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1 Foreword

The Government of The Bahamas recognises that an Energy Sector that facilitates the supply of and access to safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally sustainable energy is vital to the overall socio-economic development of The Bahamas and the people of The Bahamas. Every sector of the Bahamian economy depends on the provision of energy as an input of production. The Government further realises that the sustainable development of The Bahamas and effective management of the Energy Sector through clearly defined policies, including legal and institutional frameworks, and partnerships with the private sector, will positively impact other sectors in the economy. The Government has therefore placed the reform of the Energy Sector in The Bahamas as a high priority on its National Development agenda.

The Government is keenly aware of the peculiar challenges facing the Energy Sector to provide energy throughout the archipelagic geography of The Bahamas, as well as the scale-related challenges in terms of small energy markets particularly on the Family Islands, and The Bahamas' vulnerability to exogenous shocks to the supply of energy throughout the country. The Government also recognizes the importance of developing indigenous talent to actively participate in the Energy Sector and the potential benefits of fostering consumer education to enable more informed energy choices by consumers. Equally important for the Government and a matter of priority is addressing the burden of fuel purchases on the country's gross domestic product (GDP). Therefore, Government considers that the Energy Sector in The Bahamas must be effectively and efficiently managed, guided and regulated through a robust energy policy framework that can meet the challenges confronting not only the Energy Sector but the economy of The Bahamas as a whole.

The National Energy Policy 2025 – 2030 (NEP 2025 – 2030) builds upon the National Energy Policy 2013 – 2033. While some of the core tenets of the 2013 – 2033 National Energy Policy remain valid, there have been notable and significant legal, regulatory, social, political, environmental and economic changes in The Bahamas since it was published. This has compelled the Government to review the 2013 – 2033 National Energy Policy and formulate the NEP 2025 – 2030, which incorporates current developments in the Energy Sector. The NEP 2025 – 2030 aims to encourage the further development of electricity GTDS services throughout The Bahamas, foster cost-effective pricing in relation to such services, promote the diversification of energy sources through the deployment of renewable and alternative energy sources in The Bahamas, emphasize energy efficiency and conservation, and facilitate scaled-up access to energy services

in the Family Islands of The Bahamas. The NEP 2025 – 2030 also contemplates climate change mitigation and adaptation while simultaneously promoting transformational investments that are required in the Energy Sector of The Bahamas.

The Ministry of Energy and Transport is ultimately responsible for the overall leadership, oversight, implementation, and policy directions of this National Energy Policy. The Ministry of Energy and Transport will also facilitate an investment environment that promotes and supports public-private participation in the transformation of the Energy Sector for the accelerated socio-economic development of The Bahamas.

2 List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BPL	Bahamas Power and Light Company Limited
CO2	Carbon Dioxide
CREDP	Caribbean Renewable Energy Development Program
DSM	Demand Side Management
ECE	Energy Conservation and Efficiency
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EFW	Energy-from-Waste
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Electricity Sector
ESCO	Energy Service Company
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHI	Global Horizontal Irradiance
GTDS	Generation, Transmission, Distribution and Supply
IPP	Independent Power Producer
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MW	Megawatt
NGS	Natural Gas Sector
RE	Renewable Energy
RET	Renewable Energy Technology
OTEC	Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion
UN-ECLAC	UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
URCA	Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority
WTE	Waste-to-Energy

3 Introduction

The Government of The Bahamas is committed to the transformation of the Energy Sector[1] in The Bahamas with the aim of increasing access to safe, affordable, reliable, environmentally sustainable, and modern energy supply and infrastructure for the people of The Bahamas.[2] While this transformation is a national priority and will be a core driver of social and economic growth and development, the nature and speed of this transition will be shaped by the progressive and achievable Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives established by the Government for the Energy Sector.

Accordingly, this National Energy Policy document sets out the Government's Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives for the Energy Sector in The Bahamas, and in doing so, is satisfying the requirements of Section 5(1) of the Electricity Act, 2024 (EA).

The Government notes that the EA3 sets out certain statutory Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives for the advancement and effective regulation of the Electricity Sector in The Bahamas. The Government also recognizes policy objectives that have been `set out in the Natural Gas Act, 2024 (NGA).[4] The Government's Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives that are set out in this policy document do not derogate from these statutory Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives; but rather, are to be considered and, where required, implemented in tandem with the statutory Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives for the Energy Sector.

To achieve the desired Energy Sector Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives effectively and efficiently, the Government has formulated this National Energy Policy 2025 – 2030 that will further facilitate the transformation of the Energy Sector in The Bahamas in a progressive and sustainable manner. This policy forms part of the comprehensive legal, regulatory and institutional framework for modern energy infrastructure and services, investment in renewable energy technologies, energy conservation and efficiency as well as local participation in the Energy Sector.

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[1] Under this National Energy Policy, the Energy Sector encompasses: the Electricity Sector in accordance with the Electricity Act, 2024, the Natural Gas Sector in accordance with the Natural Gas Act, 2024; the Petroleum Sector in accordance with the Petroleum Act Chapter 219; and activities in the Transportation Sector to the extent that such activities relate to the Electricity, Natural Gas and Petroleum sectors.
[2] In accordance with Plan 3 of "*Our Blue Print for Change*", 2021.
[3] See Sections 5(1) and 6(1) and 6(2) of the Electricity Act, 2024.
[4] See Section 5 of the Natural Gas Act, 2024.

The Government recognises that in September 2015[5] The Bahamas, as a Member State of the United Nations, ratified the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and was called upon along with all other Member States, by the UN, to develop national strategies to pursue the seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Emphasizing the vital role that energy plays in the growth and development of The Bahamas and consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Government has aligned, and sets out in this National Energy Policy document, its Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives for Energy Sector towards achieving the following SDGs[6]:

(i) ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all (Goal 7);
(ii) make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (Goal 11); and
(iii) strengthening the means of implementation and revitalisation of the global partnership for sustainable development (Goal 17).[7]

The Government particularly considers that SDG Number 7 aims at ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services by 2030; increasing substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix by 2030; and doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency by 2030.

The Government is cognizant of the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022 (SDG Report)[8] which highlights the cascading and interlinked crises that are placing the 2030 SDG Agenda in "grave danger". The SDG Report has emphasised the confluence of global crises dominated by the COVID-19 Pandemic, climate change and international conflicts that are adversely affecting the achievement of the SDGs. The Government therefore considers it important to reaffirm and does broadly reaffirm its commitment to achieving the SDGs.

The Bahamas however, as an archipelagic Small Island Developing State (SIDS), faces peculiar challenges regarding engagement with and the development of its people, and the protection of vulnerable consumers[9] throughout New Providence and the Family Islands. The Government

5 Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015.
6 Having regard to the Government's focus on the global impact of climate change, the scope of the listed SDGs has been broadened to include SDG 11.
7 The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), a Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), United Nations - Habibi, LMK-DRD.
8 https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2022.
9 A policy focus for the Government pursuant to Section 5(1)(d) of the Electrcity Act, 2024.

recognises that energy plays a pivotal role in achieving the necessary standards of national development and therefore remains committed to pursuing the 17 SDGs, to the extent possible.

The Government is also guided by the SEforAll initiative by the United Nations, launched in September 2011, that aims to achieve the three main goals of: ensuring universal access to modern energy services; doubling the global rate of energy efficiency; and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix by the year 2030. This National Energy Policy provides a framework for achieving these targets.

The Government has also oriented its Energy Sector Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives to address the adaptation of changing climatic patterns, the energy infrastructure in The Bahamas, and the increasing energy demand and supply requirements throughout the country, given the scale and intensification of the impact of climate change. This National Energy Policy plays a direct role in the implementation of The Bahamas' climate change commitments that are in accordance with the Paris Agreement and encourages state entities and other stakeholders in The Bahamian society to align their respective energy strategies, practices, habits, and policies accordingly.

The Government's Energy Sector Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives have taken a multi-sectoral approach to the transformation of the Energy Sector to, inter alia, meet the carbon-constraint demands placed on the global community. The Government believes that various sectors in The Bahamas must play a significant role in the transformation of the Energy Sector and this multi-sectoral approach is especially required for the newly established Natural Gas Sector in The Bahamas.

