Regional framework for improved disaster risk management for Caribbean ports

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CDM	Comprehensive Disaster Management
CIP	Inter-American Committee on Ports
CSA	Caribbean Shipping Association
CSO	Company Security Officers
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency, United States
ICS	Incident Command System
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IMT	Incident Management Team
IPS	International Port Security Program, United States Coast Guard
ISPS	International Ship and Port Facility Security
IT	Information technology
MTS	Maritime Transportation System
MTSR	Maritime Transportation System Recovery
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIST	National Institute of Standards & Technology, United States
OAS	Organization of American States
PFSO	Port Facility Security Officer
PFSP	Port Facility Security Plan
PMAC	Port Management Association of the Caribbean
RRM	Regional response mechanism
SAR	Search and rescue
SEDI	Executive Secretariat for Integral Development
SSO	Ship Security Officers
USCG	United States Coast Guard

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Regional cooperation summary

Due to the nature of Caribbean countries and territories, ports are a critical entry point for significant volumes of humanitarian relief, equipment, and personnel. Once immediate disaster response efforts have ended and support is no longer needed, it is critical for ports to resume and maintain normal operations not only for the port, but for the country/island's economic recovery and stability.

Regional cooperation among Caribbean port facilities is among the best forms of preparation for and response to disasters. Caribbean islands face a range of shared threats, including hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanic activity, coastal hazards, drought and water shortages, and flooding and extreme rainfall, all of which can simultaneously disrupt port infrastructure, supply chains, transportation networks and essential services. As a result, the scale and cascading effects of these incidents can quickly exceed the capacity of any single island or port facility to respond and recover on its own. By working together through pre-established agreements, shared assets, coordinated communication systems, operational capacity, technical expertise, and joint training, Caribbean port facilities can mobilize aid faster and reconstitute infrastructure through a regional cooperation mechanism that protects lives and accelerates recovery and resumption of normal operations. In a region facing the threats mentioned above, collaboration becomes the strongest form of resilience.

Against this regional context, the Organization of American States Inter-American Committee on Ports (OAS-CIP) developed this Framework in collaboration with the Caribbean Shipping Association (CSA) and in consultation with Caribbean port, maritime, disaster management, and regional organizations and with reference to relevant regional and international disaster risk management plans, strategies, studies, and stakeholder input. The development process also considered the findings of the *Model Emergency and Disaster Management Plan* the OAS CIP developed in 2021, as well as the OAS CIP *Disaster Risk and Management Survey for Enhanced Coordination in Caribbean Ports*, including identified regional hazards, capability gaps, and opportunities for improved coordination. In this context, this Framework has been prepared in consultation with the following emergency management and disaster risk management plans and studies:

- CDEMA CDM Strategy 2014-2030
- United Nations Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030
- United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Response Federal Emergency Operational Plan (most recent edition)
- FEMA National Disaster Recovery Framework (most recent edition).

In addition, this Framework underwent a review and validation process, with input from the following stakeholders incorporated:

- Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)
- GSD
- OAS Disaster Risk Management Section
- Port Management Association of the Caribbean (PMAC)
- Prepared International (PPI)
- Resolve Marine

- Tropical Shipping
- United States Coast Guard (USCG)

This Framework focuses on disaster risk management in the port and maritime sector, with regional coordination as its organizing principle. It provides a common regional architecture to strengthen preparedness, information sharing, mutual assistance, maritime transportation system recovery, resilience, business continuity, training and exercises, and stakeholder coordination among Caribbean ports and relevant partners. The Framework is intended to be adaptable to a range of organizational and governance structures within the Caribbean port and maritime sector, including port authorities, port operators, terminal operators, government agencies, maritime administrations, and other entities with responsibilities for port operations, maritime transportation, emergency management, or disaster response.

The Framework does not prescribe the internal emergency management structures, operational procedures, or response arrangements of individual ports. Individual ports and countries remain responsible for their respective disaster risk management and operational arrangements in accordance with applicable laws, authorities, and institutional requirements. Rather, the Framework establishes common regional principles, coordination mechanisms, information-sharing arrangements, mutual-support practices, and recommended capabilities intended to strengthen cooperation and interoperability before, during, and after disasters and emergencies.

1.2 Record of changes

The Record of Changes documents approved revisions to the Framework.

Record of Changes

Revision No.	Date	Description	Authorized By

1.3 Record of distribution

The Record of Distribution identifies organizations or individuals receiving controlled copies of the Framework.

Distribution List

Framework Holder	Mailing Address	Copy Number	Date Issued

2.0 PURPOSE, SCOPE, SITUATION OVERVIEW, AND ASSUMPTIONS

2.1 Purpose and scope

This Framework establishes regional principles and coordination mechanisms to support port resiliency in the face of disaster among participating Caribbean ports and relevant partners. Port resiliency is the overarching objective to which risk reduction, preparedness, response, recovery and business continuity contribute.

The Framework is intended to promote a shared understanding of regional risks and capability gaps; improve visibility of available resources, capabilities, and specialized expertise; facilitate timely communication and situational awareness; support the coordination of mutual assistance; and promote common approaches to recovery and continuity of the maritime transportation system.

Activities conducted under this Framework complement, and do not replace or supersede, applicable national disaster management plans, laws, regulations, authorities, or established incident management arrangements. Operational command and decision-making during an incident remain with the affected country and its competent authorities.

Through these mechanisms (national disaster management plans, laws, regulations and authorities), participating port authorities, government agencies, regional organizations, maritime industry stakeholders, and other relevant partners can coordinate preparedness activities, exchange information, request and offer assistance, support recovery and continuity of the regional maritime transportation system, and incorporate lessons learned into future preparedness, response, recovery, and resilience efforts.

2.2 Situation overview

Caribbean ports operate in an environment characterized by geographic dispersion, strong dependence on maritime transportation, exposure to recurring natural and technological hazards, and limited redundancy in some critical infrastructure and specialized recovery capabilities.

For many Caribbean countries and islands, ports are essential gateways for trade, tourism, fuel supplies, humanitarian assistance, and disaster response. Disruption of port operations can therefore have consequences extending beyond the affected facility or country and may affect regional shipping networks, supply chains, and the movement of critical goods. Ports are part of the critical infrastructure facilitating disaster response operations, along with electricity, telecommunications, fuel, water, road networks, and other resources.

The findings used to develop this Framework indicate both a strong history of regional cooperation and recurring coordination and capability gaps that can limit the effectiveness of regional disaster response and recovery.

2.2.1 Hazard analysis summary

The OAS CIP Disaster Risk and Management Survey for Enhanced Coordination in Caribbean Ports conducted during the first half of 2026 identified several hazards of recurring concern to Caribbean ports, including hurricanes and extreme weather events, earthquakes and tsunamis, volcanic activity, oil and hazardous-material incidents, public health emergencies, mass-casualty or evacuation incidents, and

cybersecurity incidents. These risks reflect both the hazards facing the region and also the exposure of critical infrastructure and supply chains, vulnerabilities and capability constraints within the maritime sector, the availability of response and recovery capacity, and the dependencies that connect ports across the region. The potential for cascading and cross-border impacts underscores the importance of regional coordination, information sharing, mutual assistance and continuity planning.

The assessment identified hurricanes and extreme weather, earthquakes and tsunamis, volcanic activity, oil and hazardous-material incidents, public health emergencies, mass-casualty or evacuation incidents, cybersecurity incidents, and other events capable of disrupting port operations and regional maritime transportation. These risks may affect individual ports or multiple countries simultaneously and may disrupt port infrastructure, utilities, maritime access, cargo operations, transportation networks, communications, and regional supply chains.

The common risks, associated capability gaps, and regional best practices identified through the assessment are consolidated in Section 12 and inform the priorities, and coordination mechanisms established under this Framework.

2.2.2 Regional capability and gap summary

The assessment undertaken (see section 2.2.3) in developing this Framework identified several recurring capability and coordination gaps across Caribbean ports, including:

- Limited procedures for requesting and coordinating regional or international assistance
- Limited availability of specialized response and recovery resources and expertise
- Customs, immigration, and administrative barriers affecting cross-border assistance
- Limited emergency storage, infrastructure redundancy, and recovery capacity
- Limited regional visibility of available resources and capabilities
- Potential competition for scarce resources when multiple ports are affected simultaneously
- Limited pre-arranged access to specialized marine response and recovery services
- Limited capacity for post-event hydrographic survey and underwater obstruction assessment.

The assessment also identified strengths in regional disaster logistics, movement and staging of emergency supplies, coordination with customs and immigration authorities, and the provision of assistance through regional disaster management organizations.

These findings inform the preparedness mechanisms established in Section 7 and the common risks, gaps, and regional best practices addressed in Section 12.

2.2.3 Relationship to survey findings

This Framework was developed based on the findings of the OAS CIP *Disaster Risk and Management Survey for Enhanced Coordination in Caribbean Ports*. Participants in the survey included regional ports and port authorities, commercial salvage providers, and non-governmental relief organizations. Key findings included:

- Limited regional resource visibility
- Challenges associated with cross-border mutual assistance
- Limited specialized recovery capabilities
- Information-sharing gaps
- Dependency on maritime transportation for essential commodities

- Simultaneous multi-port impacts from hurricanes and other regional hazards.

