8.10: Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.

5.3.2.4 That Supports Sustainable and Resilient Development

Unless we change the way the country has developed, the economic gains made, the prosperity we rely on, the enjoyment we get from the environment and its diversity and ability to absorb and recover from external shocks, natural disasters will increasingly enhance our vulnerability. To address that, we aspire that all future development meets the standards of sustainability and resilience.
This requires investment in growth initiatives that maintain our social and natural capital, that protect the resilience and robustness of our natural environment and the maintenance of stability in our economic, social and cultural systems.

**Visionary Goals:**

- Mainstream sustainable development and resilience practices
  - Preservation of ecological sites
    - Mullet Pond as a protected RAMSAR site embodies government’s commitment to take the steps necessary to ensure that its ecological character is maintained.
    - The Man of War Shoal Marine Park (MWSMP) managed by Sint Maarten Nature Foundation, a non-profit and non-governmental organization, is a marine archaeological site that includes Sint Maarten's most ecologically and economically important marine habitats, including extensive coral reefs and sea grass beds.
  - A Nature Policy Plan and an Environmental Policy Plan is draft and implemented.
- Promote orderly and sustainable spatial development
  - Develop & implement Development (zoning) plans covering the whole island.
    - Special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.
    - Safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces.
- Integrate disaster risk management into development policy
  - Safe and affordable housing and upgrade slums.
- Reduced or mitigated adverse impacts of climate change/ Effective DRM
  - Continuous Environmental Planning
  - Sustainable cities

**Among our 2030 targets**

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned Development Themes and Visionary goals is **Sustainable Development 11** (SDG 11): Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
Targets to be achieved SDG 11

11.1: By 2030, ensure access for all, to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.

11.2: By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations.

11.4: Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage,

11.6: By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management,

11.7: By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces,

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned Development Themes and Visionary goals is **Sustainable Development 13** (SDG 13): Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

Targets to be achieved SDG 13

13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.

13.2: Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.

13.3: Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned Development Themes and Visionary goals is **Sustainable Development Goal 14** (SDG 14): Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
**Targets to be achieved SDG14**

14.1: By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.

14.7: By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned Development Themes and Visionary goals is **Sustainable Development Goal 15 (SDG 15):**

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

**Targets to be achieved SDG 15**

15.4: By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.

15.9: Continue, integrating ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts.

**5.3.2.5 That Leverages our Unique Position within the Caribbean**

Sint Maarten is right at the crossroads of important international trade routes within the Caribbean. We will therefore maximize the benefits from our strategic position and agree to strengthened cooperation with French Saint Martin and develop new strategic partnerships.

**Visionary Goals:**

- Strengthen Sint Maarten as a regional logistic hub,
- Develop strong and mutually cooperative relations with French Saint Martin.
Among our 2030 targets

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned Development Themes and Visionary goals is **Sustainable Development Goal 17 (SDG 17):**
Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

**Targets to be achieved SDG 17 related to Policy and Institutional coherence and trade**

17.13: Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence.

17.15: Respect each country’s policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development.

17.16: Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.

5.3.3. **A DECISIVE AND AMBITIOUS COUNTRY**

An efficient government organization with a sustainable financial position is a perquisite to unleash its development potential and achieve economic resilience. Achieving autonomous status on October 10, 2010, meant that, Sint Maarten had to create a new structure and organization of government with policy, implementation, monitoring and accountability as core duties and achieving financial independence and sustainability. Transparency will be boosted and delays reduced by expanding online services and improving their governance standards, with the aim of becoming a global leader in e-government.
Achieving aforementioned is the first development priority and a prerequisite to build Economic Resilience.

**DEVELOPMENT THEME III: A DECISIVE AND AMBITIOUS COUNTRY**

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<th>Responsibly Empowered</th>
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**Visionary goals**

- Promote an integrated government in the delivery of policy
- To create a supportive and cooperative environment – collaborative private and community sectors
- Attain Fiscal sustainability
- Promote businesses and foundations (nonprofit sector) to apply proper governance standards, facilitate the high-quality training of staff and promote a culture of volunteering
- Strengthen the capacity of government institutions

### 5.3.3.1 Effectively Governed

The government system continues to be in a process of development since 2010, when Sint Maarten attained full responsibility for the management of its internal affairs. An effective and stable government organization is a prerequisite for the realization of country development objectives, building economic resilience, ability to keep pace with rising expectations and attend to new challenges. We will focus on strengthening government’s capacities and capabilities to work effectively as a stable, accountable and transparent system.
Envisioned is “A flexible and customer-oriented government organization supported by an efficient and effective tax system/administration in addition to providing safety and security to all citizens”.

**Visionary Goals:**

- Promote a more joined up government in the delivery of policy and shared services across our government ministries,
- increasing productivity and raising the efficiency of government spending
- increase quality, cut costs, unify our efforts,
- follow best practices in employing shared services, with a robust set of performance indicators that will measure quality, workflow improvement, cost reduction and knowledge transfer.
- Attain fiscal sustainability/ Efficient and effective tax system and administration.
- Strengthen the capacity of government institutions and its services
- Effective E-Government
  - Improved public service/customer service to the people of Sint Maarten e.g. “Platforms where citizens can shop intelligently and efficiently for everything from health insurance to educational opportunities to business licenses and potential business partners”.
  - Create and continually update for a successful customer/citizens experience”.

**Among our 2030 targets:**

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned A Decisive and Ambitious Country is:

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 16 (SDG 16):** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

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8 Derived from the meeting with the SG
9 World Economic Forum
16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.

5.3.3.2 **Responsibly Empowered**

The visionary aspirations we aspire will not be achieved without a collective effort whereby everyone contributes. Whether you are in business or a foundation, a community, family or as an individual, we are all are empowered to fulfill our Vision and contribute to the building of Sint Maarten.

**Visionary Goals:**

- To create a supportive and cooperative environment in which private and community sectors can collaborate with government.
- The role and performance of the Private Sector enhanced.
- A regulated Financial and Non-Financial Sector.
- A regulatory framework that empowers the non-profit sector. Promote businesses and foundations (nonprofit sector) to apply:
  - proper governance standards,
  - facilitate the high-quality training of staff and,
  - promote a culture of volunteering.
- National legislation policies and programs for education, culture and sports are aligned with international agreements and treaties.
Among our 2030 targets:

The sustainable development goal aligned with the aforementioned A Decisive and Ambitious Country is:

**Sustainable Development 11 (SDG 11):** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

**Targets to be achieved SDG 11**

11.4: Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.

11.6: By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.

11.7: By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces.

**Sustainable Development Goal 17 (SDG 17):** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

- **Targets to be achieved SDG 17 related to Policy and Institutional coherence and trade**
  - 17.13: Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence.
  - 17.15: Respect each country’s policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development.
  - 17.16: Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.
6. **HOW TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION**

To achieve our aspirations and hopes, Government will together with the Private sector and key NGO outline the strategic direction towards the implementation of the National Development Vision 2021 – 2030.

The series postponed high-level retreat will serve the purpose of preparing a strategic report as an integral part to the final Sint Maarten National Development Vision 2030.