

## UK Small Island Developing States Strategy 2026–2030



Cover Image: Getty Images. Cape Verde: São Vicente Island.



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Image: Getty Images. Cape Verde: São Vicente Island

## Ministerial Foreword

**The UK shares deep connections with many Small Island Developing States (SIDS) particularly through the Commonwealth, and we recognise their special circumstances, including their vulnerability to the climate and nature crisis.**

The damage wrought by Hurricane Melissa underlined how SIDS' populations and economies are threatened by rising sea levels and extreme weather events. SIDS' marine ecosystems and coral reefs for example – which are key to livelihoods, tourism and the protection of coastlines – are threatened by ocean acidification and high sea temperatures. Climate change impacts can drive displacement and increased economic costs, and SIDS can be disproportionately affected compared to larger developing countries. Yet SIDS have contributed least to this problem; they account for less than 1 percent of annual global greenhouse gas emissions.

This strategy sets out the major strands of UK support to SIDS' climate and economic resilience, with an approach based on partnership. In delivering the strategy, we will support the UK's wider international objectives, support multilateralism and also benefit from the ideas and energies that SIDS themselves bring to international debates on development, sustainable growth, biodiversity, climate change and a reformed international system.

The strategy responds to the 'Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS' and also what we are hearing from SIDS about their own priorities.

At the Fourth International Financing for Development Conference in Seville in July 2025, the international community agreed that a new chapter is needed for development and sustainable growth. We are now looking forward to working with the international community, including SIDS themselves, to build on this consensus. We are also supporting the Commonwealth to champion and amplify the voices of the SIDS. The UK is calling for the expansion of pre-arranged finance and shock-responsive instruments that can disburse quickly and predictably, helping to protect SIDS' development gains and fiscal space when disasters strike. We are channelling our world-class UK expertise to build SIDS' capacity and empower them to finance their own development, climate, and nature goals sustainably. We have championed action on debt and are supporting reform of the global climate financing mechanisms. We are helping SIDS to protect nature and oceans, grow their economies and reduce their reliance on aid. In promoting SIDS' economic and climate resilience, we show what's possible when the UK and the SIDS work together in modern partnership.



**The Rt Hon Baroness Chapman of Darlington,**  
Minister of State (International Development & Africa)



**Chris Elmore MP,**  
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Human Rights, Latin America, Caribbean)

## Introduction

**1. Small Island Developing States (SIDS)<sup>1</sup> are an important part of our global community; they represent 20% of the UN family, steward vast ocean territories through their exclusive economic zones (EEZs)<sup>2</sup> and are hotspots for biodiversity globally. SIDS are on the front line of the climate and nature emergency and face particular risks from extreme weather events and global economic shocks.**

2. The UK shares deep connections with SIDS. Nearly half the Commonwealth (25 of the 56 members) are SIDS, as are 6 UK Overseas Territories and 11 of His Majesty the King's 14 realms. Diaspora communities from SIDS, especially from the Commonwealth, have played a significant role in the UK's own story and greatly enriched our national life. Business, trade, educational, cultural and other people-to-people links continue to benefit both the UK and SIDS and can be a driving force for opportunity and growth in an increasingly contested world. SIDS are also essential UK partners on global issues such as climate change, economic growth, combatting crime and energy security.

3. Many SIDS are classified as either high or upper-middle income<sup>3</sup>. However, this belies the fact that SIDS are consistently more vulnerable than other countries at a similar income level<sup>4</sup>. A tailored approach to SIDS and their vulnerabilities is therefore needed. As we shift towards modernised

development partnerships, so our partnership with SIDS will also evolve. In this strategy, we set out how we will focus on helping SIDS to build their climate and economic resilience.

4. For those SIDS which are eligible to receive UK Official Development Assistance (ODA)<sup>5</sup>, we will shift towards being an investor rather than a donor, investing in developing systems rather than service delivery; providing expertise rather than grants; and focusing on local provision rather than international interventions. Some SIDS, despite their vulnerabilities, have nonetheless managed to sustain a high gross national income (GNI) per capita and graduated from ODA eligibility. For these SIDS, we will continue to discuss responses to contemporary and emerging challenges (for example, UK support for Barbados' Bridgetown Initiative 3.0 on global financial system reform), as well as supporting their resilience through our global reform efforts and policy dialogue.

5. Over 30 years ago, SIDS were recognised as a special case for environment and development<sup>6</sup>. The UN Barbados Programme of Action, Mauritius Strategy, SAMOA Pathway and, most recently, the 'Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS' (ABAS) – agreed at the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States in May 2024 – represent frameworks for the international community's support to SIDS. Since the 1992 Rio

Conference, progress has been made but SIDS' special circumstances continue to be recognised, including in the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (the BBNJ Agreement).

6. The climate and nature crisis and shifting global context, however, is bringing a new urgency to these discussions. The UK is committed to leading global efforts to combat climate change, but we cannot succeed in this alone. Total global levels of ODA are falling<sup>7</sup>, including from the UK. SIDS are also challenged by increased geopolitical competition, impacting how they engage in global discussions on climate, sustainable development and ocean issues. In an era of constrained resources, we must narrow our focus to those areas of cooperation with SIDS which can have the most impact.

7. The Commonwealth sees itself as having a particular focus on supporting small and vulnerable member countries, reflected in its latest 5-year Strategic Plan, and the Commonwealth's technical assistance work. The ABAS provides a framework for the international community's support for SIDS for the next decade (2024 to 2034).



At the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in 2025, it was reaffirmed that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development but that efforts need to be supported by an enabling international economic environment that helps promote growth and mitigate shocks.

8. This strategy sets out how the UK, as a leading partner for the SIDS group, will: (1) **partner** with SIDS, particularly on climate adaptation, aid effectiveness, governance and human rights; (2) work with them to **reform** the international finance system; and (3) help them to **grow** resilient economies, whilst protecting nature and the ocean.

9. In taking forward the UK-SIDS partnership, we will work alongside our allies and use our leadership and convening power, including our Board positions on international financial institutions and our position within the Commonwealth, to amplify SIDS voices and shape multilateral action. The UK will champion action on key areas such as improving the accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness of climate and development finance. We will also work with SIDS to ensure the effective use of resources to build their economic and climate resilience, tackle unsustainable debt, manage their natural resources and reduce dependency.

10. In this era of geopolitical competition and radical uncertainty, resilient, prosperous and well-governed SIDS can make a positive contribution to their respective regions and to debates on development, sustainable growth, climate and a reformed international system. Our modern UK-SIDS partnership will demonstrate that our traditional bonds and shared values can deliver results for the UK and for SIDS in this new context.