The Framework addresses these findings through the establishment of a Regional Resource Catalog, Points-of-Contact Network, Mutual Assistance Procedures, Maritime Transportation System Recovery Coordination mechanisms, and Regional Communications Protocols.

2.2.4 Planning assumptions

This Framework is based on the following planning assumptions:

- Caribbean ports will continue to operate in resource-constrained environments and remain exposed to recurring natural, technological, and security-related hazards
- Ports will continue to serve as critical gateways for national commerce, tourism, essential commodities, humanitarian assistance, and disaster response
- Major disasters may affect multiple ports or countries simultaneously and create competing demands for limited regional resources
- National disaster management systems, laws, authorities, and procedures will remain the primary basis for operational response and recovery
- Regional cooperation can supplement national capabilities by improving access to information, specialized expertise, resources, alternative port capacity, and mutual assistance
- Regional coordination arrangements should remain flexible enough to accommodate differences in national governance, port structures, and incident-management systems.

Implementation of this Framework will require sustained financial, human, institutional and technical resources.

2.2.5 Caribbean regional context

Caribbean ports are highly interconnected through shipping services, trade flows, fuel and commodity supply chains, tourism, telecommunications, and other critical infrastructure. As a result, disruption at one port can have operational, economic, and supply chain effects elsewhere in the region.

Many ports operate with limited redundancy in critical infrastructure, specialized personnel, equipment, and recovery capabilities. These conditions increase the value of regional information sharing, mutual assistance, alternative routing, resource visibility, and coordinated maritime transportation system recovery.

This Framework therefore emphasizes regional mechanisms that complement national and port-level arrangements and strengthen the collective ability of Caribbean ports and relevant partners to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and build resilience to disasters affecting the regional maritime transportation system.

3.0 FRAMEWORK GOVERNANCE AND REGIONAL ROLES

Effective implementation of this Framework requires clear roles for participating ports, national authorities, regional organizations, maritime industry stakeholders, and the organization responsible for facilitating regional coordination. These roles are intended to support cooperation under the Framework, while recognizing that disaster risk management and operational decision-making remain the responsibility of individual countries and their respective authorities.

3.1 Regional coordinating organization

For administrative and coordination purposes, ORGANIZATION NAME should serve as the regional coordinating organization for this Framework.

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate the implementation of the Framework and support the regional coordination functions described in Section 8, including maintenance of regional coordination mechanisms and support for preparedness, information sharing, mutual assistance, and maritime transportation system recovery.

ORGANIZATION NAME does not exercise operational command or control over participating ports, national authorities, or resources made available by participating organizations.

3.2 Participating port authorities and facilities

Participating port authorities and facilities should support implementation of the Framework by:

- Designating primary and alternate points of contact for regional coordination
- Providing information necessary to support regional preparedness, resource awareness, and situational awareness
- Maintaining familiarity with regional mechanisms for communications, mutual assistance, and maritime transportation system recovery
- Participating, as appropriate, in regional preparedness, training, drills, exercises, and lessons-learned activities
- Coordinating participation under this Framework with applicable national authorities.

It should be noted that in this Framework, participation in regional assistance activities remains subject to applicable national laws, authorizations, resource availability, and the circumstances of the particular incident.

3.3 National authorities and disaster management organizations

National disaster management agencies and other competent government authorities retain their respective responsibilities and authorities for disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and related decision-making within their jurisdictions.

This Framework complements existing national arrangements by providing regional mechanisms through which port and maritime-sector requirements can be communicated and regional support can be coordinated. Participating ports should maintain appropriate relationships and communication channels with their national authorities to ensure that requests for, acceptance of, and provision of regional assistance are coordinated through the appropriate and authorized channels.

3.4 Regional and international organizations

Regional and international organizations may support the implementation of the Framework through coordination, technical assistance, training, resource mobilization, information sharing, and dissemination of good practices.

Where multiple organizations are supporting an affected country or port, coordination should seek to reduce duplication, improve visibility of available assistance, and ensure that support responds to priorities identified by the affected country.

3.5 Maritime industry and other stakeholders

Shipping companies, terminal operators, harbor pilots, logistics providers, utilities, telecommunications providers, contractors, humanitarian organizations, commercial marine salvage companies, and other relevant stakeholders play important roles in preparedness, continuity, and recovery.

As part of their risk management activities, participating ports should establish appropriate relationships with these stakeholders before disasters occur and support their participation in the coordination arrangements described in Section 7. Stakeholder roles and coordination expectations during preparedness, response, and recovery are addressed in greater detail in Section 7.

3.6 Digitally based information

Many disasters affecting the maritime sector can restrict physical access to offices and, in some cases, damage port facilities and the records stored within them. Accordingly, this Framework recommends that the information contained in Annexes A and B be maintained in a cloud-based environment. Doing so will help ensure continued access to critical contact information and operational data if hard-copy records are damaged, destroyed, or otherwise inaccessible as a result of a disaster.

4.0 REGIONAL COORDINATION AND INTEROPERABILITY

Effective regional disaster risk management requires participating port authorities, government agencies, regional organizations, and other stakeholders to be capable of coordinating across different national and institutional incident-management arrangements. It also requires a degree of interoperability in communications systems, data and information exchange, terminology, resource classification and typing, reporting formats, logistics coordination, and damage and needs assessment processes, where appropriate. This Framework establishes principles for regional coordination and interoperability, while recognizing that operational command and control remain the responsibility of the affected Country and its respective authorities.

The Framework does not establish a regional incident command structure, nor does it supersede national emergency management systems, laws, regulations, or established chains of command. Participating organizations should maintain incident-management arrangements consistent with applicable national requirements and capable of interfacing with the regional coordination mechanisms established under this Framework. To support effective regional cooperation, participating organizations should also seek, where practicable, to align or map key communications, information-sharing, reporting, logistics, and assessment practices to facilitate cooperation during disasters and emergencies.

4.1 Incident-management interoperability

Participating ports should seek to ensure that their respective incident-management arrangements can effectively interface with those of national authorities, neighboring ports, regional organizations, and organizations providing assistance during an emergency.

Interoperability should be supported through:

- Clearly identified points of contact and lines of communication
- Common or mutually understood terminology
- Procedures for requesting, receiving, and coordinating external assistance
- Mechanisms for exchanging operational and situational information
- Liaison arrangements between affected ports, supporting organizations, and national authorities

- Familiarity with the incident-management systems used by participating countries and regional partners.

The Incident Command System (ICS) is recognized as one model that may support effective multi-agency coordination and interoperability. Participating ports should employ incident-management systems appropriate to their national and institutional requirements while seeking compatibility with organizations likely to provide or receive assistance during a disaster.

4.2 Operational command and regional coordination

During an incident, operational command remains with the affected country and its designated authorities. Regional organizations and assisting ports should support, rather than replace, the affected country's command and coordination arrangements.

Requests for regional assistance should originate through, or be coordinated with, the appropriate authorities of the affected country. Supporting organizations should integrate their assistance into the affected country's established incident-management structure to the extent practicable.

Where multiple ports, countries, or supporting organizations are involved, the regional coordination mechanisms established under this Framework should facilitate:

- Communication among affected and supporting organizations
- Development of shared situational awareness
- Identification and communication of priority needs
- Coordination of requests and offers of assistance
- Identification of available regional resources and specialized expertise
- Coordination of support where multiple ports are affected simultaneously
- Resolution or elevation of regional coordination issues that cannot be addressed at the port level.

Regional coordination under this Framework does not confer authority on ORGANIZATION NAME or any participating port to direct the personnel, assets, or operations of another country or organization.

4.3 Liaison and coordination arrangements

Participating ports should identify personnel or positions capable of serving as liaison points among the port, national authorities, regional organizations, supporting ports, and other organizations providing assistance.

Liaison personnel should facilitate communication and coordination in accordance with the regional information-sharing arrangements established in Section 5 and, where applicable, the mutual-assistance arrangements established in Section 11.

The specific organizational structure used to perform liaison functions should be determined by each participating country or port in accordance with its national and institutional arrangements.

4.4 Coordination during multi-port or regional incidents

Disasters in the Caribbean may affect multiple ports or countries simultaneously, creating competing demands for specialized personnel, equipment, transportation, and other limited resources. In such circumstances, regional coordination should support a shared understanding of impacts, needs, available capabilities, and regional maritime transportation priorities.

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate regional situational awareness and communication among affected ports, national authorities, and organizations capable of providing assistance. Where resources are insufficient to meet all identified needs, the Framework should support information sharing and coordination among relevant authorities and assistance providers regarding competing requirements, resource availability, and potential sequencing of regional assistance.

Decisions regarding the deployment of resources remain subject to the authorization of the country or organization providing the resource and acceptance by the affected country.

