

Press Release

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ARE & OECS to accelerate the race to the sun in the Eastern Caribbean region

The Alliance for Rural Electrification (ARE), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Eastern Caribbean Solar Challenge will be co-organising a dialogue on [Advancing Policy & Mobilising Investment: The Eastern Caribbean Solar Challenge](#) on 2 September 2021. The event is supported by the Caribbean NDC Finance Initiative (NDCFI) and GET.invest, a European programme that mobilises investments in decentralised renewable energy (DRE), supported by the European Union, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Austria.

In view of the launch of the Eastern Caribbean Solar Challenge by the NDCFI this year, the event will address key opportunities provided by the initiative and the different ways to get involved.

H.E. Dr. Didacus Jules, Director General of the OECS, emphasised that: *“Achieving an increased level of energy independence, diversification of our energy sources and reduction of energy prices will create a positive domino effect that will ultimately improve the overall quality of life in our region and support our resilience goals. The dialogue provides an avenue for key stakeholders to engage more meaningfully in the process of redefining the regional energy landscape.”*

The sessions will also share practical insights for domestic and international DRE companies and investors to enter or scale up in the Eastern Caribbean market, with a focus on innovative technologies and business models, policy frameworks and financial opportunities. In addition, participants will be able to meet relevant business partners in the region via 1:1 meetings during a virtual GET.invest Matchmaking session.

Expected participants include private and public investors, technology providers, project developers, philanthropies, international funding partners and policymakers.

Mr. David Lecoque, CEO of ARE said that: *“ARE is proud to expand its work and accelerate the achievement of SDG-7 in the Caribbean, together with strong partners such as the OECS. The dialogue is a very exciting opportunity to learn about the Eastern Caribbean Solar Challenge and catalyse exchanges between business partners, investors and policymakers in the Eastern Caribbean and internationally via the GET.invest Matchmaking session. We very much look forward to developing and maintaining active collaborations in the Eastern Caribbean to reach our shared strategic goals.”*

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Note to the editor

The Alliance for Rural Electrification ([ARE](#)) is an international business association with the aim to promote a sustainable decentralised renewable energy industry for the 21st century, activating markets for affordable energy services, and creating local jobs and inclusive economies. ARE enables improved energy access through business development support for more than 185 Members along the whole value chain for off-grid technologies.

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States ([OECS](#)) is an International Inter-governmental Organisation dedicated to regional integration in the Eastern Caribbean. The vision of the organisation for 2020-2024 is a better quality of life for the people of the OECS and its mission is to drive and support sustainable development through regional integration, collective action and development cooperation. The OECS came into being on June 18th 1981, when seven Eastern Caribbean countries signed a treaty agreeing to cooperate and promote unity and solidarity among the Members. The OECS is now an eleven-member grouping comprising the full Member States of Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, with the British Virgin Islands, Anguilla, Martinique and Guadeloupe as associate members.

Launched in 2021, [the Eastern Caribbean Solar Challenge](#) is an initiative of the NDC Finance Initiative which is managed by OECS and the Government of Saint Lucia. The Eastern Caribbean Solar Challenge seeks to increase the use and visibility of solar energy in the OECS Member States by 2023 through the combined efforts of governments, development partners, the regional and international private sector and households.

The Caribbean NDC Finance Initiative ([NDCFI](#)) is a joint initiative of the OECS Commission and the Government of Saint Lucia. The NDCFI was established with the support of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and under the auspices of the NDC Partnership, with initial funding from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, GIZ. It was formally launched in 2017.

[GET.invest](#) is a European programme which supports investments in decentralised renewable energy. The programme targets private sector business and project developers, financiers and regulators to build sustainable energy markets in developing countries. Services include market information, a funding database, matchmaking events and access-to-finance advisory. The programme is supported by the European Union, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Austria, and works closely with initiatives and business associations in the energy sector.