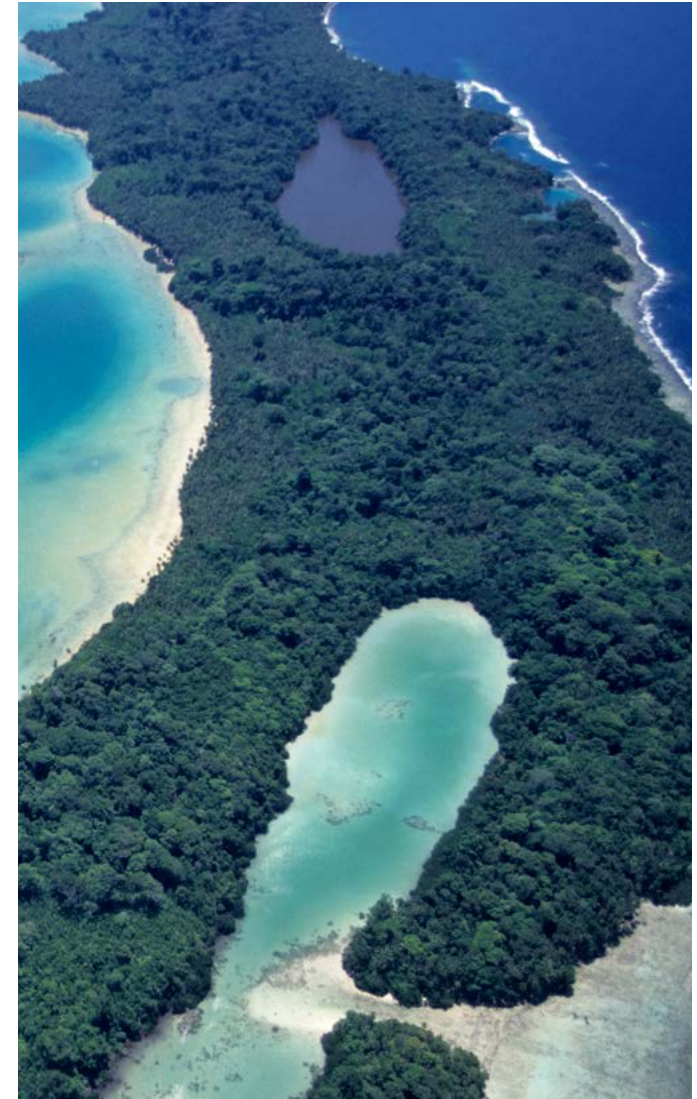


Image: Getty Images. Aerial of islands in Blackett Strait, Solomon Islands.

## Part 2

### A cross-government effort

11. Multiple UK Government departments are already supporting SIDS on issues such as sustainable ocean management and resilience, climate adaptation, countering illicit finance, business and trade and on security and justice. The breadth and depth of UK Government expertise is a significant part of our offer of support to SIDS and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) will continue to work as part of a whole of HMG partnership with SIDS. The UK SIDS Envoy<sup>8</sup> will continue to play a role in sustaining and coordinating cross-Government ambition.

12. The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) is a major partner for SIDS on the ocean, including the protection of biodiversity, addressing risks to marine livelihoods and promoting sustainable blue economies. The UK's ODA-funded marine programming supports developing countries to protect the marine environment and reduce poverty and includes a SIDS-focused programme on sustainable blue economies, managed by FCDO, which aims to strengthen ocean management capacity, improve livelihoods and increase adaptive capacity in SIDS. The UK's international marine portfolio includes other programmes working in SIDS, like the Global Fund for Coral Reefs, the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance, the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership and the World Bank's PROBLUE.

13. Earlier this year, the Chancellor of the Exchequer launched the "London Coalition on Sustainable Sovereign Debt" to be co-chaired by the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, which will bring together government and private sector stakeholders to find innovative solutions to increase sustainable sovereign debt financing in developing economies, including in SIDS.

14. The Home Office's engagement aims to strengthen border security and policing through capability building initiatives in SIDS. Policing porous maritime borders effectively with limited assets can be difficult and SIDS can be particularly vulnerable, for example to trafficking in the British Overseas Territories and independent Caribbean nations. Targeted activities, building on UK strengths in security and criminal justice reform, aim to safeguard UK interests against malign influence and prevent hostile actors expanding their influence. Such influence could undermine regional security and have tangible consequences for the UK, including, for example, increased drug trafficking to the UK and a rise in asylum claims from the Caribbean.

15. HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) plays a pivotal role within the Commonwealth Association of Tax Administrations (CATA), helping to strengthen tax systems that support sustainable development and good governance. SIDS are a central priority in this work. Through CATA, HMRC provides targeted peer-

to-peer technical support and leads the CATA Senior Leadership Programme, which enhances strategic leadership among senior tax officials in SIDS. These initiatives ensure that tax administrations have the institutional capacity, skilled leadership, and resilient governance systems needed to build robust revenue structures and drive long-term economic stability.

16. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) will support SIDS' institutional capacity to deliver their national and regional climate priorities and participate fully in international climate processes. This includes technical assistance for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) which will, in turn, help SIDS to maintain a strong and influential presence in international climate negotiations. DESNZ will also continue funding for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) support through the NDC Partnership, to enable access to targeted technical assistance, embedded expertise, and flexible funding for SIDS' climate and development needs.

17. The Department for Business & Trade's (DBT) UK Trade Strategy aims to further simplify the Developing Countries Trading Scheme rules to better support businesses using inputs from across African and Asian value chains which export to the UK. SIDS that qualify<sup>9</sup> can benefit from duty-free and quota-free access to the UK market for many of their products. The UK is also considering how to cooperate on



trade through our Economic Partnership Agreements with African, Pacific and Caribbean countries<sup>10</sup>. The UK Government has increased the capacity of UK Export Finance to provide financing, guarantees and insurance to support UK exports.

18. During international humanitarian crises, FCDO may also call upon the support of the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) to assist with its response. FCDO works closely with the UK military and can rapidly request deployment of UK military assets (such as ships, aircraft and personnel) in line with international guidelines and the humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality, independence and objectivity. The most recent example of this collaboration was during the Hurricane Melissa response where a Royal Naval vessel, HMS Trent, supported relief efforts.

19. The UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO), an executive agency sponsored by the MOD, is a world-leading centre for hydrography, supporting SIDS in the Southwest Pacific, Caribbean, Indian Ocean, and South Atlantic. UKHO provides modern hydrographic data, seabed mapping, and technical expertise to support safe, secure and thriving oceans. As a Primary Charting Authority for several SIDS, UKHO continues to support maritime safety, trade, and resource management. Recent examples include conducting extensive hydrographic survey activity in the Seychelles, and UKHO has helped

establish a Hydrographic Service in Maldives and with FCDO support strengthened the country's hydrographic capability.

20. At the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 2024, the UK Prime Minister officially launched the UK-led Global Clean Power Alliance (GCPA) which will speed up the global drive for clean power by uniting developed and developing countries across the north and south. The alliance of countries (including Barbados) will work together and share expertise with the goal of meeting the COP28 commitments to triple renewable energy and double energy efficiency, including through approaches that attract private finance to support these goals in the Caribbean region.

21. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has provided its Advisory Opinion on the Obligations of States in respect of Climate Change. The UK co-sponsored the UN General Assembly resolution seeking this advisory opinion and contributed views to the ICJ proceedings. Tackling climate change is and will remain an urgent UK and global priority. Our position remains that this is best achieved through international commitment to the UN's existing climate treaties and mechanisms. The UK will continue to collaborate with others to create the conditions for greater ambition and action, including through the UNFCCC.



Image: Getty Images. Aerial View of Montego Bay.



## UK Overseas Territories and the SIDS group

22. The UK Government is committed to fulfilling its constitutional and international obligations to its Overseas Territories, including under Article 73 of the UN Charter. The Joint Ministerial Council, which meets annually, is the highest forum for political dialogue and consultation between UK Ministers, elected Leaders and Governors of the Overseas Territories. It provides an effective platform for consultation on key issues such as security, economic development and climate change. In 2025, the Joint Ministerial Council reaffirmed the 5 principles which underpin the UK-Overseas Territories relationship: democratic autonomy, partnership and engagement, good governance, defence and security and share prosperity. The UK also supports capacity building in priority areas in the Territories, including security, good governance, climate and maritime protection.

23. The Overseas Territories face many of the same challenges as SIDS, including vulnerability to extreme weather events, climate change and economic shocks. These pressures are compounded by capacity constraints due to small populations and limited institutional resources. The UK seeks to address these challenges by promoting economic and social wellbeing. Six of the UK's 14 Overseas Territories are members of the SIDS group as Associate Members of UN Regional Economic Commissions, and the UK stands ready to engage with other Territories who wish to become Associate Members of their relevant UN Regional Economic Commissions. Three Territories are in receipt of ODA, which helps fund essential services and promote economic development, including through improvements to critical infrastructure.

24. The Overseas Territories are home to approximately 94% of the UK's unique biodiversity. In November 2025, the UK launched the first co-created Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy, setting out key issues, challenges and opportunities for biodiversity in the Territories. The UK also provides targeted environmental support through the FCDO's Blue Belt Programme, which helps protect and manage over 4.4 million square kilometres of marine environment, alongside Defra's Darwin Plus Fund which supports biodiversity and conservation.



Image: Getty Images. Rising Sea Levels Threaten Coral Atoll Nation Of Tuvalu.



## Partner

### Support inclusive climate adaptation and resilience

25. Climate change is accelerating and is intensifying extreme weather events, disrupting ecosystems and threatening lives and livelihoods in SIDS as well as across the globe. Globally important ecosystems such as coral reefs are close to tipping points as a result of climate change. This affects not only the biodiversity of these critical habitats but also the coastal resilience and livelihoods of the people who depend on them, with a particular pressure on SIDS. The UK is taking important action on climate mitigation. The UK is the first major economy to halve its emissions – having cut them by 54% between 1990 and 2024 and is committed to reaching net zero emissions by 2050. The UK's Carbon Budget and Growth Delivery Plan sets out how we will continue to unlock the benefits of clean energy and climate action in line with the framework of the UK's Climate Change Act. Robust UK action domestically helps strengthen our position as a climate leader internationally and helps mitigate some of the effects of climate change felt by SIDS. For instance, by becoming a Global Methane Pledge (GMP) champion the UK is working through initiatives such as the Oil & Gas Decarbonisation Charter to reduce global methane emissions and encourage strong monitoring, reporting and verification processes.

### Case study

Hurricane Melissa was one of the most intense Atlantic hurricanes on record affecting nearly 6 million people, with Jamaica, Haiti and Cuba the worst affected. The UK response was multi-layered, including financial, physical and future-proofing support, alongside our consular assistance to British nationals. As of December 2025, we have released £8 million in emergency humanitarian funding; deployed expertise and sent core relief items. HMS Trent was deployed to assist with local recovery efforts in Jamaica. Prior UK support for disaster risk finance mechanisms played a role in Jamaica's access to insurance payouts. To maintain readiness against Caribbean hurricanes, the UK undertakes regular preparedness visits, has emergency relief supplies pre-positioned in the Caribbean and carries out training and regular exercising.

26. UK International Climate Finance (ICF) helps developing countries reduce greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity loss, damage to the environment and adapt to the effects of climate change. The UK takes climate commitments seriously and is on track to deliver £11.6 billion of ICF by the end of financial year 2025 to 2026, ensuring a balance between adaptation and mitigation. We are also on track to treble our adaptation spending from £0.5 billion in 2019 to £1.5 billion in 2025. Part of UK ICF addresses the specific needs of those on the frontlines of the climate crisis, including SIDS.

27. At the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa in 2024, leaders, including from many SIDS, underlined the climate crisis remains a critical priority for the Commonwealth family<sup>11</sup>. We will continue to work with our allies in the Commonwealth and with other SIDS to keep up the pressure on coordinated international action on climate mitigation and the 1.5 degree target under the UNFCCC Paris Agreement.

28. The UK Caribbean Infrastructure Fund has been providing support to build high quality and climate-resilient infrastructure: bridges; renewable energy; ports; water; and sea defences that will increase productivity and resilience to extreme weather events and the climate crisis. This fund aims to improve economic development by helping to boost growth and create jobs across the region.

In the Pacific, the UK is supporting the first blended-finance fund of its kind (TIDES - Transforming Island Development through Electrification and Sustainability) to leverage a £10.6 million investment and de-risk private sector investment for a total fund size of US\$100 million to accelerate deployment of renewable energy and reduce reliance on imported costly fossil fuels.

30. In Seville, at the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development, the Bridgetown Initiative and the UK launched a Global Coalition on scaling up the use of pre-arranged finance for disasters from 2% of crisis finance currently towards a global target of 20% by 2035. This includes insurance and other forms of contingent finance. Reaching people and communities more quickly helps to reduce the cost of action and accelerate recovery. SIDS, particularly in the Caribbean, have been at the forefront of this work.

31. The UK is a longstanding champion of disaster risk finance and has supported SIDS to build these critical systems for rapid response and recovery after disasters. We were a founding member of all 4 of the world's regional risk insurance schemes ('risk pools'), including those in the Caribbean and Pacific. We have supported both schemes with further investments recently (£5.3 million for the Pacific risk pool and \$25 million for the Caribbean risk pool) to enable them to expand cover and develop

new products, including a new resilience and insurance facility for water utilities in the Caribbean (the Caribbean Water Utilities Insurance Collective or CWUIC). These schemes are open to ODA-eligible and also non-ODA SIDS, including Overseas Territories. The UK has also supported insurance for education, social protection and humanitarian agencies, as well as working with the World Bank and regional development bank to develop their crisis finance tool kits. The scale and value of this cover was demonstrated in Jamaica, where \$242 million was paid out rapidly from the regional risk insurance scheme and a catastrophe bond after Hurricane Melissa and over \$620 million made available as contingent and emergency credit by the Multilateral Development Banks.