4.5 Coordination with external assistance providers

External assistance may be provided by neighboring ports, regional or international organizations, foreign governments, private-sector entities, or other partners. Such assistance should be coordinated through appropriate national and regional channels and should respond to needs identified by the affected country.

Participating ports and national authorities should maintain familiarity with the procedures and requirements applicable to requesting, receiving, coordinating, integrating, and demobilizing external assistance. Detailed arrangements concerning authorization, customs, immigration, security, logistics, deployment, and demobilization are addressed in Section 11.

External assistance should complement, and not replace, the incident-management and recovery arrangements established by the affected country. Assistance should be provided in a manner that respects national authorities, supports established coordination mechanisms, and contributes to the timely restoration of port operations and essential services.

5.0 REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION SHARING

Timely and consistent information sharing is essential to effective regional disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and continuity of maritime transportation. This Framework establishes a common approach for exchanging information among:

- Participating ports
- National authorities
- Regional organizations
- Maritime industry stakeholders
- Other relevant partners.

The Framework does not prescribe the internal communication systems or procedures of individual ports. Rather, it identifies the types of information that should be shared regionally, the circumstances in which information sharing is most valuable, and the principles that should guide the exchange and protection of information.

Participating organizations should use established national and regional communication channels wherever practicable and should maintain redundant means of communication appropriate to the risks of disruption during a disaster.

5.1 Regional information-sharing principles

Regional communications under this Framework should support timely, accurate, and actionable situational awareness while recognizing differences in national systems, institutional responsibilities, and information-security requirements.

Information sharing should be guided by the following principles:

- Information should be shared through established points of contact and authorized channels
- Communications should use clear and commonly understood terminology
- Information should be updated as conditions change and, where appropriate, identify the time and source of the information
- Participating organizations should distinguish confirmed information from preliminary or unverified information
- Sensitive, proprietary, security-related, or otherwise restricted information should be protected in accordance with applicable requirements
- Regional information sharing should complement, rather than replace, applicable national reporting and communication requirements.

5.2 Routine and preparedness information

Regional information sharing should occur before disasters as well as during response and recovery. Maintaining routine awareness of regional capabilities, dependencies, and points of contact can improve coordination when an emergency occurs.

Participating organizations should periodically provide or update, as appropriate:

- Primary and alternate points of contact
- General port capabilities and operational characteristics relevant to disaster response and recovery
- Specialized personnel, equipment, vessels, and/or other resources potentially available for regional assistance
- Known capability or resource constraints
- Relevant customs, immigration, security, or other requirements affecting the movement of assistance
- Significant changes in port infrastructure or operations that may affect regional dependencies or recovery
- Other information necessary to maintain regional resource catalogs and preparedness arrangements.

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate the maintenance of this information and make it available to participating organizations in an appropriate and accessible format.

5.3 Pre-incident and emerging-threat information

For forecasted or emerging hazards, participating ports and relevant regional organizations should exchange information that supports preparedness and continuity planning.

Information sharing should focus on anticipated changes in port operations or capacity, potential impacts to maritime transportation and regional dependencies, expected resource or assistance requirements, and potential alternative port or routing arrangements.

The purpose of pre-incident information sharing is to improve regional awareness and allow participating organizations and maritime stakeholders to anticipate disruptions, dependencies, and resource requirements before significant impacts occur.

5.4 Response information and regional situational awareness

Following a disaster or other significant disruption, affected ports should provide timely operational-status information through applicable national and regional coordination channels.

Regional reporting should focus on information necessary to understand impacts to port operations and the maritime transportation system, identify significant resource or capability gaps, communicate requirements for assistance, and support coordination among affected and supporting organizations.

Participating ports should use the common port-status reporting approach established in Section 5.6, as appropriate, and update information when significant conditions or operational capabilities change.

Regional reporting arrangements should be designed to interface, to the greatest extent practicable, with existing national emergency-management, maritime, and disaster-information systems. Information provided under this Framework should support, complement, and draw from established national and regional situational-awareness mechanisms to avoid duplication of effort, reduce reporting burdens on affected ports, and promote a common operating picture among participating organizations.

5.5 Recovery and maritime transportation system information

During recovery, participating organizations should exchange information necessary to support restoration of maritime transportation and continuity of regional supply chains.

Information sharing should focus on current and projected port capacity, significant recovery requirements and timelines, specialized resource or technical assistance needs, constraints affecting critical cargo and maritime services, and available alternative port or routing capacity.

Recovery information should support the regional maritime transportation system recovery mechanisms established in Section 9 and should be updated as significant recovery conditions or capabilities change.

5.6 Common port-status reporting

To improve regional situational awareness, ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate development and use of a common port-status reporting approach. The intent is not to replace existing national reporting requirements, but to establish a minimum set of information that can be readily understood, compared, and incorporated into existing national and regional reporting systems across participating ports.

A common reporting approach should, at a minimum, allow participating ports to communicate:

- Whether the port is open, partially operational, restricted, or closed
- Status of channels, berths, terminals, and key cargo-handling infrastructure
- Significant vessel, cargo, or landside access restrictions
- Approximate available operational capacity

- Critical resource or capability gaps
- Assistance requested or potentially required
- Availability of alternative routing or handling capacity
- Expected changes in operating status, where known
- Status of post-event channel and berth assessment activities
- Known or suspected navigational obstructions and hazards
- Status of aids to navigation and navigational restrictions
- Port security conditions and restrictions.

Common reporting terminology and formats should be periodically reviewed through drills, exercises, actual incidents, and lessons-learned activities.

The coordinating organization should develop and maintain a standardized reporting template to support consistent regional situational awareness and facilitate the exchange of operational information during incidents. The template may be updated periodically without requiring revision of this Framework.

5.7 Communication redundancy and continuity

Participating organizations should consider the potential loss or degradation of normal communication systems during disasters and maintain appropriate alternative means of communicating with national and regional partners.

The Framework does not prescribe particular communication technologies. Depending on local and national arrangements, redundant communications may include satellite communications, radio systems, mobile networks, internet-based platforms, or other available systems.

Regional preparedness activities should periodically validate that participating organizations can establish communication with relevant national and regional points of contact when primary systems are unavailable.

5.8 Information protection and sharing restrictions

Information exchanged under this Framework should be handled in accordance with applicable national laws, organizational policies, security requirements, and any restrictions established by the organization providing the information.

Participating organizations should identify information that is sensitive, proprietary, security-related, or otherwise restricted and communicate applicable limitations on its further distribution.

The need to protect sensitive information should be balanced, where appropriate, with the need to provide participating organizations sufficient operational information to support regional preparedness, response, recovery, and continuity of maritime transportation.

6.0 STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION

Effective regional disaster risk management depends on coordination among port authorities and facilities, national authorities, regional organizations, maritime industry stakeholders, disaster response organizations, and other partners.

This section establishes a common approach to stakeholder coordination before, during, and after disasters. Detailed arrangements for information sharing, preparedness, mutual assistance, and maritime transportation system recovery are addressed in the relevant sections of this Framework.

6.1 Regional coordination structure

The Framework promotes a networked approach in which participating organizations cooperate within their respective authorities and responsibilities. Relevant stakeholders may include:

- Port authorities and facilities
- National disaster management, customs, immigration, maritime, security, and other government authorities
- Environmental, public health, and other authorities with responsibilities relevant to disaster preparedness, response, recovery, or environmental emergencies
- Regional and international disaster management and maritime organizations
- Shipping companies, terminal operators, pilots, and other maritime service providers
- Utilities, telecommunications, logistics, and transportation providers
- Humanitarian and relief organizations
- Port workers, communities adjacent to ports, organizations representing vulnerable populations, and other stakeholders affected by port disruptions, where appropriate
- Other organizations with responsibilities or capabilities relevant to port preparedness, response, recovery, resilience, or business continuity.

Participating organizations should maintain appropriate relationships and points of contact to support timely coordination when regional cooperation is required.

6.2 Stakeholder coordination during preparedness

Before disasters occur, stakeholder coordination should focus on building relationships, maintaining awareness of relevant capabilities and constraints, and reducing barriers to regional cooperation.

Participating organizations should, as appropriate, maintain current points of contact; participate in regional planning, training, drills, and exercises; identify capabilities potentially available for regional assistance; and coordinate with relevant government and private-sector stakeholders on issues affecting preparedness and continuity. Participating organizations should also consider personnel welfare and resilience measures within preparedness planning, including occupational health and safety, fatigue management, psychosocial support, and arrangements for post-incident care and recovery.

Regional preparedness mechanisms, including the Regional Resource Catalog and Points-of-Contact Network, are addressed in Section 7, and regional training and exercises are addressed in Section 13.

6.3 Stakeholder coordination during response

During response, stakeholder coordination should support the affected country and port by facilitating communication, situational awareness, identification of priority requirements, and access to potentially available regional assistance.

Affected ports should communicate significant operational impacts and requirements through applicable national and regional channels. Supporting ports, regional organizations, maritime industry stakeholders, and other partners should coordinate assistance and operational information through those established arrangements.

