

INSTITUTIONAL PROJECT · FACT SHEET · NOVEMBER 2026

The Caribbean Blue Economy Financing (BluEFin) Project

DIGITAL PAYMENT SYSTEM

Purpose / Rationale

A Digital Payment System (DPS) is a financial mechanism that enables electronic fee collection for access to Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

The system allows visitors and other users to pay entrance fees, mooring fees and other MPA services digitally, replacing or complementing cash-based collection.

By digitizing payments, the DPS improves transparency, strengthens financial oversight and helps ensure that fees are collected and securely directed toward the operation, maintenance and sustainable management of MPAs and conservation projects whilst at the same time reduces the cost of revenue collection and transaction time, freeing up staff for enforcement and maintenance instead.

The Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF), in partnering with the St. Lucia National Conservation Fund (SLUNCF) and the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Conservation Fund (SVGCF), under the Caribbean Blue Economy Financing (BluEFin) Project to implement and strengthen Digital Payment Systems in two significant Marine Protected Areas: the Soufrière Marine Management Area (SMMA) in Saint Lucia and the Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP) in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The total area of both areas is 8,300 hectares. The SMMA encompasses approximately 1,700 hectares, including 1,600 hectares of marine area, while the TCMP covers approximately 6,600 hectares, of which 6,000 hectares are marine area.

Capitalization & Implementation Structure

The DPS is implemented through a partnership between an authorized MPA authority and a bank or fintech company that provides the digital payment infrastructure.

A technical assistance or concessional finance provider supports the establishment and strengthening of the system, while National Conservation Trust Funds (NCTFs) can support governance and help identify conservation projects that can benefit from the revenues generated.
The system can be designed to collect different types of MPA-related payments electronically, including entrance fees, mooring fees and other marine services.

Revenues can then be allocated and managed by the authorized entity to cover MPA operational and maintenance costs and support conservation and sustainable management activities within its jurisdiction.

The CBF collaboration is looking at how these financial flows can be facilitated or co-managed between the MPA authority and a national conservation trust fund. including through the establishment of a dedicated special fund. The fund could be managed by the NCTF under agreed governance, fiduciary, and reporting arrangements, providing a transparent and sustainable mechanism for receiving, managing, and reinvesting revenues generated through the DPS.

Executed by: CARIBBEAN BIODIVERSITY FUND
Financed by: gef global environment facility
Implemented through: UN environment programme
german cooperation
KFW
AFD
FONDS FRANÇAIS POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL
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Expected Outcomes

- Improved transparency and financial oversight of MPA fee collection
- Increased compliance with entrance, mooring and other MPA fees
- Improved visitor experience through convenient digital payment options
- Strengthened financial sustainability of Marine Protected Areas

Operational Mechanism

System Setup: An authorized MPA entity partner with a bank or fintech company to establish the digital payment system.

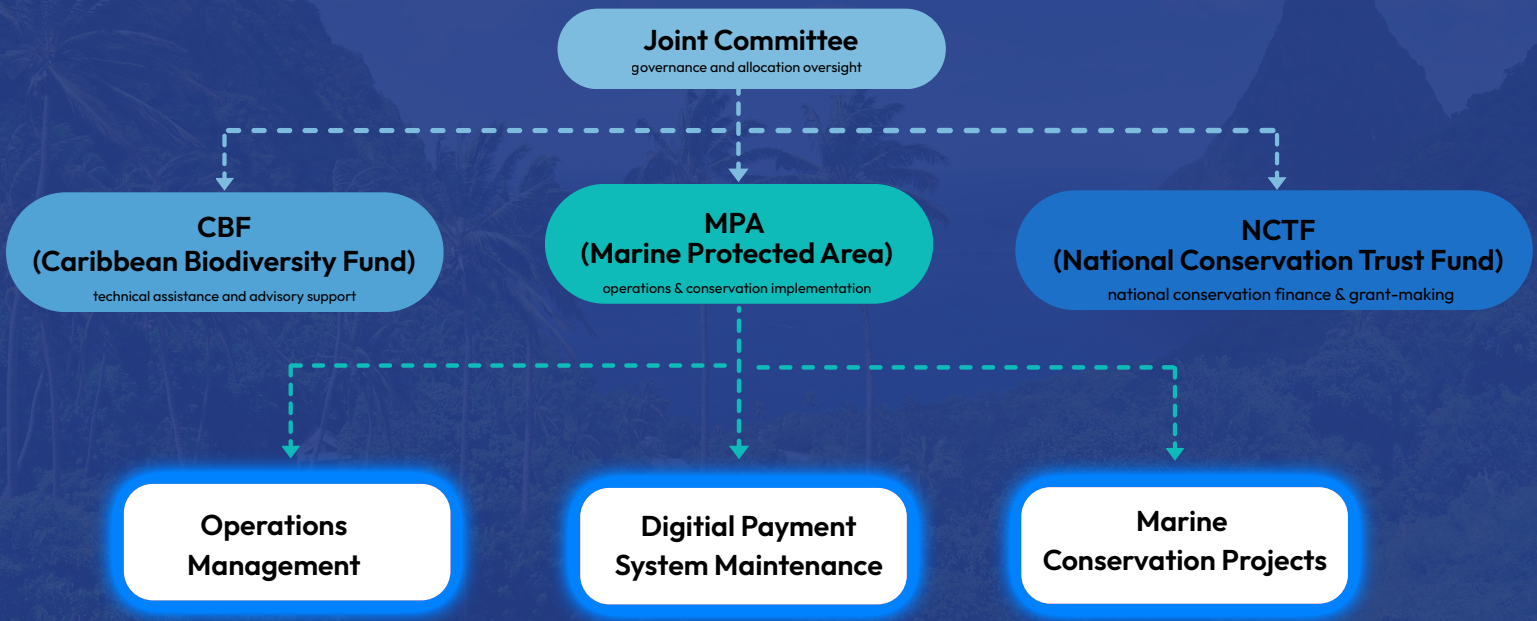
Digital Fee Collection: Visitors and other MPA users pay entrance fees, mooring fees and other marine services electronically.

Revenue Allocation: Collected revenues are directed to the authorized entity for MPA operations, maintenance and conservation activities.

Financial Oversight: Digital transactions create secure and traceable financial records, strengthening reporting, governance and financial control.

Conservation & Management: Revenues support the sustainable management of the MPA and conservation projects within its jurisdiction. The Conservation Trust Fund can be the facilitator in this process, supporting the MPA authority to manage and access more funding towards conservation projects within the MPA.

Flow of funds for the Digital Payment System



Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals:



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