32. The UK also plays an important role in building SIDS' capability on early warning of extreme weather events, including at regional level, as part of a wider focus on humanitarian response and prevention. Seasonal preparedness is an important aspect of ongoing work so that we can provide humanitarian support if needs arise. The FCDO is a major financial contributor to the Met Office-led Weather and Climate Information Services (WISER) programme, which in the Pacific has been working with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to support Weather Ready Pacific to increase Pacific resilience to extreme weather events and contribute to objectives under the Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative.

## Case study

The UK was a founding contributor to the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF), the first regional parametric insurance facility. Grenada's National Water and Sewerage Authority, for example, received a US\$2.2 million payout – over 20 times its premium – to restore water services after Hurricane Beryl as a result of support from the Inter-American Development Bank, CCRIF and the UK.

In addition, in 2024, the UK provided a £5.3 million contribution to the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Insurance Company (PCRIC). PCRIC is a multi-donor funded disaster risk insurance company established for the benefit of the Pacific Islands region. Most recently, PCRIC have made insurance payouts to the Vatuvara Foundation Fiji, following Tropical Cyclone Rae, and to Samoa for tsunami recovery.



33. UNEP estimates adaptation needs in developing countries range from between USD \$310 billion to \$365 billion per year by 2035<sup>12</sup>. Unlocking more private finance to achieve global climate goals is therefore critical. Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) can also play a key role in early-stage project design through project preparation facilities.

34. The Catalysing Private Finance for Adaptation and Resilience (CPFAR) programme brings together private and public sectors to develop and test tools and financial solutions that help identify, price, and manage climate risks in investments, especially infrastructure, thereby encouraging more resilient designs. The Jamaica Systemic Risk Assessment Tool (JSRAT) has been developed through CPFAR as a pilot to support the Government of Jamaica in identifying and prioritising investments that strengthen the resilience of critical infrastructure against climate change. The pilot is intended to provide a model for replication and is linked to a broader partnership approach with the Government of Jamaica, including the set-up of a 'Blue Green Facility' as a key financing vehicle.



Image: Getty Images. Valley of Desolation, active fumaroles, Morne Trois Pitons National Park.

## Improve aid effectiveness

35. Achieving sustainable development in SIDS requires the mobilisation and effective use of all forms of development financing, including for climate adaptation. Through AOSIS, SIDS are providing strong leadership in combatting the climate crisis. SIDS' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) are a key component. National and regional sustainable development plans and their financing frameworks are also critical in coalescing wider international support for SIDS and reducing fragmentation in development support. Country platforms, or other nationally- or regionally-led multi-stakeholder partnerships, can be a useful way of aligning international and national goals and unlocking finance for climate action. The UK has previously supported analytical work (with AOSIS, Canada and others) to highlight and prioritise areas of focus for development co-operation in SIDS and to examine how the existing principles of effective development co-operation can be applied to the SIDS contexts<sup>13</sup>.

36. Our work on access to climate finance for the most climate vulnerable countries - including through the UK co-chaired Taskforce on Access to Climate Finance - will help tackle both country and system-level barriers which prevent the effective mobilisation of finance by SIDS.

37. FCDO is working with Government of Jamaica under the Taskforce on Access to Climate Finance, to build a country-led platform to unlock and align climate finance with Jamaica's climate priorities. We are supporting the Government of Jamaica to develop institutional capacity and coordination, identify priority resilience projects, turn them into bankable projects and secure investment. In Mauritius, in partnership with the Ministry of Finance, we developed a Climate Finance Strategy and Roadmap, endorsed by 9 ministries and the private sector, and established Mauritius' first Climate Finance Unit. We are also creating a Climate Risk Map to guide infrastructure investments, providing advice on financial instruments to de-risk private capital for climate investments, and quantifying private sector contributions to NDC targets, to build capacity in the public and private sectors and get climate finance flowing at scale to deliver Mauritius' NDC.

38. In addition, SIDS' human and institutional capacity to plan and implement development initiatives can be helpfully supplemented including through support on their domestic strategies, policies and legislation. Such support can help SIDS governments to mobilise diverse development finance, engage communities and better manage resources. Embedded technical assistance and knowledge exchange can be a useful way in which development partners, like the UK, can bolster SIDS' capacity to deliver on their sustainable development ambitions.

## Case study

Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) and safeguarding have been embedded into our work throughout the Ocean Country Partnership Programme in the Maldives, ensuring inclusive and safe practices. In the Maldives a local consultant developed a GEDSI context review and developed practical handbooks and templates on GEDSI and SEAH (Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment). We established a national GEDSI-SEAH network, fostering collaboration and shared learning across multiple stakeholders in the conservation space. This inclusive approach has amplified marginalised voices and improved engagement. Partners have reported increased awareness, safer working environments, and more equitable conservation outcomes.



39. Through our programme to boost SIDS' capacity and resilience, the UK supports international organisations and SIDS governments to strengthen systems that will allow them to better access and utilise wider climate finance and other concessional funding. The FCDO 'Unleashing the Data Dividend' programme strengthens data and statistical systems to enable data-driven decision making.

40. The FCDO provides long-standing support to the ODI Fellowship Scheme, which since 1963 has embedded more than 1,300 young professionals in 50 governments and regional and international organisations, including in many SIDS. Fellows have worked as statisticians, economists or planning officers in the centre of government in SIDS' ministries of finance or planning, revenue authorities, central banks and statistical offices. In partnership with host governments, 8 UK-funded ODI fellows are in placements across the Pacific to unlock government and institutional capacity, including on fiscal policy, budgeting, and access to climate finance.

## **Support inclusive governance and human rights**

41. Governance can be negatively affected by a lack of capacity and resource constraints. Weak governance in some SIDS can potentially lead

to vulnerability to malign influence, organised crime, and social issues. For example, insufficient attention to maritime security issues can lead to vulnerability to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Illegal ocean dumping can threaten marine ecosystems in SIDS and negatively impact local livelihoods. Deep-seated problems, such as exclusion based on language, gender or sexual orientation can remain unaddressed.

42. Access to UN human rights mechanisms is important to strengthen SIDS voices and visibility in global governance, while fostering partnerships that help deliver tangible benefits at the national level. The UK is supporting human rights advisers within the Commonwealth Small States Office in Geneva, who support SIDS – particularly those without a permanent diplomatic presence in Geneva – to engage with the UN human rights architecture including the Human Rights Council (HRC), Treaty Bodies and the Universal Periodic Review process. This in turn results in greater awareness within the international community of issues faced by SIDS more broadly.

43. Policy environments in place at the national level in SIDS – the investment and regulatory environment, macro-economic policies, accountability, transparency and public financial management – and values including gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, human

rights and fundamental freedoms are critical in leveraging and catalysing resources for sustainable development and ensuring their effective use.