Having regard to the context of the foregoing, the National Energy Policy of 2013 - 2033 has been revised and replaced to provide a new National Energy Policy 2025 – 2030; and the Government now sets out its Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives for the Energy Sector in The Bahamas in this document.

3.1 The 2013 - 2033 Sector Policy

(1) In 2013, the then Government of the Bahamas developed the first National Energy Policy for The Bahamas that was "designed and structured" with the vision to ensure: "*A modern, diversified and efficient energy sector, providing Bahamians with affordable energy supplies and long-term energy security towards enhancing international competitiveness and sustainable prosperity*". The National Energy Policy 2013 – 2033 stated intentions were to:

(i) enhance energy security in the nation through diversifying the energy supply mix;

(ii) increase energy access especially in New Providence and the Family Islands;

(iii) facilitate employment creation and empowerment;

(iv) protect the environment and mitigate climate change; and

(v) promote best practices in efficient energy use and conservation of energy.

(2) In furtherance of the above stated vision, the National Energy Policy 2013 – 2033 established the following Goals:

Goal 1: Bahamians will become well aware of the importance of energy conservation, use energy wisely and continuously pursue opportunities for improving energy efficiencies, with key economic sectors embracing eco-efficiency;

Goal 2: The Bahamas will have a modern energy infrastructure that enhances energy generation capacity and ensures that energy supplies are safely, reliably, and affordably transported to homes, communities and the productive sectors on a sustainable basis;

Goal 3: The Bahamas will be a world leader in the development and implementation of sustainable energy opportunities and continuously pursues a diverse range of well-researched and regulated, environmentally sensitive and sustainable energy programmes, built upon our geographical, climatic and traditional economic strengths; and

Goal 4: The Bahamas will have a dynamic and appropriate governance, institutional, legal and regulatory framework advancing future developments in the energy sector underpinned by high levels of consultation, citizen participation and public-private sector partnerships.

(3) In view of the above, the revision of the National Energy Policy 2013 – 2033 is necessitated by certain key factors including, but not limited to, the following:

(i) Energy Sector legislative reform and the requirement under the Electricity Act, 2024 for the existing national energy policy to be revised;

(ii) the Government's renewed commitment to transform and modernize the Energy Sector in The Bahamas to support the rapid growth of all sectors of the Bahamian economy;

(iii) achieving universal energy access in line with the SEforALL and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal No.7;

(iv) ensuring cost-reflective pricing with internationally acceptable returns on investment, which will include tariff adjustment mechanisms for all sources of energy;

(v) focused attention on reducing the impact of climate change on energy and energy consumption;

(vi) promoting renewable and other alternative sources of energy, with emphasis on sustainable and clean energy which is accessible to all;

(vii) promoting energy efficiency and conservation;

(viii) enhancing integrated resource planning and implementation for the supply of energy throughout the entire The Bahamas;

(ix) encouraging private sector participation in the Energy Sector through an environment conducive for such participation, be it in the form of direct investment, Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), Independent Power Producers (IPPs) or other participation vehicles;

(x) developments in the Energy Sector that harness emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, while integrating strategies to mitigate the potential risks and adverse impacts associated with the use of such technologies and distributed energy resources (DER);

(xi) ensuring that entities operating within the energy sector have appropriately trained human resources;

(xii) the need for consumer education to foster prudent energy choices that will counteract inflationary pressures and increase consumer savings and investment;

(xiii) the potential benefits of developing efficient and environmentally sustainable transportation networks throughout the country; and

(xiv) creating opportunities for foreign direct investment (FDI) in the energy sector and reduce the debt burden on the country.

(4) The National Energy Policy 2025 – 2030 builds on the National Energy Policy 2013 – 2033 and sets out clear, updated Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives for the Energy Sector. It reflects the current developments in the Energy Sector both nationally and internationally and endeavours to address the unfinished agenda of the National Energy Policy 2013 – 2033.

(5) The Government believes that its National Energy Policy 2025 – 2030 provides the guiding framework for increased access to affordable, safe, reliable, sustainable, efficient and modern energy for all sectors and people in The Bahamas.

3.2 Purpose of this Sector Policy

(1) The purpose of this National Energy Policy is to:

(i) revise The Bahamas National Energy Policy 2013 – 2033;

(ii) outline the Government's vision, Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives for the Energy Sector for the period 2025 to 2030;

(iii) inform all stakeholders, including the public, Licensees providing services in the Energy Sector, persons wishing to provide such services, and other interested persons, of the Government's Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives for the Energy Sector;

(iv) provide a contextual framework for persons wishing to enter the Energy Sector; and

(v) guide URCA in the discharge of its functions under the Electricity Act, 2024 (EA) and the Natural Gas Act, 2024 to ensure that its regulation of the Energy Sector aligns and is consistent with the Government's Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives for the Energy Sector set out herein.

4 Overview of the Energy Sector[10]

(1) In presenting an overview of the Energy Sector in The Bahamas, the Government considers it important to firstly state that the Ministry of Energy and Transport (MoET) is the Government entity responsible for directing and coordinating overall policy developments in the Energy Sector for The Bahamas. The MoET is the lead policy-making authority of the Government on all Energy Sector supply and demand matters. It is also responsible for, among other things, the development of policies, strategies, initiatives, and plans that ensure national energy security. The MoET is the custodian of the National Energy Policy.

4.1 Contextual Summary of the Energy Sector

(1) For contextual purposes to this National Energy Policy 2025 – 2030, the following sets out a summary of the Energy Sector in The Bahamas that provides the foundation for the Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives in this policy document.

(2) The industrial, residential, commercial and transport sectors are the main users of energy in the country.

(3) The majority of energy is derived from fossil fuels imported into the country. The fuels include heavy fuel oil (Bunker C), light fuel oil (automotive diesel), aviation fuel, gasoline, and propane. Renewable energy use is minimal.

(4) The Bahamas is an archipelago of 700 islands. Only about 30 islands are inhabited and of these there are twelve (12) major islands. All inhabited islands have been electrified.

(5) There are two main public electricity suppliers – Grand Bahamas Power Company (GBPC) and Bahamas Power and Light (BPL). GBPC supplies the island of Grand Bahama while BPL supplies the majority of the remaining islands. The power grids are isolated to each island.

[10] For investment in the Energy Sector of The Bahamas, this National Energy Policy should be read in conjunction with relevant information that may be found on the following website for the Bahamas Investment Authority: Bahamas Investment Authority (BIA) - Government - Details.

(6) Movement between the islands occurs by boat (mostly commercial freight) and plane (mostly passengers). Transportation on the island is by vehicle. The Bahamas is well served by international airlift – mainly from the United States of America.

(7) The Ministry of Energy and Transport is the primary government body with responsibility for the sector. The Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority (URCA) is the sector regulator.

4.2 Legal and Regulatory Framework

(1) The Energy Sector in The Bahamas is currently governed by two (2) core statutory enactments, namely:

(i) The Electricity Act, 2024; and
(ii) The Natural Gas Act, 2024.

(2) The Electricity Act 2024 (EA) – came into force on 1 June 2024. The objective of the EA is to establish a legislative framework to regulate the generation, transmission, distribution and supply of electricity. It also provides the regulatory framework for tariff setting and competition in the Electricity Sector. The EA establishes the creation of a regime for the supply of safe, least cost, reliable and environmentally sustainable electricity throughout The Bahamas as the main goal of the Electricity Sector.

(3) The Natural Gas Act, 2024 (NGA) – came into force on 1 June 2024. The objective of the NGA is to establish a legislative framework to regulate the importation, regasification, storage, transport and retail of natural gas and to provide for the licensing of natural gas facilities and terminals and to provide for safety standards in the Natural Gas Sector (NGS). The NGA outlines the creation of a regime for the safe, least cost, reliable and environmentally friendlier gas throughout The Bahamas as the main goal of the gas sector policy.

(4) The Electricity Act, 2024 and the Natural Gas Act, 2024, respectively, empowers URCA to issue regulations and other regulatory measures for the Energy Sector. Regulations issued by URCA have the force of law.[11] To date, URCA has issued the following

11 See section 8(4) of the NGA

regulations and regulatory measures that have a direct impact on the governance of Energy Sector in The Bahamas:

(i) Natural Gas Supply Regulations;
(ii) Natural Gas Metering Regulations;
(iii) Liquified Natural Gas Road Transport Regulations;
(iv) Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Regulations;
(v) Liquified Natural Gas Facilities Safety Regulations;
(vi) Liquified Natural Gas Waterfront Facilities Safety Regulations; and
(vii) Liquified Natural Gas Transfer Operations Regulations.