Regional communications and information sharing are addressed in Section 5, and requests and offers of regional assistance are addressed in Section 11.

6.4 Stakeholder coordination during recovery

During recovery, stakeholder coordination should support restoration of port operations and regional maritime connectivity, including continuity of critical cargo and transportation services. Recovery coordination should also consider the welfare of affected personnel and the restoration of safe and sustainable working conditions.

Affected and supporting organizations should exchange information concerning significant recovery requirements, operational capacity, alternative transportation arrangements, and opportunities for technical or resource support.

Regional maritime transportation system recovery coordination is addressed in Section 9, and regional resilience and business continuity are addressed in Section 10.

6.5 Information sharing and situational awareness

Stakeholder coordination should use the regional communications, information-sharing, and port-status reporting arrangements established in Section 5.

6.6 Coordination principles

Activities under this Framework should respect applicable national authorities and legal requirements and complement, rather than replace, the disaster management arrangements of affected countries.

Regional coordination should promote timely information sharing, cooperation among public- and private-sector stakeholders, flexibility across different national and institutional systems, and effective use of available regional capabilities.

Effective regional coordination depends on relationships, communication channels, and procedures established before disasters occur. Participating organizations are therefore encouraged to maintain regular engagement, strengthen familiarity with one another's roles and capabilities, and remain familiar with the coordination mechanisms established under this Framework.

7.0 REGIONAL PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS FRAMEWORK

Effective regional disaster risk management requires participating ports to maintain a shared understanding of regional risks, capabilities, resource gaps, dependencies, and mechanisms for cooperation before a disaster occurs. This section establishes the common preparedness elements that support coordination among Caribbean ports and relevant national and regional organizations.

The Framework does not prescribe the content or structure of individual port emergency or disaster management plans. Rather, it identifies regional preparedness capabilities and coordination mechanisms that participating organizations should maintain or support to improve interoperability, mutual assistance, maritime transportation system recovery, resilience, and business continuity.

7.1 Common regional risk picture

Participating ports face many common hazards, including:

- Hurricanes and extreme weather events
- Earthquakes and tsunamis
- Volcanic activity
- Oil and hazardous-material spills
- Public health emergencies
- Cybersecurity incidents
- Search and rescue incidents
- Other incidents capable of disrupting maritime transportation.

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate periodic development and review of a common regional risk picture based on information provided by participating ports, national disaster management organizations, relevant regional organizations, and other available sources. Where practicable, the regional risk picture should draw upon and align with existing national multi-hazard risk assessments and related risk-management processes.

Participating ports are encouraged to support this process through structured risk assessments appropriate to their respective circumstances. Such assessments may draw upon the methodology contained in the OAS CIP *Model Emergency and Disaster Management Plan* (2021), including consideration of hazards, vulnerabilities, existing capabilities, risk perceptions, and the potential consequences of disruptions to critical port functions. The results of these assessments can help inform regional preparedness priorities, capability development, and coordination arrangements under this Framework.

The regional risk picture should consider, as appropriate:

- Hazards capable of affecting multiple ports or countries simultaneously
- Critical maritime infrastructure and services exposed to those hazards
- Regional dependencies involving shipping services, fuel, food, utilities, telecommunications, and landside transportation
- Ports or maritime services that may provide alternative capacity following a disruption
- Potential cascading impacts across the regional maritime transportation system
- Emerging risks or changes in hazard exposure that may affect regional preparedness and recovery.

The purpose of the regional risk picture is not to replace individual port or national risk assessments, but to complement them by identifying risks and dependencies that may require regional coordination or collective preparedness.

7.2 Regional capability and gap assessment

The Framework should support a shared understanding of capabilities and resource gaps relevant to regional preparedness, response, recovery, resilience, and business continuity. Participating ports should periodically provide information, as appropriate, concerning:

- Capabilities and resources relevant to resiliency/business continuity, disaster response and recovery
- Specialized personnel, equipment, vessels, supplies, and technical expertise potentially available for regional assistance
- Significant operational or infrastructure limitations
- Critical dependencies affecting continuity and recovery

- Resources or capabilities that may be difficult to obtain following a regional disaster
- Common or recurring capability gaps.

ORGANIZATION NAME should periodically review this information to identify regional capability gaps, common resource constraints, and opportunities for shared resources, technical cooperation, training, or other regional preparedness initiatives.

This regional assessment should complement, rather than prescribe, the internal capability-assessment processes of individual participating ports.

7.3 Regional resource catalog

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate maintenance of a regional catalog of resources and capabilities that may be relevant to disaster response and maritime transportation system recovery. The catalog may include:

- Specialized personnel and technical expertise
- Cargo-handling and heavy equipment
- Marine vessels and support craft
- Hydrographic survey capabilities
- Salvage and wreck-removal capabilities
- Oil-spill and hazardous-material response equipment
- Emergency communications equipment
- Temporary power and utility-support equipment
- Engineering and infrastructure-assessment capabilities
- Marine casualty response capabilities
- Commercial diving and underwater operations capabilities
- Dredging, obstruction-removal, and debris-clearance capabilities
- Heavy-lift and marine crane capabilities
- Marine engineering and salvage planning expertise
- Lightering and marine pollution response capabilities
- Other resources identified by participating organizations as potentially available for regional assistance.

The catalog should identify the organization responsible for each resource, appropriate points of contact, and relevant limitations or conditions affecting potential deployment.

The catalog should, where practicable, distinguish between resources located within the region and those requiring mobilization from outside the region. Relevant information may include estimated mobilization and deployment timeframes, recognizing that the availability of a capability alone may not reflect the time required for it to support response and recovery operations.

The resources catalog should also include, as appropriate, information regarding resource ownership, points of contact, procedures for requesting or activating the resource, applicable information-sharing restrictions, and any other considerations relevant to its potential use in regional assistance arrangements. Where available, participating organizations may also identify cost, reimbursement, or other administrative considerations that could affect deployment.

Inclusion of a resource in the regional catalog does not constitute a commitment to deploy it. Any deployment remains subject to availability, applicable national law, required authorization, and acceptance by the affected country.

7.4 Regional points-of-contact network

Participating organizations should maintain primary and alternate points of contact for regional disaster risk management and maritime transportation system recovery coordination. The regional points-of-contact network should include, as appropriate, representatives of:

- Participating port authorities and facilities
- National disaster management organizations
- Customs, immigration, and other relevant government agencies
- Regional disaster management and maritime organizations
- Shipping companies and terminal operators
- Relevant utility and transportation providers
- Organizations capable of providing specialized technical or operational assistance.

ORGANIZATION NAME should maintain and periodically update the regional contact network. Participating organizations should promptly communicate significant changes in designated points of contact.

The network should support both routine preparedness coordination and rapid communication during disasters.

7.5 Regional information-sharing protocols

Participating organizations should establish familiarity with and periodically validate the regional communications and information-sharing arrangements described in Section 5.

Preparedness activities should ensure that relevant organizations understand applicable communication channels, points of contact, common reporting arrangements, information-protection requirements, and procedures for exchanging operational and situational information before, during, and after a disaster.

Regional drills and exercises should be used, as appropriate, to confirm that these arrangements can be activated effectively and that participating organizations can exchange the information required to support regional coordination and maritime transportation system recovery.

7.6 Regional assistance coordination procedures

Participating organizations should understand and periodically validate the regional mutual-assistance arrangements described in Section 11 before a disaster occurs.

Preparedness activities should address, as appropriate, authorized channels for requesting and offering assistance; applicable national approvals; customs, immigration, security, and other entry requirements; procedures for receiving and integrating external personnel and equipment; and logistical or administrative considerations affecting deployment and demobilization.

The purpose of these activities is to identify and reduce potential barriers to regional assistance before an emergency occurs, while recognizing that decisions to request, accept, provide, or deploy assistance

remain subject to applicable national authorities, laws, resource availability, and the circumstances of the incident.

7.7 Pre-arranged commercial response capacity

Many of the specialized capabilities required to restore maritime access following a disaster, including salvage, wreck removal, underwater survey, obstruction and debris clearance, emergency towage, and marine firefighting, are provided predominantly by commercial providers rather than by ports or national authorities. Delays in identifying, accessing, mobilizing, or contracting these capabilities can significantly affect the speed with which channels, berths, and other critical maritime infrastructure are returned to service.

Participating ports and national authorities are encouraged to identify and understand, before a disaster occurs, the specialized marine capabilities potentially available within and outside the region. This may include maintaining awareness of qualified service providers, existing contractual arrangements, potential mobilization requirements, and relevant customs, immigration, licensing, and permitting considerations that could affect deployment during an emergency.

ORGANIZATION NAME may support regional preparedness by facilitating the exchange of information on specialized response capabilities, provider qualification criteria, deployment considerations, model contractual approaches, and lessons learned from previous incidents. The intent is not to prescribe commercial arrangements, but to improve regional awareness of capabilities and factors that may limit their timely mobilization.