44. Some SIDS are exploring Citizenship by Investment (CBI) initiatives. CBI programmes can be a source of development finance for a number of countries, but their existence can pose challenges: both to the host and to third countries. The UK therefore engages in regular dialogue with a range of stakeholders on the issue of CBI programmes.

45. No region is immune from illicit finance, including small island jurisdictions. Illicit finance and corruption undermine both our national security and overseas interests and drain resources from development, fuel conflict and insecurity and undermine democratic institutions, hampering achievement across the Sustainable Development Goals. The UK and SIDS have a strong history of working together as partners to make our respective economies more resilient to illicit finance and ensuring dirty money has nowhere to hide at home or overseas. The UK's Foreign Secretary will host a Ministerial-level Illicit Finance Summit in London in June 2026.

46. The UK has developed 2 scholarships programmes for SIDS<sup>14</sup>, to be managed through the prestigious Chevening and Commonwealth scholarship schemes. The first SIDS scholars will arrive in the UK in autumn 2026. The Chevening

SIDS Scholarship scheme includes an enhanced UK programme including events with policy experts and government ministers and educational opportunities designed to build a community of SIDS advocates. Commonwealth Scholars will undertake study in fields that help to address a national development priority or capacity shortages such as: human rights, democracy, and the rule of law; climate change and sustainability; economic recovery and growth; and supportive societies that help people lead peaceful and productive lives. Both scholarships will host joint activities for all scholars, helping to develop a strong network across all SIDS.



Image: Getty Images. Historic town center of Trinidad Cuba.



## Reform

### Reform the global financial system

47. The UK has been a prominent advocate for an international system that can also meet the needs of SIDS. The UK works with like-minded partners in a range of international fora, including at the OECD-DAC, at the boards of International Financial Institutions and on the boards of the multilateral climate funds to promote positive reforms for SIDS. We will collaborate with like-minded partners to push for reforms across the global financial system to deliver a fairer, smarter, future-fit financial system that empowers SIDS to finance their own development, climate, and nature goals sustainably; support good governance; and attract the investment needed to generate growth and create jobs; and reduce their reliance on aid.

48. This includes working across MDBs to make them better, bigger and more effective. We will push for: further stretching of MDB balance sheets to double lending volumes by 2035; call for increased voice and representation for the poorest and most climate-vulnerable countries at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF); and push for operational reforms to improve the accessibility, effectiveness and efficiency of MDB climate and development finance. We will continue to explore opportunities to simplify and harmonise the architecture, such as by promoting mutual reliance frameworks, to reduce transaction costs

and make it easier for capacity-constrained states, including SIDS, to access, absorb and utilise finance from all available sources including the private sector. In parallel, we will continue to support efforts across the MDBs to ensure eligible SIDS receive a fair share of concessional finance. This includes our ongoing support for special carve outs such as the World Bank's Small States Exemption and the UK supported ringfencing of \$600 million for SIDS as part of the Asian Development Fund 14 replenishment.

49. The UK is committed to safeguarding and strengthening the World Bank Group, with robust and fair governance at its core. We want to see the institution become more representative of low-income and vulnerable client countries, putting these countries more clearly in the lead on their own development priorities. The World Bank's ongoing shareholding review presents an opportunity to make progress on this agenda.

50. The Bridgetown Initiative 3.0 is a policy and advocacy initiative led by Barbados' PM Mia Mottley which seeks reform of the international financial system to increase climate-vulnerable and developing countries' access to finance, including for nature and adaptation. It was launched at COP26 in response to the challenges of rising debt, climate change and insufficient flows of capital to developing countries. The UK has been a key advocate, through

cooperation in areas of mutual agreement, such as efforts to increase developing countries' voice in the governance of international financial institutions, tackling unsustainable debt (including championing the use of climate-resilient debt clauses), and joint efforts on disaster risk financing. We will continue to work with Barbados to help deliver Bridgetown 3.0.

51. The UK uses our position in bodies such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and the OECD-DAC to advocate for simplified procedures that are fit-for-purpose for states that may have lower capacity. We have been encouraging the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to collaborate with SIDS to help bolster their resilience through investments in their blue (marine and freshwater) and green (terrestrial) environments. The UK will continue to use its position to encourage global funds, international financial institutions, development banks and multilateral climate funds to take account of and help address the particular capacity constraints and vulnerabilities of SIDS. We will work with SIDS and other climate vulnerable developing countries and continue to press for the effective, coherent mobilisation of finance through longer-term programmatic and platform approaches.

52. As a major donor to the Commonwealth, the UK will continue to promote reforms that strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of Commonwealth institutions and sharpen their focus on delivering

## Case study

The FCDO is one of the largest donors to the Green Climate Fund (GCF). To-date, GCF has approved US\$2.2 billion for 78 projects in SIDS, spanning 25 countries. GCF supports climate resilience through projects covering water security, low-emission energy, ecosystem restoration, and livelihoods. Impact varies by region, with notable progress in energy access and water resilience.

The UK has worked to advance reforms that better serve SIDS. In 2023, it co-authored a report with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and UNDP – “What GCF Do We Want in the Pacific?”. As GCF Board co-chair in 2024, the UK championed reforms to improve accessibility and responsiveness and placed climate finance advisers across 7 Pacific nations. Advisers have represented SIDS on the GCF Board, led capacity-building workshops, and supported Vanuatu’s bid for accredited entity status. The UK also backs GCF’s plan for a Pacific outpost to strengthen regional access.

tangible results for Commonwealth members, including SIDS, in priority areas of economic growth, climate change, democracy, good governance and rule of law.

53. The UK was a key champion of the COP26 Glasgow Climate Pact which encourages relevant providers of financial support to consider how vulnerability could be reflected in the provision and mobilisation of concessional financial resources. The FCDO has reflected this internally through our evidence-based decision making as part of our 2026 to 2027 and 2028 to 2029 ODA allocation process.

54. The UK also played a key role in the formation of the AOSIS-DAC Partnership for Action on SIDS, which invited the DAC to continue to look at flexibility within existing ODA eligibility and graduation rules. At the DAC High Level Meeting in March 2025, DAC Members agreed to strengthen the ODA graduation process, to ensure smoother transitions, sustainability of financing, and continuous partnership beyond graduation. The DAC has also launched a review to examine the implications of the changing landscape of development finance including ODA. The UK will continue to engage fully in these reviews.

55. 41% of SIDS are at high risk of debt distress. Supporting developing countries to tackle unsustainable debt is a key development priority of this government. Debt sustainability is good

for our partner countries, good for private sector creditors, and it’s good for the UK – for growth, for stability and for global prosperity. Where we are a creditor, the UK has fully engaged in multilateral negotiations with debtor countries via the Paris Club and G20 Common Framework mechanisms to put debt back on a sustainable trajectory. We are calling for efforts to strengthen and speed up debt restructurings via the G20 Common Framework, and expand them to Middle Income Countries, through our membership of the Paris Club, G20, and the Global Sovereign Debt Roundtable.