(5) This National Energy Policy 2025 – 2030 derives its legal authority from Section 5 of the Electricity Act 2024, and thereby forms part of the comprehensive legal and regulatory framework, as set out above, for the Energy Sector in The Bahamas.

4.3 The Role of the Government in the Energy Sector

(1) In accordance with the Electricity Act, 2024[12], the Minister, in conjunction with URCA, is required to cause the national energy policy to be revised setting out the strategic aims of the Government for meeting the electricity sector policy objectives, including but not limited to, the formulation of the Government's role in the Energy Sector[13].

(2) Accordingly, the role of the Government in the Electricity Sector shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(i) facilitating the development, review and implementation of Energy Sector laws, Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives;
(ii) developing and implementing initiatives, plans and programmes for the Energy Sector;
(iii) attracting domestic and foreign investment in the Energy Sector;
(iv) promoting the use of emerging technologies in the Energy Sector;
(v) mobilization of resources and participating strategically in Energy Sector investments;

12 See Section 5 of the Electricity Act, 2024.
13 See Section 5(1)(b) of the Electricity Act,2024.

(vi) strengthening the capacity of Government institutions responsible for the Energy Sector through investing in human capital;

(vii) creating opportunities that develop the capacity of Bahamians to be able to effectively participate in the Energy Sector; and

(viii) promoting infrastructural development in line with the Government's National Development Plans for the Energy Sector.

(3) The Electricity Act, 2024 also requires that the national energy policy be revised every five (5) years and that the Minister shall, at least six (6) months prior to expiration of the energy sector policy, formulate and publish a draft of the revised national energy policy for public consultation that may be conducted by URCA[14]. The Government, in fulfilment of its role to revise the national energy policy, therefore encourages URCA's participation in the revision and consultation process of the National Energy Policy.

4.4 The Role of the Department of Energy in the Energy Sector

(1) Recognizing the very significant role of the Energy Sector to national growth and development, the Government has established the Department of Energy[15] to bring focused attention to matters concerning the Energy Sector in The Bahamas. While the Government also recognizes and acknowledges URCA's role, jurisdiction and statutory mandate to regulate the Energy Sector in The Bahamas, the Department of Energy has been given the clear mandate to, inter alia, lead, oversee and superintend certain key Energy Sector initiatives. The Government expects that the Department of Energy will work closely with the Ministry of Energy and Transport and other Energy Sector agencies, including URCA, to implement the Government's National Energy Policy.

(2) The responsibilities of the Department of Energy[16] shall include but not be limited to:

(i) revising and updating this National Energy Policy, from time to time, in consultation with the Minister and URCA, subject to the Electrcity Act, 2024[17];

[14] See Sections 5(1) and (2) of the Electricity Act, 2024.
[15] Cabinet Paper Reference No. ME&T/50/12; Cabinet Conclusion Reference No. ICO 47(24) 14; Cabinet Approval Date 19 November 2024.
[16] Broadly established and set out in the Cabinet Paper, supra.
[17] Particularly in accordance with Section 5 of the Electricity Act, 2024.

(ii) promoting renewable energy (including WTE and OTEC) projects;

(iii) developing energy efficiency and conservation initiatives such as the National Energy Audit and Retrofit Program, which aims to assist small businesses and low-income homeowners with reducing energy consumption through energy audits and recommending energy efficiency upgrades;

(iv) establishing a register of certified renewable energy and energy efficiency system installers. In this regard, the Department of Energy shall function in conjunction with the National Energy Committee to ensure that the Government's energy goals are achieved;

(v) managing relations with BPL, and the natural gas and oil industries;

(vi) collecting, collating and compiling Energy Sector statistical data and information;

(vii) producing quarterly reports for local and foreign investors, international organizations and financial institutions; and

(viii) leading public awareness and education campaigns on energy efficiency, in conjunction with other agencies such as the Bureau of Standards and URCA to promote energy efficient technologies.

(3) The Government recognizes that there are certain roles and functions of the newly established Department of Energy that may overlap and intersect with other relevant Energy Sector agencies. The Government considers it important to emphasize for the avoidance of doubt that the roles and functions of the Department of Energy do not derogate from URCA's regulatory jurisdiction or the roles and functions of any other relevant Energy Sector agencies. The Government therefore encourages co-regulatory working relations between the Department of Energy and such agencies, where appropriate, for the advancement of the Energy Sector in The Bahamas and the implementation of this National Energy Sector Policy.

4.5 The Role of URCA in the Energy Sector

(1) The Government recognises that URCA is the regulator for the Electricity and Natural Gas Sectors in The Bahamas and that its primary role is to regulate those sectors in accordance with the goals, objectives and principles underpinning the national energy and electricity sector policies.

(2) While URCA is required to implement the National Energy Policy as issued by the Government from time to time, URCA has organisational autonomy (including budgetary autonomy) and acts independently of the Government. The Government, in the main, is not involved in Energy Sector regulatory activities. However, there are certain aspects of the regulatory framework, such as the revision of the NEP 2013 – 2033 and the formulation of this National Energy Policy, that the Minister has been granted a level of involvement under the Electricity Act. The Minister may also, by order, adjust the tariff rate for electricity services of any public electricity supplier based on the need for a tariff rate relief for a category of persons as stated in the order.

(3) The Government particularly acknowledges that the Energy Sector requires independent and progressive regulatory oversight by URCA to ensure that the sector is regulated effectively and efficiently. URCA is empowered by legislation with a broad range of regulatory powers and functions in the Energy Sector, which are to be applied in a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory manner.

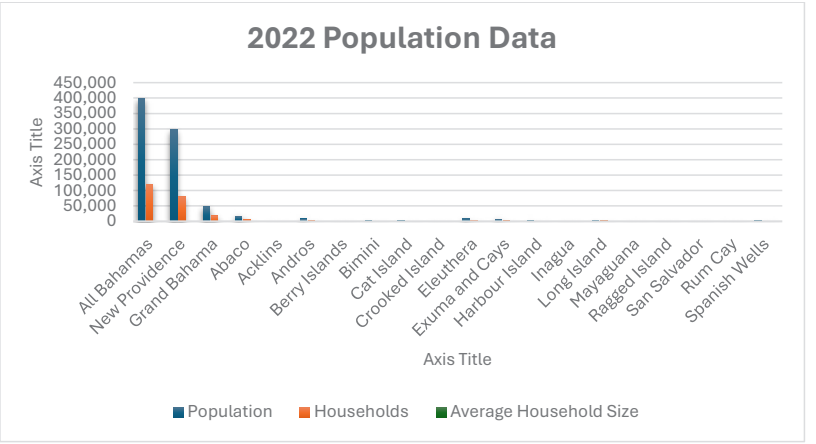
(4) The Government also recognises URCA's role to regulate the Energy Sector in The Bahamas through issuing regulatory and other measures particularly: issuing regulations, granting licenses to qualified entities; receiving and investigating complaints; conducting tariff reviews, monitoring performance and other standards with regards to quality, health and safety, and the environment; promoting effective competition and economic efficiency; protecting the interests of consumers; and advising the Government on matters relating to the electricity and natural gas sectors.

(5) The Government believes that the effective implementation of the Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives set out in this NEP 2025 – 2030 document will be achieved through collaborative efforts and engagement with URCA as the regulator for the Energy Sector. The Government therefore encourages and anticipates URCA's full cooperation in

implementing the Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives established under this NEP 2025 – 2030 for the Energy Sector.

4.6 Economy

(1) The Bahamas' archipelagic geography presents a significant challenge for essential energy infrastructure and services as it needs to be duplicated across approximately thirty (30) inhabited islands for a relatively small population of 399,314 people. Economies of scale is a major barrier and energy costs are heavily subsidized as New Providence Island has approximately 80 thousand households, while some Family Islands have less than 100 residents and less than 50 households.

