

**ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS)  
CARIBBEAN SEA COMMISSION (CSC)  
SARGASSUM SUB-COMMISSION (SSC)**

**COMMON POSITION OF MEMBERS OF THE SARGASSUM SUB-COMMISSION ON  
SARGASSUM IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN**

**Approved by the Members of the Sargassum Sub-Commission in the context of  
the 4<sup>th</sup> EU – Caribbean Global Gateway Sargassum Conference in Cancún, Mexico  
– October 2026**

We, the undersigned Members of the Sargassum Sub-Commission of the Caribbean Sea Commission of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) - the single unique intergovernmental mechanism across the entire Caribbean basin dedicated to coordinating sargassum policy and action - reaffirm our shared commitment to providing a coordinated, science-based, and environmentally sustainable response to the sargassum crisis in the Greater Caribbean.

The recurring and increasing influxes of sargassum represent an immediate, common, complex, and persistent regional challenge with multidimensional consequences: environmental, public health, social and economic. They threaten marine and coastal ecosystems, tourism, fisheries, livelihoods, food security and coastal communities across the Greater Caribbean.

For many countries and territories of the Greater Caribbean, these impacts extend far beyond the marine environment. Sargassum places growing pressure on coastal communities, public services and local authorities, while generating substantial costs for tourism and other economic activities that depend on healthy and accessible coastal ecosystems. In economies where tourism represents an important source of employment, income and foreign exchange earnings, recurrent massive influxes can have consequences that cascade across entire communities and national economies.

The nature of this challenge speaks directly to the interdependence of the Greater Caribbean. Sargassum transcends areas under national sovereignty or jurisdiction, equally affecting both continental and island States and territories alike. While its impacts and national circumstances differ, no lasting response can be achieved through isolated action. Effective management requires national efforts to be reinforced by sustained regional cooperation, the exchange of knowledge on monitoring, collection, and potential uses, as well as coordinated action across the Greater Caribbean basin.

The Greater Caribbean region has already begun to speak with one voice on this crisis. In both the Declaration of Antigua, Guatemala, and the Declaration of Monteria, Colombia - adopted by the ACS Heads of State and/or Government in 2023 and 2025, respectively- the region recognised the urgency of the sargassum crisis and called for a global response commensurate with the magnitude of its impacts.

In this regard, the Association of Caribbean States occupies an irreplaceable position: it is the only intergovernmental body whose coverage encompasses the entire Caribbean Sea,

bringing together 25 Member States—including Mexico as a founding Member State—and 10 Associate Members, alongside the European Union as an active Observer. This full geographic footprint uniquely positions the ACS to foster true basin-wide policy alignment, strengthen dialogue, and concerted action across the Greater Caribbean.

The Sargassum Sub-Commission of the Caribbean Sea Commission of the Association of Caribbean States, established in 2025, likewise stands as the permanent institutional expression of that same collective will.

Operating within this distinct mandate, and under the framework of the Caribbean Sea Commission, this institutional and technical architecture positions the ACS as a natural regional partner for initiatives seeking to address sargassum at the scale of the Greater Caribbean. It does not replace national, subregional or specialised efforts; rather, it provides an intergovernmental and multidisciplinary space through which shared priorities can be articulated, national experiences and scientific knowledge exchanged, technical cooperation promoted, and areas identified where coordinated regional action can add value to national and subregional efforts.

As the national, regional and international response to sargassum evolves, moving from recognition of the crisis and individual pilot initiatives towards implementation, investment and scale, the Greater Caribbean must also strengthen its capacity to act collectively. This requires connecting accumulated scientific knowledge regarding sustainable management, public policy, financing, investment and emerging value chains within a coherent regional framework.

Against this background, the Members of Sargassum Sub-Commission of the Caribbean Sea Commission have identified the following priorities for collective action and international cooperation:

### **A science-based and integrated regional response**

1. We call for strengthened scientific cooperation and integrated approaches that combine scientific evidence with practical experience and local and institutional knowledge to improve understanding of the extent, severity, frequency and impacts of sargassum influxes.
2. We support stronger regional mapping and baseline analysis, improved collection and exchange of relevant data, and interoperable tools for early detection, monitoring and forecasting, including where applicable, information on environmental conditions and the effects of sargassum arrivals on marine and coastal ecosystems—contributing to the consolidation of a shared regional evidence base that facilitates informed decision-making across the Greater Caribbean.
3. We affirm that sargassum management must address the entire cycle—from monitoring and early warning to collection, transport, treatment, processing and final use or disposal—while protecting marine and coastal ecosystems, ensuring that response, collection, and management measures avoid or minimise additional impacts on sensitive coastal ecosystems and habitats, reducing public-health risks and taking account of the different capacities and circumstances of countries and territories.

