

The VNR in a Nutshell – National Strategies for SDGs.

Belize

Capital	Belmopan
Population	377,968
Area (in sq.km)	22,960
Languages	English, Spanish and Creole
Poverty rate	41.3%
Per capita income	9,363.83
International Tourist Arrivals (2015)	1,299,000



Sources: UNDP, World Bank, VNR, UNWTO

The recognition of the role of tourism in sustainable development and the emphasis placed in the SDGs on the development of public policies for sustainable tourism is a landmark breakthrough that provides a unique opportunity for all governments to create a sound and favourable policy foundation.

The first two years of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda have shown that countries are making headway in aligning national strategies, adapting institutional frameworks and adjusting policies to realize the SDGs.

The countries' efforts have been reported in the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), presented by UN Member States during the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2016 and 2017.

Title for VNR: Belize's Voluntary National Review for the Sustainable Development Goals 2017. Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world.

Presenter for VNR: Omar Figueroa, Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, the Environment, Sustainable Development and Climate Change

National Thematic Focus:

No specific themes mentioned but VNR focus on:

- SDG 1 – No poverty
- SDG 3 – Good health and well being
- SDG 5 – Gender equality
- SDG 14 – Life below water

Institutional Arrangement:

Political oversight: The Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (GSDS) is authorized and endorsed by the Office of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet.

Advisory body: The Economic and Sustainable Development Council is a senior leadership advisory body appointed by the Prime Minister. It provides recommendations about implementation strategies and serves as a platform for dialogue with civil society and the private sector.

Lead and coordination entity: The Ministry of Economic Development, Petroleum, Investment, Trade and Commerce (MED) is the implementation body for the Horizon 2030 long-term strategy and the GSDS.

There is a proposal to make the Sustainable Development Unit from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, the Environment, Sustainable Development and Immigration (MAFFESDI) the new focal point for the SDGs.

Implementation of the SDGs: Implementation and monitoring of the GSDS is organized through five inter-ministerial Technical Committees. Each of the Technical Committees is associated with one of the five critical success factors identified in the GSDS, namely: 1) Optimal National Income and Investment Committee, 2) Social Cohesion and Resilience, 3) Natural Environmental, Historical, and Cultural Assets Committee, 4) Governance Committee, and 5) Citizen Security Committee. The Technical Committees are organized as follows:

- Members for each of the Technical Committees are drawn from the government ministries associated with achieving each critical success factor, including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Human Development, the Ministry of Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Transport and Works, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, the Environment, Sustainable Development, and Immigration, and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.
- The Technical Committees are supported by working groups called “Working Tables.” These are chaired by representatives of the Statistical Institute of Belize.
- The Technical Committees report to the CEO Caucus, a body tasked with providing general oversight and policy advice and coordinating decision-making among the Ministries.

Policy and Planning Unit of MEDP	Cooperation between PPU & SDU	Sustainable Development Unit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinating the implementation of the GSDS - Entrench a strong monitoring and evaluation culture within the public service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mainstream the sustainable development approach into planning and implementation of development strategies - Eliminate duplication of effort in the monitoring of the GSDS - Monitoring and reporting progress of the SDGs and their targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposed focal point for SDGs - Promoting the sustainable development agenda into the work of line ministries and other public-sector entities - Reporting on the SDGs at international forums

SDG Incorporation to National Framework:

Belize has incorporated the 2030 Agenda goals and targets into two key documents:

- 1) “Horizon 2030: National Development Framework for Belize 2010-2030” was published in 2010, following comprehensive stakeholder consultations. It establishes the long-term priorities for Belize on matters including democratic governance for effective public administration and sustainable development, education, economic resilience, health, and environment.
- 2) “Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (GSDS) 2016-2019” provides the medium-term framework for operationalization of Horizon 2030, which was drafted in 2016. It incorporates SDG principles and targets through a comprehensive strategy for sustainable development involving economic, social, and environmental policies at both the national and sub-national level.

Tourism Ministry /NTA portfolio:

[Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation](#)

Tourism and SDG in Belize:

Opportunities

- **Marine and Coastal Protection**



The **National Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (NSTMP)** together with other sector specific regulations, plans, strategies and policies have provided the operational direction for sustainability of oceans/marine resources. These includes but are not limited to: the Fisheries Act, the National Land Use Policy and Planning Framework (NLUPP), the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP), the National Environmental Policy and Strategy, the Environmental Protection Act, the Sustainable Chemical Management Action Plan, the National Protected Areas Policy and Systems Plan (NPAPSP), the Mangrove Regulations, the National Climate Change Policy and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. It is noteworthy that the country has also initiated the process to develop a National Water Master Plan to guide the regulatory actions in the 2011 Integrated Water Resource Management Act.

- **Sustainable production and consumption**
- **Blue Economy**
- **Green Economy**
- **Tourism diversification**



According to the report, Belize's framework for sustainable fisheries management has proven to be effective; however, this can be further enhanced by updating the Fisheries Act. It also promotes **natural resource-based tourism**.

Resources and Useful Links

[Belize VNR 2017](#)