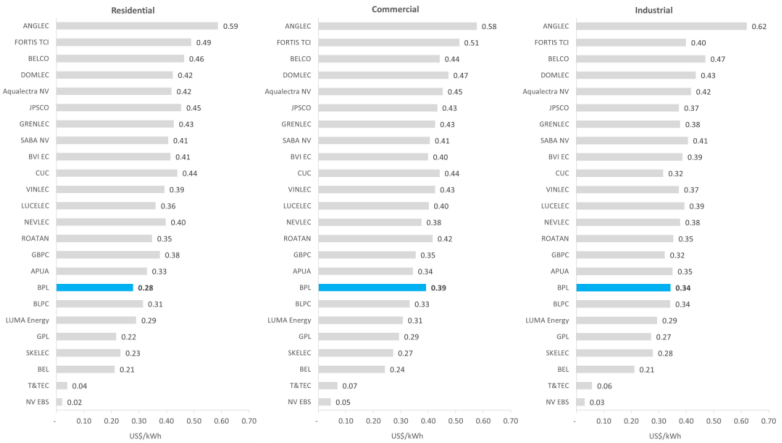


(2) The Energy Sector relies heavily on imported fossil fuels, causing price volatility due to the fossil fuel market's susceptibility to external shocks. As of December 2023, of the 735 MW installed in country was from liquid distillates from crude oil such as automotive diesel. The Bahamas Power and Light is the energy provider for approximately 84 percent of customers in the Bahamas[18] and has an average base rate of US$0.09 per kWh across all customer classes, which is the fourth lowest in the region and 53 percent lower than the regional average of US$0.19 per kWh. Despite this relatively low base rate, this high fuel cost makes BPL's overall tariff rate of US$0.34 per kWh comparable to the regional

[18] 2023 Castalia Maturity Audit.

average of US$0.35 per kWh (Castalia, 2024)[19]. Comparatively, as of 2023, the average residential tariff in Grand Bahama is US$0.38 per kWh. This is US$0.03 higher than the regional average of $US 0.35 per kWh. Additionally, Grand Bahama Power companies average base rate is US$0.27 per kWh.

(3) The following table sets out the average tariff rates for the Caribbean[20]:



(4) Energy inputs are an indirect variable cost that impacts the end cost of goods and services in any economy, including The Bahamas. Inflationary concerns have been at the forefront of economic considerations, especially in the post-pandemic global dynamic. Thus, decreasing energy cost is a major concern for the Government.

(5) As The Bahamas is a small open economy that imports most of its finished goods due to its low domestic production capacity, reducing energy costs is one of the few ways the Government can manage inflationary pressures. Most goods consumed in The Bahamas are imported including food, manufactured goods, and energy related products. The main source of these imports, accounting for eighty percent (80%), is the United States due to both geographical proximity as The Bahamas is approximately sixty (60) miles off the coast of South Florida at its closest point, and socio-political ties. As shown in the table below, the mineral fuels, lubricants, and related materials make up the second most

[19] Castalia. (2024). Final report: URCA audit of the performance and organizational maturity of BPL (Efficiency audit). Castalia Advisory Group.
[20] CARILEC, "Benchmarking Electricity Tariffs in the Caribbean", 2023.

imported category by value, underscoring The Bahamas' dependence on imported energy inputs.

Value of Imports[21]

Commodity Group	2019 (B$ '000)	2020 (B$ '000)	2021 (B$ '000)	2022 (B$ '000)	2023 (B$ '000)	Total (2019-2023) (B$ '000)	Avg. % of Total Imports
Machinery & Transport Equipment	640,402	495,306	631,434	684,647	874,768	3,326,557	19.72%
Food and Live Animals	505,662	389,210	640,959	690,382	760,937	2,987,150	17.48%
Manufactured Goods	468,902	308,532	479,612	517,265	563,427	2,337,738	13.76%
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	401,595	242,125	394,946	520,364	604,874	2,163,904	12.48%
Crude Materials, Inedibles (Except Fuels)	768,782	386,714	657,788	686,204	625,125	3,124,613	18.47%
Chemicals	230,249	193,985	336,497	361,366	335,718	1,457,815	8.56%
Mineral Fuels, Lubricants & Related	73,748	50,061	79,782	83,548	96,180	383,319	2.25%
Beverages & Tobacco	91,986	64,244	107,635	138,509	147,685	550,059	3.18%
Commodities Not Classified Elsewhere	129,722	68,299	139,002	140,980	162,282	640,285	3.71%
Animal and Vegetable Oils & Fats	9,456	6,811	14,955	16,397	16,524	64,143	0.37%

(6) The Bahamas' energy strategy to effectively combat the associated economic concerns is evolving, with increasing interest and emphasis being placed on renewable energy sources and liquefied natural gas (LNG) to enhance energy security, reduce costs, and promote energy sustainability.

[21] Bahamas National Statistical Institute. (2024). Commonwealth of The Bahamas foreign trade statistics quarterly report, third quarter 2024. Nassau: Bahamas National Statistical Institute.

4.7 Environment

(1) The natural environment of The Bahamas plays an extremely vital role of the socio-economic growth, development and health of the people of The Bahamas. The Government recognizes that activities in the Energy Sector have the potential to directly and significantly impact the environment for years to come.

(2) The Bahamas is an archipelago of more than 700 islands and more than 2000 cays, islets, and rocks in the western Atlantic Ocean covering approximately 100,000 square miles (mi^2) of ocean between latitudes 21° and 27° North and longitudes 72° and 79° West, with a total land area of only 5,382 mi2. It is one of the countries with the biggest ocean surface (Government of The Bahamas, 2014) that hosts five percent of the world's coral reefs and the world's third longest barrier reef (Simpson et al., 2009).

(3) The islands of The Bahamas are low and flat with an average altitude of 1 meter above sea level for most of the islands (~80%). In addition, the country is in a hurricane hazard prone area and historically has suffered major impacts from destructive storms and hurricanes that have significant physical, environmental and social losses and damages.

(4) The majority of the Bahamian population lives in coastal areas and particular attention should be paid to the islands of New Providence, Grand Bahama and Abaco, where 90% of the country's population lives.[22] The remaining 10% of the population is spread around other settled islands and cays, collectively known as 'the Family Islands'. A total of 29 Bahamian islands are inhabited.

(5) The climate in The Bahamas is sub-tropical, separated in two distinct seasons: warm but dry winter season from November to April and a hot wet summer season from May to October. Precipitation is more common in the northern islands, showing a gradient from the dry south to the humid north. Annual mean temperature in The Bahamas has been increasing, with historical records showing that in the past century, annual mean temperatures have increased by 0.5ºC since 1960 with an average rate of 0.11ºC per decade. Further analysed data show that the mean daily maximum temperature for July has

[22] The Commonwealth of The Bahamas 2010 Census, Department of Statistics (now Bahamas National Statistical Institute – BNSI).

increased an average of 2ºC in 100 years, and, with the more recent data, at a rate of 2.6ºC per 100 years. There is also seasonal variation between the islands, with the northern islands having a more rapid rate of warming than south-western islands.[23]

(7) Having regard to the foregoing, the Government is committed to establishing Policy Objectives that endeavour to protect and safeguard the environment from the potential adverse impact of the Energy Sector activities and to preserving the environment's pristine nature for Bahamians and visitors to The Bahamas.

4.8 Fuels

(1) The Energy Sector in The Bahamas is heavily reliant on a range of fuel types to support power generation, transportation, and industrial activities. Recognizing the critical role that fuel plays in driving economic and social development, the Government of The Bahamas has integrated fuel management as a key element of its National Energy Policy. Given the Bahamas' dependency on imported fuels, a diverse mix of fuel types is utilized across various sectors. As part of the Government's ongoing efforts to improve energy sustainability and reduce carbon emissions, The Bahamas is rapidly transitioning toward natural gas in relation to electricity generation, which is a cleaner and more affordable alternative to conventional fuels.

4.8.1 Fuel Imports and Distribution

(1) The Bahamas imports nearly all of its petroleum products. Notable importers include Buckeye Bahamas, Freeport Oil Company Limited (FOCOL), SOL Petroleum, and Rubis, which transport petroleum products by ship to the country. Smaller coastal tankers are used to distribute fuel to the Family Islands, ensuring that remote communities have access to essential energy resources.

(2) The Buckeye Bahamas Hub (BBH), formerly known as the Bahamas Oil Refining Company (BORCO), is a critical infrastructure point in the country's fuel supply chain. Located in Grand Bahama, BBH is the fourth-largest storage terminal in the Western Hemisphere, handling large volumes of petroleum products for both domestic consumption and export. The Government considers that this facility plays, and will continue to play, a

[23] The World Bank Group, 2021.

central role in storage, blending, and transhipment operations, facilitating the distribution of petroleum products across the region.