Participating organizations should recognize that specialized marine response assets are limited in number and may be in high demand following major regional events. A hurricane, earthquake, tsunami, or other large-scale disaster affecting multiple ports simultaneously may create competing requirements for the same commercial resources. Accordingly, ports and national authorities should consider potential resource constraints and mobilization delays in preparedness, continuity, and recovery planning.

7.8 Regional preparedness activities

Participating organizations should undertake periodic regional preparedness activities to strengthen relationships and validate the mechanisms established under this Framework. Regional training, drills, and exercises should be conducted in accordance with Section 13.

7.9 Regional readiness review

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate periodic review of regional readiness to confirm that the preparedness mechanisms established under this Framework remain current and usable.

The review should focus on significant changes affecting regional risks, points of contact, available capabilities and resources, coordination arrangements, and other factors that may affect regional preparedness.

Identified changes or deficiencies should inform updates to the relevant regional mechanisms and preparedness priorities. Broader Framework review, lessons learned, and continuous improvement are addressed in Section 14.

7.10 Relationship to port and national preparedness planning

The regional preparedness mechanisms established in this section are intended to complement existing port and national disaster management arrangements. Individual ports remain responsible for determining the preparedness measures, operational procedures, staffing arrangements, and resources appropriate to their respective circumstances.

Participating ports are encouraged to incorporate relevant regional coordination arrangements into their own plans and procedures so that regional points of contact, information-sharing mechanisms, assistance procedures, and maritime transportation system recovery arrangements can be activated effectively when required.

In this way, the Framework provides a common regional preparedness architecture without establishing a uniform operational plan for participating ports.

8.0 ROLES OF THE REGIONAL COORDINATING ORGANIZATION

8.1 Overview

The Regional Coordinating Organization serves as the focal point for implementation and maintenance of this Framework. While responsibility for preparedness, response, recovery, and resilience activities remains distributed among participating organizations, the Regional Coordinating Organization supports regional interoperability by facilitating coordination, information sharing, preparedness activities, and continuous improvement.

The Regional Coordinating Organization is not expected to direct individual organizations or assume operational control during incidents. Rather, its role is to support cooperation among participating organizations and maintain the regional mechanisms established under this Framework.

8.2 Core responsibilities

Consistent with the provisions of this Framework, the Regional Coordinating Organization should:

- Maintain the Regional Resource Catalog and Regional Points-of-Contact Network established in Section 7.
- Support regional preparedness activities, including information maintenance, stakeholder engagement, and awareness-building activities described in Section 7.
- Facilitate regional communication and information sharing in accordance with Section 5.
- Support stakeholder coordination and regional interoperability arrangements described in Sections 4 and 6.
- Facilitate awareness of available regional capabilities and resources that may support response and recovery activities.
- Support implementation of the regional mutual-assistance arrangements described in Section 11.
- Support coordination of regional maritime transportation system recovery activities described in Section 9.
- Promote regional training, exercises, lessons learned, and continuous improvement activities described in Sections 13 and 14.

8.3 Maintenance and continuous improvement

The Regional Coordinating Organization should periodically review and update the coordination mechanisms established under this Framework, including the Regional Resource Catalog, Regional Points-

of-Contact Network, and associated implementation tools. Lessons identified through incidents, exercises, stakeholder engagement, and Framework reviews should be incorporated into future updates as appropriate.

The Regional Coordinating Organization should also facilitate periodic review of the Framework in accordance with the process described in Section 14.

9.0 REGIONAL COORDINATION DURING RESPONSE AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM RECOVERY

Following a disaster or other significant disruption, effective recovery of the regional maritime transportation system depends on timely coordination among affected ports, national authorities, regional organizations, maritime industry stakeholders, and organizations capable of providing assistance.

This section establishes the regional mechanisms for coordinating maritime transportation system recovery (MTSR). Individual ports remain responsible for their own response, damage assessment, operational decision-making, and recovery activities in accordance with applicable national arrangements. The Framework focuses on the regional coordination necessary to understand impacts, identify recovery requirements, mobilize available support, maintain regional maritime connectivity, and address disruptions affecting multiple ports or countries.

9.1 Activation of regional MTSR coordination

Regional MTSR coordination should be initiated when a disaster or disruption:

- Significantly affects the operations or capacity of one or more participating ports
- Disrupts maritime transportation or critical regional supply chains
- Creates a potential requirement for specialized resources or assistance from other ports or regional partners
- Results in diversion of vessels or cargo to other regional ports.

The affected port should communicate relevant operational impacts and recovery requirements through applicable national and regional channels. ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate regional coordination when the nature or scale of the disruption requires interaction among participating ports, national authorities, regional organizations, or maritime industry stakeholders.

9.2 Regional MTS status and situational awareness

Affected ports should provide initial and updated information regarding the status and capacity of the maritime transportation system using the regional communications and port-status reporting arrangements established in Section 5.

Regional situational awareness should support understanding of:

- The operational status and capacity of affected ports
- Significant navigation, infrastructure, utility, cargo-handling, or landside transportation constraints
- Vessel or cargo restrictions affecting maritime transportation
- Immediate and anticipated recovery requirements
- Availability of alternative port capacity or routing options

- Significant changes in expected restoration timelines.

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate the consolidation and exchange of this information among relevant regional stakeholders to support recovery coordination and decision-making.

9.3 Port-level MTSR interface

Participating ports should maintain an MTSR capability appropriate to their respective operations, risks, and national arrangements and should identify the personnel or functions responsible for interfacing with regional coordination mechanisms.

This interface should enable affected ports to communicate recovery priorities, operational constraints, resource requirements, anticipated changes in capacity, and other information necessary for regional coordination.

The Framework does not prescribe the organizational structure or internal procedures used by individual ports to perform MTSR functions.

9.4 Regional MTSR coordination

Where regional coordination is required, ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate communication among affected ports, national authorities, participating ports, regional organizations, maritime industry stakeholders, and potential assistance providers.

Regional coordination should focus on developing a shared understanding of impacts to maritime transportation, identifying significant recovery requirements and capability gaps, connecting affected ports with potentially available resources and specialized expertise, coordinating information on alternative ports and cargo-routing options, identifying regional supply-chain dependencies and continuity concerns, and addressing recovery issues affecting multiple ports or countries.

Operational recovery priorities and decisions remain the responsibility of affected ports and competent national authorities.

Recovery efforts should, where practicable, consider opportunities to address vulnerabilities identified during the disaster and strengthen the resilience of port infrastructure, operations, and maritime transportation services to future events.

9.5 Alternative ports, routing, and maritime continuity

Where port capacity is significantly reduced or unavailable, regional coordination should support the exchange of information necessary to evaluate alternative maritime transportation arrangements.

Relevant information may include alternative port capacity; vessel, berth, draft, or cargo limitations; cargo-handling and storage capacity; landside transportation constraints; customs and immigration considerations; availability of fuel and maritime services; and changes in shipping-line operations.

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate exchange of this information among affected ports, potential alternative ports, shipping companies, terminal operators, government agencies, and other relevant stakeholders.

Decisions concerning vessel diversion, cargo routing, or use of alternative facilities remain with the responsible commercial operators, ports, and national authorities.

9.6 Regional recovery resources and expertise

Where specialized recovery capabilities are required, affected ports and national authorities should use the Regional Resource Catalog and Points-of-Contact Network established in Section 7 to identify potentially available resources and technical expertise.

Relevant capabilities may include hydrographic surveying, engineering and structural assessment, salvage and wreck removal, dredging and channel restoration, navigation aids, heavy and cargo-handling equipment, marine vessels, emergency utilities, environmental response, and other specialized MTSR capabilities.

Restoration of maritime access often involves a series of interrelated activities, including post-event assessment and hydrographic survey; identification and removal of navigational obstructions; restoration of aids to navigation; repair or temporary restoration of critical infrastructure and equipment; and phased reopening of port operations. Regional coordination mechanisms should support awareness of these dependencies and help affected ports identify and request the resources and technical expertise most relevant to their stage of recovery.

Where an affected port is unable to conduct a post-event survey using its own resources, the identification of available regional or commercial survey capability should be considered as an early recovery priority. Timely assessment of channel, berth, and navigational conditions can support more accurate understanding of recovery requirements, potential resource needs, and anticipated restoration timelines.

Requests, offers, mobilization, and deployment of regional recovery resources should be coordinated in accordance with the mutual-assistance arrangements established in Section 12.

The Framework does not create an obligation to provide resources or technical assistance.

9.7 Multi-port recovery and regional prioritization

A major regional disaster may affect multiple ports simultaneously and create competing demands for limited recovery resources. In such circumstances, regional coordination should improve visibility of impacts, requirements, available capabilities, alternative capacity, and regional maritime transportation priorities. Where multiple affected ports require access to scarce regional resources or specialized capabilities, ORGANIZATION NAME and other participating organizations should seek to promote transparent and informed decision-making.