4. We also recognise the importance of scientific knowledge as a basis for informing decisions on sustainable valorisation, ensuring that emerging uses and technologies are environmentally sound, safe, scalable, and account for their potential environmental impacts throughout the management and utilisation chain, as well as the diverse ecological and socioeconomic conditions of the Greater Caribbean.

### **From national responses to stronger regional coordination**

5. We affirm that national action remains indispensable, while recognising that the regional scope of sargassum requires mechanisms through which national experiences, policies and solutions can reinforce one another.
6. We support the Sargassum Sub-Commission as an intergovernmental platform for the Greater Caribbean to exchange knowledge and best practices, promote technical cooperation, identify common priorities and facilitate coordinated regional responses, while respecting national competencies and existing regional and international mechanisms that have addressed sargassum influxes within their mandates.
7. We encourage continued cooperation with relevant regional and international organisations, conventions, scientific institutions and initiatives in order to build synergies, address gaps, complement existing efforts and avoid unnecessary duplication.

### **Sustainable value chains, innovation and opportunities for communities**

8. We affirm that innovation and sustainable valorisation can help transform part of the burden created by sargassum into opportunities for sustainable economic activity, local enterprise, employment and income generation, particularly for coastal communities whose traditional livelihoods are increasingly affected by environmental and economic pressures.
9. We support the development and scaling-up of environmentally responsible and economically viable approaches to the collection, harvesting, processing and sustainable valorisation of sargassum, consistent with circular- and blue-economy principles, while conserving marine ecosystems, supporting sustainable economic activities and reducing risks to public health.
10. We commit to facilitating dialogue on regulatory, technical and market dimensions needed to scale successful national initiatives, recognising the different circumstances, development needs and policy choices of Members.

### **Financing, international cooperation and partnership for implementation**

11. We welcome the growing international recognition of the scale and multidimensional nature of the sargassum challenge, including the adoption, at the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7), of the resolution on strengthening the global response to sargassum influxes and the increasing engagement of international organisations, development partners, financial institutions, scientific institutions and the private sector.

12. We call for strengthened international cooperation and the mobilisation of accessible and sustainable financing to support regional and national priorities, including monitoring and early warning, research and innovation, technology transfer, capacity-building, sustainable management, infrastructure and the development of viable sargassum value chains. In this regard, we invite funding for the ACS Secretariat's project proposal "Institutional Strengthening of the Greater Caribbean to Address Future Sargassum Influxes for period 2026-2030."
13. We encourage development partners and financial institutions to work with countries and territories and regional mechanisms to strengthen project preparation and develop investment-ready initiatives, including projects whose viability, sustainability and impact can be enhanced through regional or multinational scale.
14. We recognise the particular opportunity presented by the 4<sup>th</sup> EU–Caribbean Global Gateway Sargassum Conference, within the framework of the Global Gateway Initiative, to advance the work of the Sargassum Sub-Commission of the Caribbean Sea Commission in connecting national experiences, innovation and investment with a sustainable regional response based on emerging sargassum value chains.
15. We affirm a natural complementarity between the Global Gateway process and the regional intergovernmental architecture established within the ACS— with Global Gateway and international partners contributing investment, financing instruments, technology, expertise, and the ACS and its Sargassum Sub-Commission providing an intergovernmental space for articulating regional priorities and sustaining dialogue across the Greater Caribbean.
16. We invite the European Union, Global Gateway and other international partners to strengthen structured cooperation with the Association of Caribbean States and its Sargassum Sub-Commission, scientific and technical cooperation, capacity-building, project preparation, investment mobilisation and the identification of initiatives that can benefit from regional or multinational approaches.
17. We maintain that such cooperation should build upon and complement existing national, subregional and international initiatives, while helping ensure that investment and innovation respond to the priorities and realities of the countries, territories and communities most directly affected.

#### **From 4<sup>th</sup> EU-Caribbean Global Gateway Sargassum Conference to sustained regional action**

18. We affirm that the 4<sup>th</sup> EU-Caribbean Global Gateway Sargassum Conference should contribute not only to identifying individual solutions and investment opportunities, but also to strengthening the conditions that allow those efforts to operate at regional scale and to deliver tangible benefits to the countries, territories and communities of the Greater Caribbean.
19. We reaffirm our commitment to using this intergovernmental mechanism to articulate the priorities and interests of the Greater Caribbean, strengthen cooperation among Members and engage constructively with regional and international partners.

20. We resolve to advance a common regional voice on sargassum, lead through the Sargassum Sub-Commission as the region's platform for translating experience into strategy and action. Through stronger regional cooperation and effective international partnerships, we will position the Greater Caribbean not as a region affected by sargassum, but as a global leader in knowledge, solutions and cooperation that this crisis demands.
21. Together, we will transform knowledge into action, strengthen sustainable value chains, create opportunities for affected communities and protect the shared Caribbean Sea that connects us.