4.8.2 Key Fuel Types in The Bahamas

(1) The major fuel types used in The Bahamas, each with its specific applications, are outlined below:

(i) Heavy Fuel Oil (Bunker C) – Used primarily for power generation by Bahamas Power and Light (BPL) and Grand Bahama Power Company (GBPC), heavy fuel oil accounts for a substantial portion of the fuel mix used for electricity production across the country. However, as part of the country's policy to reduce carbon emissions, heavy fuel oil will gradually be replaced by cleaner alternatives like natural gas.

(ii) Light Fuel Oil or Gas Oil (Diesel) – Light fuel oil plays a significant role in both power generation and transportation, fuelling marine and land-based vehicles such as buses, trucks, and cars. Diesel remains an essential fuel for the country but is also being phased out where possible to accommodate greener alternatives like natural gas.

(iii) Gasoline – Used widely for land transportation and recreational marine activities, gasoline is the primary fuel for private cars, motorcycles and small recreational boats. Although important for personal transportation and tourism, gasoline consumption is expected to stabilize as electric vehicle infrastructure continues to grow in the future.

(iv) Natural Gas – Natural gas is poised to play a pivotal role in the energy transformation and transition of The Bahamas. Expected to be commercially available in 2025, natural gas will be used primarily for power generation, providing a cleaner alternative to traditional fuels such as heavy fuel oil and light fuel oil. This transition is seen by the Government as a significant step in reducing the country’s reliance on imported oil and promoting a more sustainable and affordable energy landscape.

(vi) Propane Gas – Propane is extensively used in residential and commercial cooking, particularly in hotels, and for power generation by BPL (since 2021). A smaller amount of propane is used in land transportation, particularly in vehicles converted to run on this fuel. While propane serves as a cleaner alternative to other fuels, its role remains secondary to natural gas, which is expected to take a more prominent position in the energy mix.

(vi) Jet Fuel and Aviation Fuel – These fuels are crucial for aviation transportation. Jet fuel is used to power turbine engine planes, particularly for long-haul flights, while aviation fuel is used for piston engine planes and short-haul flights. The aviation sector remains a key consumer of this fuel, contributing to the tourism industry, but the focus of energy transition efforts is on the more ground-based fuel consumption.

4.8.3 Transition to Cleaner Fuels: The Role of Natural Gas

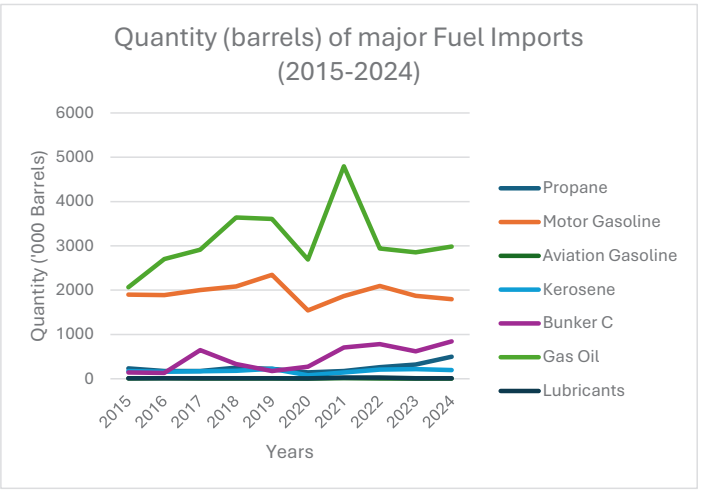
(1) While renewable energy sources like solar power are gradually increasing in The Bahamas, their impact on the fuel landscape remains limited. Since the passing of the Electricity Act in 2015[24], the installation of photovoltaic (PV) panels has grown steadily; however, they currently account for only about 2.5 percent (2.5%) of the total installed generation capacity. Consequently, conventional fuels continue to dominate the energy mix, although the Government remains committed to promoting cleaner, renewable alternatives to reduce the country's dependence on imported fossil fuels.

(2) The Government's shift towards natural gas as a primary fuel for power generation represents an imperative policy endeavour to reduce emissions and enhance the country's energy security and macroeconomic policies. As previously stated, and reiterated for emphasis, natural gas is expected to become commercially available in The Bahamas in 2025. It will offer a cleaner and more affordable alternative to heavy fuel oil and light fuel oil, significantly reducing the environmental footprint of power generation and energy costs for consumers. This transition is aligned with global trends toward cleaner energy solutions and supports The Bahamas' commitment to a more reliable, environmentally sustainable and affordable energy future.

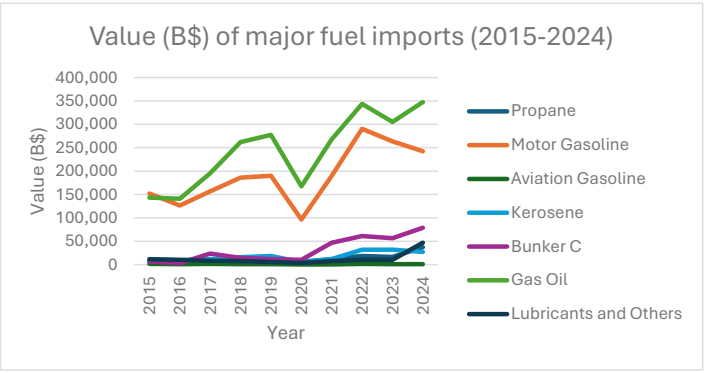
[24] Subsequently repealed and replaced by the Electricity Act, 2024.

(3) Although the use of renewable solar energy through photovoltaic (PV) panels has increased steadily since the Electricity Act, 2015 facilitated their use, PV installations only represent about 2.5 percent of the total installed generation capacity. Hence, to date, they have not had a significant impact in offsetting conventional fuel use.

(4) The following graph shows the volume of major fuel imports. [25]



(5) The following graph shows the value of major fuel imports.[26]

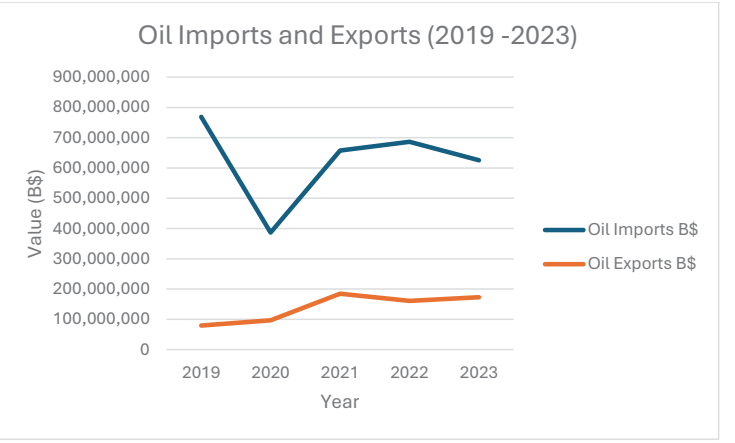


[25] Central Bank of the Bahamas, Quarterly Statistical Digest, February 2025, Volume 34, No. 1, Table 7.9: Volume of Oil Imports for Local Consumption ('000 Barrels)

[26] Central Bank of the Bahamas, Quarterly Statistical Digest, February 2025, Volume 34, No. 1, Table 7.10: Value of Oil Imports for Local Consumption.

(6) Propane fuel use increased when it was utilized for New Providence power generation in 2021. Natural gas is expected to offset light fuel oil use in power generation when imports begin in 2025.

(7) The following graph shows the trade in oil.[27] On average, imports represent about eighteen percent (18%) of total imports for The Bahamas and exports represent about twenty-three percent (23%) of total exports. The Bahamas does not produce any crude products, so about 21 percent of the imported oil is treated and exported.



(8) The major importers of petroleum products into The Bahamas are Buckeye Bahamas, Freeport Oil Company Limited (FOCOL), SOL Petroleum, and Rubis. All petroleum products are brought into the country by ship. Smaller coastal tankers move fuel to the Family Islands.