## Case study

SIDS have higher debt risk than peer countries with similar income and where cycles of disaster recovery can contribute to SIDS’ debt. Structural constraints (low revenues, inefficient public expenditure and limited private sector development) must be tackled to ensure debt sustainability. Our support to the IMF’s Regional Technical Assistance Centres in the Caribbean (CARTAC) and the Pacific (PFTAC) helps countries strengthen human and institutional capacity to design and implement sound macroeconomic policies to promote growth and reduce poverty.



56. SIDS are on the frontline of climate shocks – and the UK is driving solutions. Inspired by Grenada and Barbados’ hurricane clauses, the UK rolled out Climate Resilient Debt Clauses (CRDCs) to give countries breathing space when disaster strikes and has been instrumental in promoting the rollout of CRDCs across the MDBs. In 2023, UK Export Finance became the first export credit agency to offer CRDCs in sovereign lending to SIDS and low-income countries, sparking others to follow. These clauses allow deferrals of debt service during crises – whether hurricanes, floods, droughts, earthquakes, or health emergencies – helping governments focus on recovery. The UK has funded World Bank CRDC fees, joined the Pause Clause Alliance with MDBs and key partners, and is pushing all lenders to adopt CRDCs.

57. Launched in 2025, the London Coalition on Sustainable Sovereign Debt brings together private sector stakeholders and government to find pragmatic solutions to develop and implement market-based solutions that will ensure long-term stable flows of capital to emerging markets. This will include progressing work on debt contract innovations for bonds and loans to promote orderly restructurings and more resilient borrowing through widespread use of CRDCs. It will help identify solutions to strengthen transparency in private lending and reduce the risks of hidden debt.

58. At UNFCCC COP29, Parties adopted a New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance. The UK remains committed to be amongst the developed countries taking the lead in delivering the goal of at least USD 300 billion per year and, as part of the global effort, work to scale up financing from all sources to developing country Parties for climate action to at least USD 1.3 trillion by 2035. We are also supporting efforts to develop a robust global approach to tracking progress on the UK-championed NCQG provisions on access to finance for SIDS and other climate vulnerable developing countries.

59. The UK committed up to £40 million to establish and operationalise the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD). The UK has a full seat on the FRLD Board and is working to ensure the Fund is as effective and efficient as possible and that it targets its support to particularly vulnerable countries, including SIDS. We are pleased that a 50% allocation floor has been agreed for LDCs and SIDS in the Fund’s start-up phase. The UK will constructively engage with the UNFCCC, other nations and with civil society to help ensure that wider loss and damage funding arrangements deliver effectively for countries, especially the climate-vulnerable.

60. The UK is supportive of the UN Secretary General’s UN80 reform initiative, strengthening the

UN and ensuring it can continue to deliver its’ vital functions, including in SIDS. The UK is backing efforts to help the UN change and to strengthen their delivery for the most vulnerable peoples and countries. We will also explore opportunities to deepen our partnership with SIDS on broader reform of the Global Development Architecture.



Image: Getty Images. Aerial view Haiti.

## Grow

### Protect nature and the ocean

61. SIDS harbour an astonishing amount of marine and terrestrial biodiversity which in turn supports vibrant tourism, livelihoods and blue economies in SIDS. SIDS are leaders in leveraging nature-based solutions for their own economic and climate resilience and recognise that ocean health is inextricably linked to climate change, sustainable development and biodiversity.

#### Case study

Belize's mangrove ecosystems face growing pressure, yet their role in fisheries remains poorly understood. The Mangrove Habitat for Juvenile Fish Recruitment project, supported by the UK, is generating the first quantified baseline on mangroves as nursery habitats for juvenile fish. It pilots innovative technologies – audio devices, underwater video, and eDNA – and trains local researchers, including many women, in monitoring techniques. Early outcomes include stronger local stewardship, sustainable employment, and improved awareness of the ecological and economic value of mangroves

62. Increasing the economic benefits to SIDS from the sustainable use of natural resources is of critical importance. This includes through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture, and tourism and tackling the marine litter that pollutes their seas and shores. SIDS steward an unusually high proportion of endemic species. SIDS make up 14% of the world's coastline and possess some of the largest Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) in the world (23.2 million km<sup>2</sup>) with 80% of the population living near the coast. Fish biomass provides significant dietary protein but is projected to decline by up to 25% by 2100 due to overfishing and the climate and nature emergency. Transnational crime, corruption and illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing are also applying pressures to SIDS' fisheries.

63. SIDS are also a powerful voice in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Environment Assembly. Through the UK-led Global Ocean Alliance and as Ocean Champion of the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, the UK champions SIDS' voices and perspectives, including at critical negotiations such as at the UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP15) in 2022. SIDS have been particularly supportive of the target to protect at least 30% of the global ocean by 2030 (30by30), agreed with CBD Kunming Global Biodiversity Framework. Some SIDS are leading the

way and have made impressive strides, for example, in establishing significant marine protected areas (MPAs) that protect biodiversity, safeguard livelihoods and promote climate resilience.

64. We will continue to amplify the voices of SIDS in multilateral environmental negotiations, recognising their special circumstances and vulnerabilities, and championing the role of independent science in supporting countries with limited technical capacity. We will also continue to work with them to emphasise the importance of sustainable ocean management and resilience in these negotiations, for example in the UNFCCC and the CBD.

65. The UK Government is committed to securing an effective, legally binding international instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. SIDS are uniquely and disproportionately impacted by plastic pollution, despite contributing little to the problem. Plastic waste washes up on their shores, threatening ecosystems, harming local tourism, and placing significant stress on waste management systems. The UK Government will continue to advocate for a robust treaty that addresses the full life cycle of plastics, recognises the special circumstances of SIDS and supports the transition towards a circular economy for plastic; one that keeps resources in use for longer, prevents waste and protects nature.



## Case study

The UK has been working closely with the Maldives on marine pollution emergency response. Through training programmes, over 50 responders developed critical skills, and the UK helped create a robust framework for emergency response including an update of the National Contingency Plan. Improved regional cooperation, analysis, and planning have increased risk awareness and mitigation, whilst updated dispersant protocols and equipment audits have improved response efficiency. Together, these measures have meant the UK has significantly enhanced the Maldives' preparedness and regional leadership for marine environmental protection.

66. We will continue to engage through international partnerships, such as the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, and the Global Ocean Alliance, to address the technical and capacity building needs of SIDS, supporting their implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, including the Global Biodiversity Framework.

67. In 2023, the UK signed up to the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement at the first opportunity. The BBNJ Agreement is an important step toward coordinated global action to tackle the climate and nature crisis and is important to SIDS. The Agreement demonstrates the ongoing role of multilateral institutions in facing global challenges and cements the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as the cornerstone of ocean governance. The UK Government has introduced legislation to enable the UK to implement its obligations under the BBNJ Agreement and move towards ratification. Following the passing of the BBNJ Bill, further secondary legislation will be required before the BBNJ Agreement can be ratified by the UK.