Considerations may include:

- Humanitarian needs and support for affected populations
- Restoration of critical lifeline services and essential supplies
- Impacts on regional maritime transportation and supply chains
- Availability of alternative port capacity and routing options
- Requirements for specialized recovery resources and technical expertise
- Opportunities for unaffected ports and regional partners to support continuity and recovery.

This coordination is intended to support informed decision-making among affected countries and assistance providers. It does not authorize ORGANIZATION NAME to allocate, prioritize, or direct resources on behalf of participating countries or organizations.

9.8 MTSR review and maintenance

Regional MTSR arrangements should be reviewed periodically and following significant incidents or exercises to identify changes or lessons affecting regional recovery coordination.

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate updates to regional MTS recovery mechanisms, and participating ports should consider relevant regional lessons and changes in coordination arrangements when maintaining their own MTSR plans and procedures.

A broader Framework review, lessons learned, and continuous improvement are addressed in Section 14.

10.0 REGIONAL RESILIENCE AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Caribbean ports are critical to regional commerce, tourism, fuel and essential commodity distribution, humanitarian assistance, and disaster response. Because ports and maritime supply chains are interconnected, disruption at one port may affect transportation, trade, and the provision of essential goods and services elsewhere in the region.

This Framework promotes a regional approach to resilience and business continuity that complements the plans and procedures maintained by individual ports and national authorities. Regional coordination should focus on identifying shared dependencies, maintaining awareness of alternative port capacity, and available regional capabilities and supporting the continuity and timely restoration of critical maritime transportation following significant disruptions.

10.1 Regional resilience principles

Participating organizations should support regional maritime resilience by promoting protection and timely restoration of critical port and maritime functions; identifying significant vulnerabilities and dependencies; maintaining relationships that support mutual assistance; considering alternative means of maintaining maritime transportation when normal operations are disrupted; and, where appropriate, supporting measures that reduce, avoid, transfer, or mitigate disaster-related risks.

Individual ports remain responsible for determining the resilience measures appropriate to their infrastructure, operations, risks, and national requirements.

10.2 Regional maritime dependencies

Caribbean maritime transportation depends on interconnected shipping networks, fuel and essential commodity supply chains, telecommunications and utilities, logistics and landside transportation services, customs and border-management processes, and other critical infrastructure and service providers.

Participating organizations should consider how disruption of these dependencies may affect multiple ports or countries and should exchange information concerning significant regional vulnerabilities or constraints through the arrangements established in Section 5.

10.3 Regional continuity measures

Where a disruption affects regional maritime transportation, participating organizations should coordinate, as appropriate, to maintain or restore critical maritime functions. Regional continuity

measures may include use of alternative ports and cargo-routing arrangements, identification of available regional resources and specialized expertise, coordination with shipping lines and terminal operators, and support for the movement of humanitarian assistance, fuel, and other essential cargo.

Alternative port and routing coordination is addressed in Section 9, and the provision of regional assistance is addressed in Section 11.

10.4 Relationship to port business continuity planning

Individual ports should maintain business continuity arrangements appropriate to their respective operations, risks, and national requirements. Such arrangements should address continuity and restoration of critical port functions, including operational, infrastructure, utility, communications, personnel, security, and other dependencies relevant to the port. Business continuity arrangements should also, where appropriate, address personnel accountability, staff health and safety, emergency staffing requirements, workforce welfare, and procedures supporting the safe return of personnel to work following an incident.

Participating ports are encouraged to incorporate relevant regional dependencies, alternative capacity, information-sharing arrangements, and mutual-assistance mechanisms established under this Framework into their business continuity planning.

A broader Framework review, lessons learned, and continuous improvement are addressed in Section 14.

11.0 REGIONAL MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

Disasters affecting Caribbean ports may create requirements for personnel, equipment, vessels, supplies, technical expertise, or other capabilities that exceed those available to an affected port or country. Regional mutual assistance can help address these requirements by connecting affected ports and national authorities with resources potentially available from other participating ports and regional partners.

This Framework establishes principles and coordination mechanisms to facilitate requests and offers of assistance. It does not create an obligation for any participating organization or country to provide resources. All assistance remains subject to applicable national laws and policies, required authorizations, resource availability, and acceptance by the affected country.

11.1 Requests for regional assistance

Requests for regional assistance should originate through, or be coordinated with, the appropriate authorities of the affected country in accordance with applicable national disaster management arrangements.

Requests should provide sufficient information to allow potential supporting organizations to understand the requirement and determine whether assistance can be provided. As appropriate, requests should identify:

- The nature and location of the requirement
- The type and quantity of personnel, equipment, supplies, vessels, or technical expertise required
- The priority and anticipated duration of the requirement
- The location to which assistance should be deployed
- Relevant operating, access, security, or logistical conditions

- Required arrival time or operational timeframe, where applicable
- Affected-country points of contact
- Any customs, immigration, permitting, licensing, or other requirements relevant to deployment.

ORGANIZATION NAME should, when requested and appropriate, facilitate communication of regional assistance requirements to participating organizations and other potential sources of support.

11.2 Offers of assistance

Participating ports and other organizations that may be able to respond to a request for assistance should communicate the resources or capabilities potentially available, together with relevant conditions or limitations.

Offers of assistance should identify, as appropriate:

- The personnel, equipment, vessels, supplies, or expertise available
- The anticipated timeframe for deployment
- The period for which the resource may be available
- Transportation and logistical requirements
- Operational or technical limitations
- Costs or other conditions associated with deployment, where applicable
-
- A point of contact for further coordination.

The affected country retains authority to determine whether offered assistance is required and whether it can be accepted and integrated into national response and recovery arrangements.

Participating organizations should recognize that reimbursement, liability, insurance, and other legal considerations may affect the provision of assistance and are encouraged to address such matters, where appropriate, through pre-existing agreements or other arrangements.

11.3 Coordination of regional assistance

Where multiple organizations are providing or offering assistance, regional coordination should seek to improve visibility of available support, reduce duplication, and help ensure that assistance responds to priorities identified by the affected country.

ORGANIZATION NAME may facilitate this coordination by:

- Connecting affected and supporting organizations
- Sharing authorized information concerning outstanding resource requirements
- Identifying potentially available capabilities through the Regional Resource Catalog
- Supporting communication where multiple organizations offer similar resources
- Identifying potential gaps between requested and available assistance
- Facilitating coordination where multiple affected ports are competing for scarce or specialized resources
- Supporting information-sharing concerning the status of requested or deployed assistance.

ORGANIZATION NAME's role is facilitative and does not include authority to direct, allocate, or deploy the resources of participating countries or organizations.

Assistance provided by military, coast guard, law-enforcement, or other governmental organizations remains subject to the laws, authorities, and coordination arrangements of the providing and receiving countries.

11.4 National authorization, customs, immigration, and legal requirements

Cross-border deployment of personnel, equipment, vessels, supplies, and other assistance may require authorization by both the providing and receiving countries. Participating organizations should, where practicable, identify relevant legal, administrative, customs, immigration, security, and other entry requirements before a disaster occurs wherever practicable.

Requirements may include:

- Government authorization for deployment or receipt of assistance
- Customs procedures, including temporary importation and re-export of equipment and supplies
- Immigration, visa, and work-authorization requirements for deployed personnel
- Professional licensing or certification requirements
- Security clearances and port-access requirements
- Vessel entry or operating requirements
- Environmental or hazardous material requirements
- Insurance and liability considerations
- Other applicable national laws, regulations, or administrative procedures.

Participating ports should coordinate with appropriate national authorities to identify relevant points of contact, documentation requirements, and, where permitted by national law, procedures that may facilitate expedited processing of emergency personnel, equipment, vessels, supplies, and other forms of assistance. Such arrangements should, where appropriate, encompass both governmental and commercial providers, recognizing that specialized response and recovery capabilities may be provided by organizations outside the port authority or government sector.

Participating organizations should also consider how customs, immigration, security, law-enforcement, and border-management functions will be maintained during disasters while facilitating the movement of authorized response personnel, vessels, equipment, and relief supplies. Where practicable, contingency arrangements should support essential screening, access control, cargo integrity, and security requirements, including circumstances in which facilities, personnel, communications, or information systems have been disrupted.

Participating organizations and national authorities may consider relevant international and regional disaster-assistance frameworks and facilitation arrangements when reviewing procedures for the receipt and deployment of international assistance.

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate the sharing of relevant information among participating organizations but does not have authority to waive or modify national legal, customs, immigration, security, or other regulatory requirements.

The Framework does not supersede applicable national requirements. Decisions concerning the authorization and entry of regional assistance remain with the competent authorities of the providing and receiving countries.

11.5 Mobilization and integration of assistance

Once assistance has been accepted, the affected country and supporting organization should coordinate the arrangements necessary for mobilization and integration of the resource.

Coordination should address, as appropriate:

- Deployment destination and reporting location
- Receiving organization and point of contact
- Transportation and staging arrangements
- Access to port or restricted areas
- Communications and liaison arrangements
- Integration with applicable national or port incident-management structures
- Accommodation, sustainment, fuel, and other logistical requirements
- Safety and security requirements
- Expected duration of deployment.