(9) Buckeye Bahamas Hub terminal (BBH), formally Bahamas Oil Refining Company (BORCO), is the world's fourth largest storage terminal facility in the western hemisphere, located in Grand Bahama. At BBH, petroleum products are stored, blended, and transhipped (exported).

(10) The fuel market is segregated into wholesalers, distributors, and retailers. Licensed utility

[27] Bahamas National Statistical Institute (BNSI)

power producers receive preferential Customs duty treatment for fuel used in the generation of electricity.

(11) The two major electric utilities, BPL and GBPC, consume almost one hundred percent (100%) of the heavy fuel oil imported. Consumption of light fuel oil is shared between electric power and transportation. Prior to 2021, BPL generated twenty percent (20%) of its power using heavy fuel oil and eighty percent (80%) using light fuel oil. Since that time, it used thirty percent (30%) heavy fuel oil, sixty percent (60%) using light fuel oil, and ten percent (10%) using propane. GBPC used about eighty-five percent (85%) heavy fuel oil and fifteen percent (15%) light fuel oil.

4.9 Electricity Generation

(1) The Bahamas Power and Light Limited (BPL) and Grand Bahama Power Company (GBPC) were designated Public Electricity Suppliers (PES) for The Bahamas in accordance with the Electricity Act 2015 (EA 2015). GBPC was granted the right to perform Generation, Transmission, Distribution, and Supply (GTDS) functions in the Port Area of Grand Bahama. BPL was granted the right to perform GTDS functions in all areas of The Bahamas outside the Port Area. However, licensed undertakers[28] that existed at the time the EA 2015 came into force were granted the right to continue their operations in their designated geographic area(s).

(2) The EA 2015 facilitated the unbundling of the generation portion of GTDS with the introduction of Independent Power Producers (IPP). The PES, as Approving Authority, determines the need for additional generation and whether that need should be served utilizing its own generation or through the use of an IPP. The EA 2015 migrated from licensed undertakers approved by the Minister and allowed for Authorized Public Electricity Suppliers (APES) approved by the relevant PES and the regulator (URCA).

(3) In accordance with the EA 2015, URCA established the following generation licence types involving generation:

[28] Licensed undertakers are entities that were granted approval by the Minister, under the Out Islands Electricity Act (repealed), to provide GTDS services in a designated area of The Bahamas. See the Electricity Act, 2015 Second Schedule (section 79).

(i) Public Electricity Supplier Licence (PESL) – authorizes and gives the Licensee the right to generate, transmit, distribute and supply electricity for sale to the public in its Service Territory and to operate, construct, reconstruct, modify or replace the generation, transmission, distribution and supply facilities for these purposes subject to the Licence conditions, the Electricity Act and any other relevant law for the time being in force. Combined, BPL and GBPC cover the entire Bahamas and are the default providers of electricity services.

(ii) Authorized Public Electricity Supplier Licence (APESL) – is essentially the same as a PESL with the notable difference being that the PESL has to grant approval for the APES to operate in the Service Territory described in the APESL. Within that Service Territory the APES has the same rights to perform as the PES.

(iii) Independent Power Producer Licence (IPPL) – authorizes the Licensee to engage in the transmission and distribution of electricity, including the inter-island transmission of electricity within, into from or through the service territory within the Commonwealth of The Bahamas covering a specific geographic area.

(iv) Generation Licence (GL) – authorizes and gives the Licensee the right to generate electricity solely for his own private use and self-supply in the event of a temporary failure of the electrical grid, subject to the Licence conditions, the Act and any other relevant law for the time being in force. This Licence is required for all stand-by generating plants with a combined capacity in excess of one mega-watt.

(4) In accordance with the Electricity Act 2024, URCA has established the following additional license types:

(i) Transmission and Distribution Licence (TDL) – authorizes and gives the Licensee the right to generate, transmit, distribute and supply electricity for sale to the public in its Service Territory and to operate, construct, reconstruct, modify or replace the generation, transmission, distribution and supply facilities for these purposes subject to the Licence conditions, the Electricity Act and any other relevant law for the time being in force. Combined, BPL and GBPC cover the entire Bahamas and are the default providers of electricity services; and

(ii) System Operator Licence (SOL) – authorizes the Licensee to enter into a management agreement with a Licensee other than a Licensee holding an Electricity System Operator Licence on such terms and conditions as may be determined for the management and operation of any of the following services, operations and maintenance, capital improvements, customer service, and street lighting.

(5) URCA is required to maintain a public register of the licences issued in the Electricity Sector.[29]

(6) The primary types of electricity generation in The Bahamas use reciprocating engines which include slow speed diesel units utilizing heavy (bunker C) and medium and high-speed units using light fuel oil (automotive diesel oil). A significant portion of electricity generation in New Providence also includes gas turbines burning light fuel oil.

(7) The electric utilities companies in The Bahamas have installed an estimated 1,000,000 kW of conventional electricity generation. Most of this capacity has dual and/or tri-fuel capabilities (i.e., HFO, ADO, and gas). BPL represents ninety percent (90%) of this capacity and GBPC represents about nine percent (9%).

4.10 Renewable Energy

(1) Renewable Energy (RE) technologies were first introduced to The Bahamian energy mix circa late 1970s, where there was sporadic use of RE technologies, particularly in the form of solar energy systems which were installed with limited regulatory oversight. Residential adoption of RE technologies was encouraged and incentivized in 2009 when the import duties of RE systems were reduced by Government to incentivize their adoption and the Government contemplated implementation of a feed in tariff. Prior to the Electricity Act, 2015 coming into force, from a utility-scale perspective, RE remained an under-developed sector with limited successful efforts made by both Public Electricity Suppliers conducting studies and receiving bids in relation to incorporating wind, biomass and solar energy.[30]

[29] Register of licensees available at www.urcabahamas.bs
[30] https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy15osti/62691.pdf

(2) With the passing of the Electricity Act, 2015, a legal framework was established that mandated URCA with, not only regulating RE but also encouraging the uptake in RE throughout The Bahamas. In this regard, URCA has developed regulatory frameworks that regulate and govern RE generation either through permits or licences (as appropriate). The frameworks provide for residential, commercial, government and utility scale installations, while also making provisions for a feed in tariff for those grid-tied systems.

(3) The most recent assessments show that approximately 12,000 kW of privately installed photovoltaic (PV) RE capacity exists within The Bahamas. Of this capacity, approximately eighty percent (80%) is installed in commercial settings, while the remaining twenty percent (20%) is residential. However, approximately seventy-five percent (75%) of the total number of systems installed are residential. Furthermore, approximately ninety percent (90%) of all such systems are situated on the island of New Providence.

(4) In addition to privately installed systems, there is approximately 14,000 kW of utility-scale photovoltaic RE capacity deployed within The Bahamas. Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) have also been deployed within The Bahamas, primarily by electricity sector licensees as part of their power generation assets. To date, approximately 47,300 kWh of BESS capacity has been installed by these licensees. This capacity plays a critical role in diversifying the energy mix and reducing the country's dependence on traditional fossil fuels.

(5) The Government of The Bahamas recognizes the critical importance of RE in achieving a sustainable and resilient energy future. Accordingly, the Government has reaffirmed its commitment to advancing RE integration as a key component of its national energy strategy. This commitment is reflected in enhanced provision of the Electricity Act, 2024 and the establishment of the newly formed Ministry of Energy and the Department of Energy, which play pivotal roles in overseeing and facilitating the development and implementation of RE projects across the country. Through these institutions, the Government is committed to creating and enforcing policies that support the growth of RE, attracting investment in clean energy technologies, and ensuring the effective integration of renewable resources into the national energy grid. The Ministry and Department of Energy are tasked with coordinating renewable energy efforts and providing the necessary

support to encourage both public and private sector participation in the RE transition, reinforcing the nation's drive toward a more sustainable and energy-secure future.

4.11 Electricity Transmission and Distribution

(1) Electricity transmission and distribution systems throughout The Bahamas are predominantly overhead radial feeds with aluminium conductors and wooden poles. These systems use a wye configuration with an overriding wire on overhead systems. Some locations, primarily in The Abacos, use underwater cables to interconnect Cays. There are no established regulatory standards for the transmission and distribution systems. There is no live line work, outside of Grand Bahama.