68. The FCDO worked with the Commonwealth Secretariat to support smaller member countries with BBNJ implementation including identifying blockers to ratification and providing technical assistance. Defra has published research to develop a shortlist of potential Area-Based Management Tools, including Marine Protected Areas that could be proposed once the Agreement is in force.

69. At the third UN Ocean Conference (UNOC3), the UK announced £2.8 million investment into the Outrigger Technical Assistance Facility to support sustainable blue economies across 35 SIDS, by supporting early-stage regenerative and sustainable

blue economy businesses through grant funding. At UNOC3, the UK Government also pledged a further £4 million to the Global Fund for Coral Reefs – a blended finance instrument integrated public and private finance – which delivers support to many SIDS to help protect this vital marine habitat and mobilise finance, bringing the UK's total contribution to the fund up to £40 million.

## Case study

Over the course of Defra's investment into the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP), the Pacific region has increasingly adopted ocean accounting. For example, in Fiji GOAP has significantly advanced ocean accounting through sustained engagement with key government stakeholders, resulting in the establishment of the 'Fiji national roadmap for ocean accounts'. The GOAP/Fiji partnership has strengthened Fiji's capacity to practice sustainable environmental management and, helped to inform more accurate and impactful economic decision making.

70. Many SIDS host unique ecosystems that, while modest in global extent, are critical for local resilience as well as global environmental goals. Tropical forests for example regulate climate, provide freshwater, buffer communities against extreme weather events, and provide vital ecosystems for an array of endemic species. They also sustain livelihoods and hold deep cultural and spiritual significance for local and Indigenous peoples, while offering economic opportunities through the harvesting of timber and non-timber forest products. Yet, forests across SIDS face acute threats, as urban expansion, commercial logging, shifting cultivation, and uncontrolled fires erodes forest cover, triggers soil degradation, water scarcity, and biodiversity loss. The destruction of tropical montane cloud forests, counted among the world's most threatened ecosystems, further imperils freshwater resources and climate resilience.

71. To tackle these challenges, the UK is partnering with SIDS through initiatives such as the Forest Governance, Markets and Climate (FGMC) programme. In countries like Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Guyana, FGMC supports governance reforms, strengthens enforcement, and promotes market incentives to ensure forests are managed sustainably while delivering tangible benefits to local communities.

72. SIDS' agricultural and aquaculture sectors are also vulnerable to climate risks. Flooding, drought, erosion and extreme weather events can disrupt SIDS' supply chains and their food production systems, including crops and marine and freshwater fisheries. Ocean acidification, warming and reduced oxygen levels can also affect SIDS' marine ecosystems and fisheries. Imported food can increase SIDS' exposure to energy price, shipping and wider market fluctuations. Climate change can exacerbate the risk of undernutrition, especially for low-income households. Import-dependent processed diets in SIDS are associated with high morbidity and mortality, attributable to chronic non-communicable diseases like diabetes and cardiovascular diseases which contribute to a high public health burden. However, SIDS themselves have been driving increased understanding of the intersections between health and climate change and are leading efforts towards more resilient and sustainable food systems in SIDS.

73. The UK recognises that geopolitical competition can present a range of challenges for SIDS, including how they approach climate change, sustainable development and ocean conservation and management. We will continue to partner with SIDS, individually and through AOSIS, and support their capacity to engage in multilateral discussions.

## **Enable resilient, inclusive economic growth and diversification**

74. Sustainable economic growth in SIDS is a fundamental part of increasing their resilience. Catalytic investments from the UK and improvements in the business environment in SIDS can help leverage the support of capital markets and the private sector and also help mitigate some of the disadvantages associated with SIDS' small size and remoteness (a particular issue for some Pacific SIDS). The UK supports investment in the Caribbean through UK Export Finance (UKEF), the UK Sustainable Infrastructure Programme (UKSIP), IDB Invest<sup>15</sup> and BII<sup>16</sup>. BII has invested \$10 million in the SEAF Caribbean SME Growth Fund<sup>17</sup>. We have also committed to harnessing the blue economy, building on the potential for SIDS to increase sustainable economic benefit from their role as great ocean states.

75. UK technical assistance will help to support strengthened public financial management in SIDS (for example on tax policy and debt management through the IMF's regional technical assistance centres in the Caribbean and the Pacific) and strengthen the appraisal and development of the solutions for sustainable debt financing (for example green bond issuance and debt swaps).



76. Through the Green Cities, Infrastructure and Energy Centre of Expertise, the UK is sharing world-class expertise to support SIDS develop high-quality, climate-resilient infrastructure and urban development to deliver inclusive economic growth. In Mauritius, we are supporting pre-feasibility studies to enable 100MW of offshore wind to strengthen energy security, and through Crossrail, we are sharing expertise to demonstrate and maximise benefits for their light-rail system.

77. We will continue to encourage all providers of finance, including the private sector, to prioritise economic and climate resilience with a focus on nature-based solutions to support states with transparent infrastructure investment. Our bilateral and regional programmes are helping SIDS to access other, larger sources of finance to grow, diversify and safeguard their economic development. For example, our Compete Caribbean programme supports Caribbean SMEs to grow, export and adapt to climate change. Our investments into the Global Fund for Coral Reefs, the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance and PROBLUE provide local, national, and regional support to SIDS' coastal communities to support the growth of sustainable and profitable livelihoods.

78. The Trade Centre of Expertise (Trade COE), announced by the Prime Minister at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

### Case study

Under the UK-funded Trade Partnerships Programme, the FCDO supported a coffee trade mission to Papua New Guinea (PNG) in May 2025, enabling direct engagement between 10 UK coffee importers and 19 PNG producers, cooperatives and exporters. Delivered in partnership with the International Trade Centre and PNG's Coffee Industry Corporation, the mission included site visits, cupping sessions and export-readiness workshops. In June, 5 PNG producers were supported to attend a UK trade show, strengthening commercial ties. By August 2025, these efforts had generated over £1 million in confirmed coffee sales, with an additional £1.2 million in potential deals.

in Samoa 2024, is a flagship initiative designed to provide world-class technical assistance to governments and businesses in developing countries, consolidating and applying learning and best practice from over a decade's worth of Aid for Trade programming, including from SIDS. The Trade COE's purpose is to boost export-led growth, reduce poverty, and strengthen resilience to climate change. It can provide SIDS with technical

assistance, policy advice, and capacity-building to help governments and businesses overcome trade barriers and compete in global markets.

### Case study

The UK Trade Partnerships programme supports Caribbean businesses to export to the UK. We provide bespoke training on things like marketing, regulations and adapting to the UK market, before connecting them directly with potential UK buyers.

Traditional industries like tourism or agriculture are highly climate-vulnerable, often requiring heavy re-investment and months of lost revenues after hurricane damage. We've focussed our support on high-potential sectors that can secure stable, climate-resilient income streams, like digital services which only require a power source and an internet connection to generate revenues.