Personnel and resources provided through regional assistance should operate within the applicable legal and incident-management arrangements of the affected country.

11.6 Assistance tracking and status

Participating organizations should maintain appropriate awareness of assistance requested, offered, accepted, deployed, and completed during an incident.

The affected country or port, supporting organizations, and ORGANIZATION NAME should exchange sufficient information to understand the status and availability of regional assistance, including significant changes affecting deployed personnel, equipment, vessels, or other resources.

Assistance-related information should be coordinated through the communications and information-sharing arrangements established in Section 5 and should support, rather than duplicate, national resource-tracking systems.

11.7 Demobilization and return of assistance

The affected country or port and the organization providing assistance should coordinate the demobilization and return of personnel, equipment, vessels, and other resources when assistance is no longer required.

Demobilization should address, as applicable, release and return arrangements, transportation and logistics, customs and immigration requirements, equipment accountability, outstanding administrative or financial matters, and any necessary documentation or reporting.

Decisions concerning the release or withdrawal of assistance remain subject to the authorities and requirements of the affected and providing countries or organizations.

11.8 Multi-port and regional resource constraints

Where multiple affected ports require the same scarce or specialized resources, ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate the information sharing among affected countries and potential assistance providers concerning outstanding requirements and available resources. This coordination should support informed

decisions by the competent authorities and resource providers and does not establish a regional authority to allocate or prioritize resources.

In situations involving competing demands for limited resources, information sharing should, where appropriate, include consideration of humanitarian requirements, the role of affected ports in the importation and distribution of fuel and other essential commodities, the need to support disaster-relief operations and humanitarian logistics, the availability of alternative port capacity, and the broader impacts on regional maritime transportation and supply chains.

11.9 Lessons learned and improvement of mutual-assistance arrangements

Following significant regional assistance activities, participating organizations should identify and share lessons learned concerning the effectiveness of mutual-assistance arrangements. Findings with regional applicability should inform the Framework maintenance and continuous improvement process established in Section 14.

12.0 COMMON CARIBBEAN RISKS, GAPS, AND REGIONAL BEST PRACTICES

The assessment and stakeholder input informing this Framework identified several risks, capability gaps, and good practices that are common or relevant across Caribbean ports. Because these issues may affect multiple ports or regional maritime transportation networks, they provide an important basis for regional coordination and preparedness.

This section consolidates those findings and identifies the regional mechanisms established by this Framework to address them. It does not prescribe hazard-specific response procedures for individual ports.

12.1 Regional risk, gap, and best-practice matrix

Common Risk	Potential Regional Consequences	Common Gaps / Constraints	Regional Best Practices / Framework Response
Hurricanes and extreme weather	Multi-port closures; damage to channels, berths, terminals, utilities, and landside connections; disruption of shipping and essential cargo flows	Limited specialized recovery equipment; temporary power; hydrographic and engineering capabilities; competing demand for recovery resources	Pre-incident information sharing; common port-status reporting; Regional Resource Catalog; alternative port and routing arrangements; multi-port recovery coordination
Slow-onset climate and environmental risks	Reduced port capacity; infrastructure degradation; increased operational disruptions	Limited adaptation capacity; funding constraints; infrastructure vulnerabilities	Regional risk assessment; information sharing; resilience planning; adaptation measures
Earthquakes and tsunamis	Structural and channel damage; utility disruption; loss of port capacity; simultaneous impacts across affected areas	Limited structural, hydrographic, salvage, engineering, and heavy-equipment capabilities	Regional expertise network; rapid port-status reporting; identification of alternative capacity; coordinated access to specialized resources

Common Risk	Potential Regional Consequences	Common Gaps / Constraints	Regional Best Practices / Framework Response
Volcanic activity	Port or navigation restrictions; ash impacts; transportation disruption; cargo or vessel diversion	Limited specialized expertise; transportation constraints; reduced alternative capacity	Coordination with national authorities; regional status reporting; alternative routing; use of unaffected ports
Oil spills and hazardous-material incidents	Waterway or terminal restrictions; environmental impacts; disruption of vessel and cargo operations	Limited specialized personnel, vessels, equipment, storage, and disposal capabilities	Regional resource and expertise identification; cross-border assistance arrangements; coordination with environmental and maritime authorities
Epidemics and pandemics	Workforce shortages; vessel and cargo restrictions; reduced operating capacity; disruption of essential supply chains	Limited staffing redundancy; health-related movement restrictions; dependence on critical personnel	Business continuity arrangements; coordination among ports, health authorities, and shipping operators; regional information sharing
Cybersecurity incidents	Disruption of terminal, cargo, communications, security, or administrative systems; potential impacts across shared vendors or systems	Limited specialized cyber expertise; dependence on information systems and common service providers	Cybersecurity points of contact; information-sharing arrangements; continuity and backup capabilities; regional exercises and lessons learned
Mass-casualty or evacuation incidents	Increased demands on port, vessel, transportation, security, and humanitarian logistics capabilities	Limited staging, transportation, personnel, communications, or logistics capacity	Pre-established stakeholder relationships; regional communications; mutual-assistance arrangements; multi-agency exercises
Security-related incidents	Port closure or restriction; disruption of cargo and vessel movements; diversion to other ports	Limited specialized security capabilities; communications constraints; reduced alternative capacity	Coordination with national security authorities; protected information sharing; continuity arrangements; alternative port and routing information
Marine casualty affecting port access	Channel or berth closure; disruption of vessel traffic, cargo operations, and relief logistics	Limited survey, salvage, wreck-removal, diving, and obstruction-clearance capabilities	Regional Resource Catalog; common status reporting; coordination of specialized response resources; cross-border assistance arrangements

Across these hazards, common regional challenges include limited specialized capabilities, barriers to cross-border assistance, limited redundancy, information-sharing gaps, and competition for scarce resources during multi-port incidents.

12.2 Application to the framework

The risks and gaps identified above should inform implementation of the preparedness, communications, MTS recovery, resilience, mutual-assistance, and training mechanisms established elsewhere in this Framework. Changes in regional risks and capability gaps should be considered through the Framework review and continuous-improvement process established in Section 14.

13.0 REGIONAL TRAINING, DRILLS, AND EXERCISES

Regional training, drills, and exercises should be used to strengthen relationships among participating organizations, build familiarity with the mechanisms established under this Framework, and validate regional coordination arrangements before they are required during an actual disaster.

Activities under this section should emphasize coordination across ports, countries, government agencies, regional organizations, and maritime industry stakeholders. The Framework does not prescribe or replace the internal training and exercise programs of individual ports or national authorities.

Participating organizations are encouraged to leverage existing regional and international training, drills, and exercises opportunities in disaster risk management, such as those organized by the OAS CIP, CDEMA, USCG, and/or the U.S. Department of State. Such opportunities can provide practical platforms to test communication protocols, coordination mechanisms, information sharing arrangements and other procedures established under this Framework.

Participating organizations may also draw upon the training and exercise capabilities of maritime industry stakeholders, including salvage, emergency response, and marine service providers. Such organizations may contribute technical expertise, scenario development, subject-matter instruction, and exercise support to help strengthen preparedness, response, recovery, and interoperability. Where appropriate, collaboration with industry partners can enhance the realism and effectiveness of training and exercise activities while leveraging existing expertise and resources.

13.1 Regional training

Regional training should promote a common understanding of the Framework and the roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms it establishes.

Training should address, as appropriate, regional communications and information sharing, points-of-contact and resource mobilization mechanisms, mutual assistance, maritime transportation system recovery, stakeholder coordination, and other capabilities necessary to support regional cooperation and coordinated action during and following a disaster.

Training priorities should be informed by identified regional risks, lessons learned, and capability gaps. Where appropriate, these priorities may be incorporated into existing regional or national training programs to strengthen interoperability and avoid duplication of effort.

13.2 Regional drills

Regional drills should periodically validate selected mechanisms established under this Framework, such as points of contact, communications, port-status reporting, mutual-assistance procedures, resource identification, and maritime transportation system recovery coordination.

Drills should be focused and practical and may be conducted independently or in conjunction with other regional or national preparedness activities. The frequency and scope of drills should reflect regional priorities, available resources, and lessons identified through previous incidents and exercises.

Port-reopening drills are of particular regional value. These drills may test post-event assessment and reporting procedures, requests for specialized recovery capabilities, national processes for authorizing the deployment of those resources, and communication of phased reopening status to national authorities, shipping lines, and regional partners.

13.3 Regional exercises

Regional exercises should provide opportunities to evaluate coordination among multiple ports, countries, agencies, regional organizations, and maritime industry stakeholders under realistic disaster scenarios. Regional exercise scenarios should periodically include multi-port impact disaster response operations to test resource allocation principles mentioned in Section 9.7.

Exercises should emphasize regional issues that may not be adequately tested through individual port exercises, including multi-port disruptions, competing demands for scarce resources, communications-system disruptions, cross-border assistance, alternative port and cargo-routing arrangements, workforce continuity and personnel welfare considerations, and regional maritime transportation system recovery.