(2) Transmission voltages are 132kV and 33kV (or 34.5kV) and distribution voltages are 13.2kV and 4.16kV, although on many of the smaller islands the transmission and distribution voltages are at this level and within the same system. Gross system losses are typically in the range of fifteen to twenty percent (15% -20%). The most common types of issues experienced on the transmission and distribution system that result in unplanned outages include lightning, flashovers due to the buildup of salt spray on insulators, and vehicular accidents.

(3) The Electricity Act, 2024 facilitated two new types of licenses that were not in the Electricity Act, 2015. These are the Transmission and Distribution Licence and the System Operator Licence. The Transmission and Distribution Licence authorizes and gives the Licensee the right to transmit, distribute and supply electricity to the public in the Service Territory and to operate, construct, reconstruct, modify or replace the transmission, distribution and supply facilities for these purposes. The System Operator Licence authorizes and gives the Licensee the right to enter into a management agreement with a Managed Licensee to: (a) operate, maintain and upgrade GTDS facilities as necessary to meet the standards and capabilities of a modern electricity supply system; (b) undertake the improvements necessary to achieve the development of new transmission and distribution facilities; (c) manage the billing, collection and customer relations for all retail sales of electricity and in carrying out such responsibilities, making recommendations for the approval by URCA of tariff terms intended to advance energy efficiency, conservation, demand response, and protection of vulnerable customers; and (d) provide of street lighting.

4.12 Electricity Supply

(1) The supply of electricity is available in all major inhabited islands in The Bahamas, and to the vast majority of smaller islands through a Public Electricity Supplier or Authorized Public Electricity Supplier. Voltage levels mirror those used in North America with the same plug styles. BPL has remote meter reading and GBPC has advanced metering infrastructure.

(2) URCA has established power quality and reliability standards[31] to govern the parameters (voltage, current, frequency, and harmonics) within which the electricity supplied to consumers must comply and the consistency with which electricity is supplied to consumers, respectively.

(3) The following table sets out the tariffs charged by BPL at January 2024:

BPL tariff structure (since 2024)

Type of Customer	Tariff structure (kWh)	Base Rate (BSD/kWh)	Minimum/ Demand Charge (BSD/month)	Fuel Charge (BSD/kWh)
Residential	0 - 200 201 - 800 > 800	0.0000 0.1195 0.1495	5	Calculated monthly per kWh based on fuel-costs from previous month
Commercial	All	0.1450	10	Calculated monthly per kWh based on fuel-costs from previous month
General Services (Maxim, demand above 50 kVA)	0 – 900,000 > 900,000	0.1000 0.9000	568 + Demand Charge: 11.36 / kVA	Calculated monthly per kWh based on fuel-costs from previous month

[31] UED_-ES-09-2023-Standard-for-Power-Quality-and-Reliability-in-Electric-Power-Systems-SoR-and-FD-1.pdf

Temporary	0.1500	10	Calculated monthly per kWh based on fuel-costs from previous month

(4) The following table sets out the tariffs charged by GBPC at January 2023:

GBPC tariff structure (since 2023)

Type of Customer	**Tariff structure (kWh)**	**Base Rate (BSD/kWh)**	**Demand Charge (BSD/month)**	**Fuel Charge (BSD/kWh)**
Residential	0 - 200	0.1756	Minimum	Calculated monthly per kWh based on fuel-costs from previous month
	201 - 350	0.1814	Bill is	
	351 - 800	0.2287	BSD 10	
	> 800	0.2731		
Commercial	0 – 20,000	0.2020	9.41/kVA	Calculated monthly per kWh based on fuel-costs from previous month
	20,001 – 100,000	0.1875	Minimum	
	> 100,000	0.1730	Demand: 5kVA	
Industrial	0 – 100,000	0.1602	9.41/kVA	Calculated monthly per
	100,001 – 500,000	0.1468	Minimum	kWh based on fuel-costs
	500,001 – 1,300,000	0.1336	Demand	from previous month
	1,300,001 - 1,700,000	0.1069	1,000 kVA	
	> 1,700,000	0.0868		
General Services	0 – 100,000	0.1730	9.41/kVA	Calculated monthly per
	100,001 – 500,000	0.1586	Minimum	kWh based on fuel-

	500,001 – 1,300,000	0.1442	Demand	costs from previous
	> 1,300,000	0.1155	1,000 kVA	month
Temporary		0.2585		

4.13 Electricity Consumption

(1) Although the quality and reliability of electricity consumption data and statistics for The Bahamas is considered reasonable, there is a dearth of information available on long-term trends of individual consumer behaviours, consumer load patterns, appliance use, and other data required for planning, forecasting, and targeting of interventions ranging from tariff design to energy efficiency measures. The Government is aware that several entities have collected energy-related data in the past, including the Bahamas National Statistical Institute (BNSI), but these efforts and initiatives remain mostly insular and non-systematic. In additional to the available quantitative/qualitative and other statistical electricity consumption data, anecdotal electricity consumption data must is relied upon. In future, various public and private sector entities are likely to play a role in consolidating the country's energy-related data as part of the Government's efforts to transform the Energy Sector in The Bahamas, to the benefit of all.

(2) Demand for electricity in The Bahamas has shown an upward trend due to accelerated economic growth and development on many of the islands of The Bahamas. Major drivers of the electricity demand include increased economic activities in various islands, particularly within New Providence, Grand Bahama, Abaco, Exuma, Eleuthera and Bimini. It is anticipated that electricity demand will rise exponentially as energy intensive activities such as residential building construction, hotel infrastructure developments, and other like activities are ramped up in the short to medium term.

(3) There are approximately 135,000 active electricity accounts in The Bahamas. This represents about forty percent (40%) of the population.[32] GBPC has about 20,000 customers of which eighty percent (80%) are residential. BPL has about 115,000 electricity accounts, of which eighty-five percent (85%) are residential. Customers consume about 2,000,000,000 kWh of electricity annually, of which eighty-six percent (86%) is consumed

[32] Population data based on the most current Bahamas National Statistics Institute 2010 census.

by BPL customers. Residential customers consume forty-six percent (46%) of this amount with the balance consumed by commercial customers. The maximum demand for electricity reached about 415,000 kW in 2024.

(4) The following table sets out the share of customers and consumption in The Bahamas.

Location	**Customers %**	**Consumption %**
New Providence	63	71
Grand Bahama	15	13
Abaco	6	5
Eleuthera	6	4
Exuma	3	3
Other Family Islands	8	4
Total %	**100**	**100**

4.14 Transportation

(1) The transportation sector in The Bahamas is integral to the nation's economic growth and social development. his sector complements the country's tourism industry and supports the importation of goods critical to the nation's economy. However, it is also heavily dependent on imported gasoline and diesel fuel, which contribute significantly to national energy consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Fuel costs remain a major factor in transportation expenses for both private individuals and businesses, directly influencing overall energy costs within the sector.

(2) To address these challenges, the Government of The Bahamas recognizes that a multi-faceted approach is required. This includes improving fuel efficiency standards, promoting the adoption of electric and alternative-fuel vehicles, investing in sustainable public transportation systems, and implementing sustainability measures within the maritime and aviation sectors. The Government believes that by taking these and other measures, The Bahamas can move toward a more sustainable and energy-efficient transportation system that aligns with the nation's broader environmental goals and energy policy objectives.

(3) The transportation sector in The Bahamas encompasses multiple modes of transport, each of which play a vital role in connecting people, goods, and services. These modes include

road transportation, public transit, marine transport, and air transport. Each mode presents its own set of challenges and opportunities for energy sustainability, efficiency, and environmental impact.

(4) The Bahamas has experienced a steady increase in the number of registered vehicles, including private passenger cars, light trucks, and commercial transport vehicles, with the majority imported from the United States and Japan. The preference for used vehicles has made them more affordable but represents a potential harm to the environment regarding fuel efficiency and emissions, as these vehicles may not meet modern environmental standards. The lack of stringent fuel efficiency or emissions regulations for imported vehicles offers an opportunity for the Government to implement policy interventions that promote cleaner, more fuel-efficient vehicles, thereby reducing the sector's environmental impact. Public transportation, mainly in New Providence and Grand Bahama, consists of privately operated bus systems, known as “jitneys”, which serve as the primary mode of transit for many residents. However, challenges such as the lack of a centralized transit authority, limited route coverage, and operational inefficiencies hinder the development of an accessible and reliable public transport system.