As a direct result of our support this year, Jamaican tech company Shift Left secured multiple contracts with UK businesses leading to recurring annual revenues of USD \$3.6 million, supporting dozens of jobs in the firm.

79. High-quality and disaggregated data and statistics enable evidence-based policy decisions and enhance accountability and transparency, fostering public trust and international cooperation. We will support programmes that strengthen data collection and statistics, especially on sustainable development, including support to the development of processes and systems to monitor progress to deliver the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS.



Image: Getty Images. Rows of houses, hillside in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.



## Part 3

### UK capability

80. The UK's modern development partnerships with individual SIDS will vary by country and by context and is subject to the broader Spending Review and FCDO ODA allocation process. The Government has published ODA programme allocations for 2025 to 2026 in its Annual Report and Accounts 2024 to 2025<sup>18</sup> and intends to publish plans for 2026 to 2027 and 2028 to 2029 in due course. The UK remains committed to international development and is modernising its approach in order to deliver greater impact, value for money and transparency. In addition, the UK will work with other development partners to promote a coordinated approach to the implementation of the ABAS, building on our respective comparative advantages.

81. The FCDO2030 reform programme is a bold and ambitious transformation agenda for FCDO that will ensure our success over the next 5 years. The programme is designed to ensure the organisation is future-ready and continues to deliver effectively for the British people. Reforms will focus on strategy and prioritisation, delivery and impact, professional capability, culture and openness and efficiency and innovation. A full Overseas Network Review is an integral part of the wider FCDO2030 programme. The review will run into 2026, with changes likely to be implemented in 2026 to 2027 and beyond.

### Follow-up and review

82. Some of the actions in this strategy cut across different UK government departments. Risks and actions will be monitored and managed through established reporting, governance and accountability arrangements. Some contextual risks cannot be entirely avoided or mitigated by the UK alone and SIDS must remain in the driving seat of their own national sustainable development efforts. The UK SIDS Envoy will champion UK action in support of SIDS' climate and economic resilience and FCDO will publish biennial reports on progress against the strategy and its key commitments and review the level of ambition in its first report in 2028.

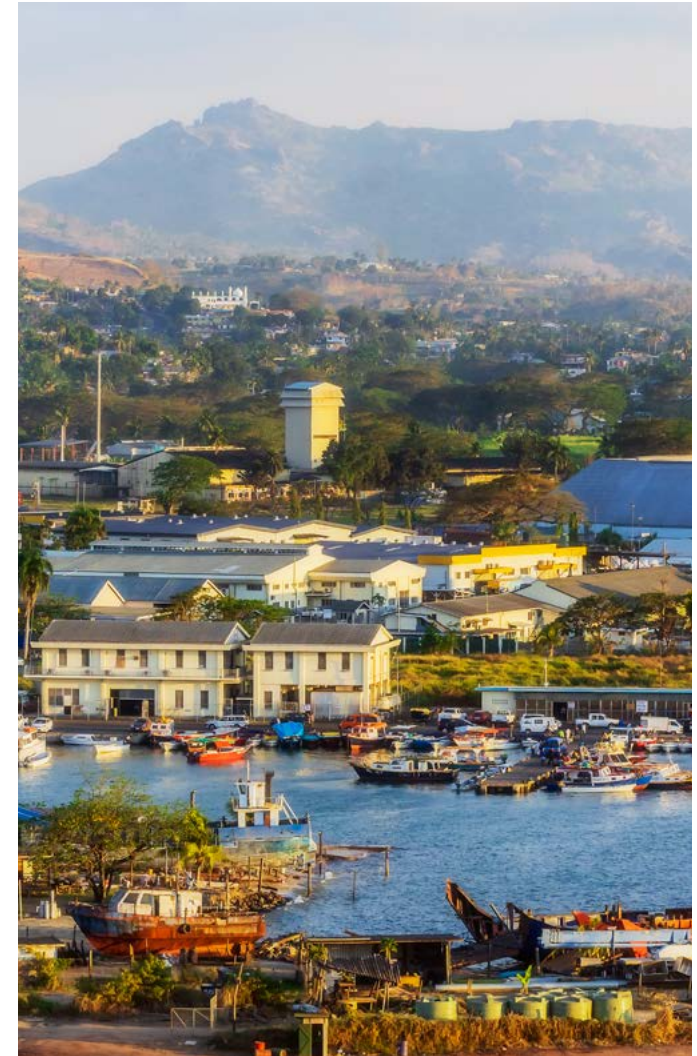


Image: Getty Images. Fiji Islands, Lautoka.

## Footnotes

1. The UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States publishes a [list of SIDS](#).
2. The 'Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity' (ABAS) notes that SIDS control 19.1 per cent of the world's EEZs.
3. The World Bank Group uses 4 income groups (low, lower-middle, upper-middle and high) to assign the world's economies based on the GNI per capita. Countries are classified each year on 1 July, based on the estimate of their GNI per capita for the previous calendar year. [World Bank Country and Lending Groups – World Bank Data Help Desk](#).
4. The [Small Island Developing States: vulnerability note](#) explores SIDS' economic, climate and environmental, governance and capacity, social and financial vulnerabilities.
5. As defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC).
6. At the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3 to 14 June 1992.
7. Preliminary official development assistance levels in 2024, Detailed Summary Note, [OECD DCD\(2025\)6](#).
8. [Tim Hemmings](#) was appointed SIDS Envoy in July 2025.
9. The following SIDS are included under the DCTS country preference tiers: (1) Comprehensive Preferences – Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kiribati, São Tomé and Príncipe, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu – and exporters in these countries receive 0% import tariffs on 99.8% of products – all products except arms and ammunition; and (2) Enhanced Preferences - Cabo Verde, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Niue and Vanuatu – which entitles exporters in these countries to 0% import tariffs on 92% of their product lines under the DCTS. Country classifications under each preference tier may change when they are reviewed and latest information can be found on [gov.uk](#).
10. The UK [has trade agreements](#) in effect with the following SIDS: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Islands, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.
11. Leaders' Statement, Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2024. The Apia Declaration also recommits to urgent, ambitious and collective climate action and mitigation.
12. UN Environment Programme [Adaptation Gap Report 2025](#) "Running on empty: The world is gearing up for climate resilience – without the money to get there".
13. [Policy paper](#) "Improving development impact in small island developing countries: implementing effectiveness principles".
14. [Master scholarships to be available under CSC & Chevening SIDS - GOV.UK](#).
15. The private sector arm of the Inter-American Development Bank Group. IDB Invest is owned by its 48 member countries, 26 of which are in the Latin American and Caribbean region.
16. British International Investment (BII) is the UK's development finance institution.
17. The SEAF Caribbean SME Growth Fund, is a private equity fund that invests growth capital in small and medium-sized enterprises throughout the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM).
18. [FCDO annual report and accounts 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK](#).





*Cover Image: Getty Images. Cape Verde: São Vicente Island.*