



# Barbados' Climate-Resilient Future: EU Backs Innovative Infrastructure Upgrade

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**The announcement of the South Coast Sewage Treatment Plant upgrade project funding brings exciting opportunities for local infrastructure experts.**

Earlier this month, the European Union (EU) made a significant announcement regarding their commitment to upgrading Barbados' climate-resilient infrastructure for clean water. This aligns seamlessly with the Global Gateway investment agenda, which was initially presented at the EU-CELAC Summit in July. The focal point of this initiative is a 'debt-for-climate swap,' designed to secure essential funding for the upgrade of the Barbados South Coast Sewage Treatment Plant (SCSTP). The planned upgrade of the SCSTP to tertiary treatment —the highest level of treatment— and incorporating reverse osmosis to enable the reuse of treated reclaimed water for non-potable (non-drinking) purposes is a substantial step forward in Barbados' relentless pursuit to counteract the impacts of climate change. This initiative will play a crucial role in alleviating chronic water shortages and enhancing the efficiency of wastewater systems on the island.

Barbados Prime Minister, Mia Mottley, expressed her enthusiasm for the initiative:

"The global community has recognised that the only way we will overcome the many challenges posed by the climate crisis is through new levels of partnership and cooperation. The support from the EU under Global Gateway underlines how such partnership can accelerate critical investments and support vulnerable populations at a crucial time in our history. This innovative financing structure, a world's first for resilient infrastructure, can provide a new avenue to allow climate-vulnerable states to accelerate critical investment in adaptation in a manner that does not jeopardise public debt dynamics."

The magnitude of this project not only holds promise for the island's environmental resilience but also presents a wealth of opportunities for local businesses capable of contributing to the successful execution of the SCSTP upgrade. The realization of this ambitious project necessitates a thoughtfully curated team possessing the ideal blend of local presence, expertise, and global knowledge with a proven track record in project execution.

## Strategic Partnerships

Integrated Sustainability emerges as a key player in this narrative, being a multidisciplinary sustainable infrastructure development company with strategic partnerships that enable them to offer comprehensive Design-Finance-Build-Own-Operate services. With a Barbados office and a recent acquisition of the local water/wastewater solutions company, Ecohesion, their commitment to the region is steadfast. They offer a unique value proposition from a combination of extensive international experience gained through projects in North America and Europe, coupled with lessons learned and know-how acquired from the successful construction and maintenance of numerous treatment systems throughout the Caribbean.





Notable examples include the successful completion of the Conceptual Design for the Bridgetown Sewage Treatment Plant (BSTP) Wastewater Treatment Upgrade, along with the Design, Supply, Install, and Commissioning of Headworks for the Bridgetown Municipal Wastewater Pre-Treatment. The experience gained from these projects positions them as an invaluable asset for the SCSTP Upgrade, benefitting from the expertise and continuity from a team that has recently spearheaded local wastewater treatment projects.

## Building Climate Resiliency in the Caribbean

Sam Neilands, the Director of Caribbean Business Development at Ecohesion, underscores the transformative impact the SCSTP Upgrade project will have on the region and the community.

“The South Coast upgrade will showcase how Barbados is fighting against climate change by utilizing technology advancements and sustainable

planning. It will be a first in the region and lead the way for other countries to follow suit with this type of infrastructure development. It provides a double value proposition with treating water that would otherwise harm the environment and turning it into water desperately needed to promote crop growth and replenish our aquifers, as the most effective step in the climate fight is to reuse. Our team are experts in this field and have been helping private customers do this (albeit on a smaller scale) in the region for over 20 years.”

This multi-faceted project aims to increase existing water supplies, mitigate the impacts of climate change, combat seawater intrusion and rising sea levels, diversify potable water sources, as well as reduce the environmental impact of treated effluent on marine life and the local ecosystem. It signifies a remarkable stride in advancing Barbados’ resilient infrastructure and serves as a beacon for other nations facing similar challenges.



 **BusinessBARBADOS**

First published in Business Barbados, Nov 19th, 2023.  
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