Exercise scenarios should, where appropriate, include disruptions affecting customs, immigration, port security, border-management, or cargo-screening functions and should assess the ability of participating organizations to facilitate the movement of authorized disaster-response personnel, equipment, vessels, and relief supplies while maintaining appropriate security, access-control, and regulatory requirements.

Exercises may be discussion-based or operations-based and should be designed according to the objectives and capabilities being evaluated.

Where practicable, regional exercises should be conducted sufficiently in advance of the Atlantic hurricane season to allow lessons identified and corrective actions to be implemented before the period of greatest regional risk. Where appropriate, regional exercises may be conducted in coordination with existing Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) arrangements and other established regional preparedness frameworks to strengthen interoperability and coordination.
This addresses:

- Multi-port disruptions
- Competing resource demands
- Communications failures
- Workforce continuity and welfare
- Border-control and screening disruptions
- Humanitarian facilitation vs. security
- RRM interoperability.

13.4 Evaluation and lessons learned

Regional drills and exercises should include an appropriate evaluation process to identify strengths, coordination gaps, and opportunities for improvement in the mechanisms established under this Framework.

Significant findings should be documented and shared, as appropriate, with participating organizations and should inform future regional preparedness priorities, training, drills, and exercises. Where appropriate, lessons learned may be shared in a manner that protects sensitive, proprietary, security-related, or organization-specific information and encourages candid identification of coordination challenges, capability gaps, and opportunities for improvement.

The purpose of regional evaluation and lessons-learned activities is to strengthen preparedness, coordination, and resilience rather than to assign fault or assess organizational performance. Participating organizations are encouraged to share lessons learned and good practices in a constructive manner that supports regional improvement and organizational trust.

Findings requiring changes to the Framework or its regional coordination mechanisms should be addressed through the Framework maintenance and continuous-improvement process established in Section 14.

14.0 FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION, MAINTENANCE, AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Effective implementation of this Framework depends on sustained participation by Caribbean ports, national authorities, regional organizations, maritime industry stakeholders, and other relevant partners. The Framework should be maintained as a living regional resource and updated periodically to reflect changes in risks, capabilities, institutional arrangements, and lessons identified through incidents, drills, and exercises.

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate the implementation, periodic review, and maintenance of the Framework in consultation with participating organizations. Nothing in this section alters the authorities or responsibilities of participating countries, ports, or other organizations.

14.1 Implementation and participation

Participating organizations should incorporate the regional principles and coordination mechanisms established under this Framework into their preparedness, response, recovery, resilience, and business continuity arrangements, as appropriate to their respective roles and authorities.

Implementation should emphasize practical use and maintenance of the regional mechanisms established by the Framework, including points of contact, resource information, communications and information sharing, mutual assistance, stakeholder coordination, maritime transportation system recovery, and regional training and exercises.

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate the regional awareness of the Framework and support participating organizations in maintaining familiarity with these mechanisms.

14.2 Periodic framework review

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate review of the Framework at least every four years, in consultation with participating organizations, to confirm that its regional coordination mechanisms remain relevant, current, and practical.

Reviews should consider significant changes in regional risks and capability gaps, organizational roles and points of contact, available resources and expertise, national or regional coordination arrangements, maritime transportation dependencies, and other developments affecting implementation of the Framework.

Updates should be proportionate to the identified needs and should preserve consistency with applicable national authorities and regional arrangements.

14.3 Lessons learned and after-action review

Significant regional incidents, drills, and exercises should be used to identify the lessons relevant to the effectiveness of the Framework and its coordination mechanisms.

Participating organizations should share significant findings, as appropriate, with ORGANIZATION NAME and other relevant partners. Regional lessons should focus on the issues affecting coordination among ports, countries, organizations, and maritime stakeholders, rather than the internal performance of individual organizations.

Lessons requiring changes to regional arrangements should inform future preparedness priorities and updates to the Framework.

14.4 Updates to regional coordination mechanisms

ORGANIZATION NAME should facilitate updates to the regional coordination mechanisms established under this Framework when reviews, incidents, drills, exercises, or other developments identify a need for change.

Updates may include changes to points of contact, resource and capability information, communications and reporting arrangements, mutual-assistance procedures, preparedness priorities, and other regional mechanisms necessary to support effective coordination.

Participating organizations should provide relevant updates within their respective areas of responsibility and should consider applicable regional changes when maintaining their own plans and procedures.

15.0 CONCLUSION

The maritime industry is vital to the Caribbean region, supporting commerce, the movement of essential goods, disaster response, tourism, and humanitarian response. Cooperation and coordination among Caribbean countries and ports can strengthen preparedness, facilitate effective response and support timely recovery from natural and anthropogenic disasters. This Framework provides a regional mechanism to facilitate communication, resource identification, information sharing and coordination among participating countries, ports, and other relevant partners. It is intended to complement, rather than replace, the disaster management plans, procedures, authorities, and responsibilities established by individual port and national authorities. Through sustained cooperation before, during, and after disasters, participating Caribbean ports and partners can strengthen regional preparedness, improve

access to information and resources, support continuity of critical maritime transportation, and contribute to the timely restoration of port operations and essential services.

ANNEX A: PRE-IDENTIFICATION

Inclusion of pre-identified resources does not constitute national approval for deployment, nor does it constitute approval of relevant agencies for import or export of the resource (customs, immigration, health/sanitation, etc.)

Vessels

Pre-identification of vessels transporting relief supplies and personnel decreases response time following a disaster. Participating port authorities/directors should submit vessel information to ORGANIZATION NAME for pre-identification that may be called upon to transport relief supplies and personnel.

Knowledge of vessel cargo handling characteristics (onboard cranes, derricks, davits, etc.) can help affected port authorities/directors in requesting appropriate vessels in the event that the disaster has affected or may affect the port facility's cranes and cargo handling equipment.

Knowledge of vessel navigation requirements and mooring requirements can help affected port authorities/directors in deciding which vessels are unable to moor at the port facility and therefore must have relief supplies and personnel offloaded by an intermediary vessel/barge.

For response vessels belonging to a non-governmental organization (NGO) or private vessel likely to respond to a disaster, port authorities/directors should consider requesting the same information.

Vessel information form

Vessels on call/likely to deploy for disaster response assistance

Vessel Information				
Vessel name	Vessel nationality	Vessel homeport	IMO Number	Call sign
Length overall (ft/meters)	Beam (ft/meters)	Draft (ft/meters)	Air draft (ft/meters)	Gross tonnage
Side Ramp / Stern Ramp	Helicopter deck	Fuel transfer capability	Potable water transfer capability	Shallow draft and/or landing craft capability
Required pier length (ft/meters)	Required pier depth (ft/meters)	Special bollard or gangway requirements		
Type of cargo	Onboard cargo handling equipment			

Safe working load of cargo handling equipment	
Any special requirements	

Personnel

Participating port authorities/directors should maintain a list of port authority/facility deployable personnel according to their specialties. This list is for the purposes of providing rapid response to other port/authorities/facilities in the event of a disaster response in which donating port authority/facility will deploy personnel to assist with the response. Personnel on this list should have internal authorization from their port authority/facility to deploy.

This list should have the following information available:

- Full name
- Nationality/citizenship
- Passport number, nationality, date of issuance, date of expiration
- Date of birth
- Specialty
- Any relevant license, credential information germane to the anticipated response effort.

*The above information constitutes personally identifiable information and must be appropriately protected.

Supplies and equipment

Participating port authorities/directors should maintain a list of port authority/facility deployable equipment and supplies. This list is for the purposes of providing rapid response to other port/authorities/facilities in the event of a disaster response in which donating port authority/facility will deploy equipment and/or supplies. Equipment and supplies on this list should have internal authorization from their port authority/facility to deploy.

This list should have the following information available:

- Type/nature of equipment
- Relevant working weight/capacity ratings, if relevant
- Shipping size/weight
- Required fuel type, if relevant
- Information regarding potential hazards for shipping and/or end user.

Contracted and commercial response providers

Participating port authorities/directors should maintain awareness of specialized marine response and recovery capabilities that may be available to support disaster response and maritime transportation system recovery. Such capabilities are often provided by commercial or contracted organizations and may not be held by ports or government agencies.

The purpose of maintaining this information is to improve regional awareness of available capabilities and support the timely identification and mobilization of specialized resources when required.

Where practicable, the following information should be maintained:

- Provider name and location, including regional or local representation, where applicable
- Specialized capabilities available, such as salvage, wreck removal, commercial diving, underwater survey, emergency towage, marine firefighting, pollution response, heavy lift, or debris clearance
- General information regarding existing access arrangements or mechanisms through which the capability may be requested or obtained
- Primary and emergency points of contact
- Estimated mobilization timeframes and, where known, locations from which personnel and equipment would deploy
- Relevant customs, immigration, licensing, permitting, or other administrative considerations that may affect deployment
- Date of last review or update of that information.

ANNEX B: PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Authorizing Official	Organization Point of Contact	Email	Phone number