(5) Marine transport plays a vital role in inter-island connectivity and trade due to the archipelagic nature of The Bahamas. The country has numerous registered vessels, including ferries, cargo ships, and fishing boats, which rely predominantly on diesel and bunker fuels. The Bahamas also has one of the world’s largest ship registries, underscoring its significant role in global maritime activities. Recognising this importance, the Government has, inter alia, developed supporting enabling legislation in the relevant portions of the Merchant Shipping Act and the Natural Gas Act, which govern the transfer of hazardous materials and natural gas in Bahamian waters, ensuring safe operations. However, the Government also understands that the marine sector's reliance on fossil fuels presents an opportunity to explore alternative fuels and technologies that could enhance its environmental sustainability.

(6) Finally, The Bahamas has several international and domestic airports, with the Lynden Pindling International Airport (LPIA) in Nassau serving as the primary gateway for air transport throughout the country. Commercial airlines, private jets, and chartered flights support both tourism and business travel. The air transport sector relies heavily on jet fuel

and aviation gasoline, contributing to the nation's overall energy consumption and emissions. As international air traffic continues to grow, there are opportunities to explore more sustainable practices, such as the use of biofuels and other alternative energy sources, to reduce the environmental impact of aviation while supporting the nation's connectivity with the global community.

4.15 Education

(1) Education plays a crucial role in equipping The Bahamas with the skilled workforce needed to support the country's energy sector, especially as it transitions toward greater reliance on renewable energy. Institutions such as the Ministry of Education, the University of The Bahamas (UB) and the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI) offer a range of formal education programmes that provide essential technical knowledge and practical skills in fields related to energy.

(2) The Ministry of Education supports science-based courses aimed at developing secondary level students with an interest in the energy sector. These initiatives reflect a growing recognition of the importance of education in enhancing the workforce needed for the energy transition in The Bahamas. The Ministry of Education also actively promotes careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) through various initiatives, such as the Technical Cadets Corps Programme (TCCP) and its involvement in Girls in ICT Day, held annually in April. This event encourages young women in particular to pursue careers in science and technology fields, by providing information, hands-on experiences, career advice and exposure to role models in STEM fields.

(3) Additionally, at the University of The Bahamas, academic learning related to energy and renewable energy is led by two departments: the GTR Campbell Small Island Sustainability Institute (SIS Institute) and the Department of Mathematics, Physics and Technology. Currently, there are no courses in which energy is the sole focus of learning, however, the SIS Institute offers courses on the subject matter of environmental sustainability which provides tangential instruction on energy systems.

(4) At the vocational level, BTVI has provided training programmes that cater specifically to the Energy Sector, focusing on the technical aspects of electrical installation, renewable energy system design, and system maintenance. These programmes are designed to provide

students with the hands-on skills necessary to work in both traditional energy fields and the growing renewable energy sector.

(5) In addition to traditional education, informal initiatives like public awareness campaigns have contributed to educating the broader population about sustainable energy practices. Despite these efforts, public education campaigns around energy efficiency and renewable energy, initiated with the launch of the NEP in 2013, have not been fully sustained. Moving forward, more efforts in both formal and informal education will be necessary to ensure that The Bahamas continues to build a knowledgeable and skilled workforce for the evolving Energy Sector.

4.16 Regional and International Participation

(1) The Bahamas, as a Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member country, actively participates in CARICOM's energy programmes and initiatives such as the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE) and Caribbean Sustainable Energy Roadmap and Strategy (C-SERMS). Respectively, these programmes play a key role in advancing energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives within the Caribbean region and promote sustainable energy across member states.

(2) The Bahamas regularly attends and participates in CARICOM Energy Week, which is an annual event focusing on energy efficiency and renewable energy within CARICOM member states. The Bahamas also participates in the Caribbean Renewable Energy Forum (CREF), which is a major regional forum focusing on renewable energy projects, policies, and investment opportunities in the Caribbean.

(3) The Bahamas is a member of International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) which is a lead global inter-governmental agency for energy transformation that serves as the principal platform for international cooperation, supports countries in their energy transitions, and provides state of the art data and analyses on technology, innovation, policy, finance and investment. The Bahamas participates in the IRENA Assembly annually, along with other global energy leaders, to discuss policies and strategies for renewable energy. As an IRENA member, The Bahamas is supported in its efforts to transition towards a sustainable energy future.

(4) The Bahamas is a signatory to the Paris Agreement, reflecting its commitment to climate change action, particularly in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with global energy goals. The Bahamas also is and will continue to be a leading voice at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) conferences, which is primarily climate focused. The Bahamas participates in the Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) conferences and aligns with SEforALL's mission to achieve universal access to modern energy services, enhance energy efficiency, and expand the use of renewable energy.

(5) The Bahamas collaborates and has also partnered with regional and international organizations such as the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on various energy-related projects and programmes.

(6) Under this National Energy Policy, the Government will establish Policy Objectives to support and strengthen The Bahamas' regional and international participation and representation in Energy Sector fora, meetings and policy making.

5 Mission and Vision for the Energy Sector

(1) Mission: “To create an energy sector that enhances quality of life”.

(2) Vision: “A financially and environmentally sustainable sector that provides a high quality of living, supported by the availability of energy at developed world standards, and synergizes with other national development policy objectives”.

(i) The Mission summarizes the overarching purpose of the energy policy and underpins the actions proposed herein. The Vision describes the future state of the Energy Sector that the policy intends to achieve.

(ii) The Mission and Vision for this National Energy Policy are statements that best encapsulate the overall intent and commitments of the Government towards transforming the Energy Sector in The Bahamas. They have been purposefully framed in a manner to be easily understood and to encourage support from stakeholders for the Energy Sector Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives. The Mission and Vision have formed the basis of the approaches that this National Energy Policy endeavours to achieve.

(iii) The realisation of the Mission and Vision is inextricably linked to the Government’s Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives for the Energy Sector. Therefore, the Government has set out the following Strategic Aims to support the achievement of its broader Energy Sector policy objectives.

(3) Energy Sector Strategic Aims

(i) The Strategic Aims are the broad goals that the Government is committed to achieving under this National Energy Policy. The Government recognizes the broad Strategic Aims for meeting the Energy Sector policy objectives as stated in the Electricity Act, 2024 which include:

(a) the priorities for diversification competition and sector regulation;
(b) the Government’s formulation of its role in the electricity sector;
(c) plans for the efficient use and supply of safe, least cost, reliable and environmentally sustainable electricity, and;

(d) aspects of social policy, including the scope of universal service and the protection of vulnerable customers.

(ii) This National Energy Policy provides goals that go beyond those established under the Electricity Act that are primarily specific to the Electricity Sector. The broader areas of focus include, but are not limited to: the generation, transmission, distribution, and supply of electricity; conservation and energy efficiency; fuel diversification; marine, road, and air transportation; protection of the environment; growth of the economy; education of consumers and energy service providers; and regional and international participation of The Bahamas in energy related matters. Consideration has also been given to emerging issues in the Energy Sector, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Cybersecurity, under this National Energy Policy.

(iii) The Government particularly recognizes the statutory principles that undergird the policies in accordance with the Strategic Aims and Goals of the National Energy Policy include the following:

(a) provision of safe, reliable, least cost supply of energy to all consumers;
(b) advancement of The Bahamas' economic growth and development and international competitiveness;
(c) enhancement of the energy security of The Bahamas;
(d) promotion and encouragement of a competitive and liberalized Energy Sector;
(e) a structure for the Energy Sector overseen by an independent regulator;
(f) employment of practices and technology that protects the natural environment of The Bahamas;
(g) promotion of energy efficiency in the generation, distribution and consumption of energy throughout The Bahamas;
(h) promotion of the use of renewable energy;
(i) promotion of private investment and innovation in the Energy Sector;
(j) creation of incentives for private sector participants in the Energy Sector for improved performance and customer service;
(k) provision of investment opportunities for citizens of The Bahamas; and

(iv) provision of a regulatory structure that balances the interests of and affords opportunities for input from all stakeholders, honours contractual commitments, and encourages investment.

(4) The Government has aligned its Strategic Aims and Energy Sector Policy Objectives with the principles as set out in the Electricity Act, 2024 and has thereby formulated the following specific Energy Sector Goals for the period 2025 to 2030:

Goal 1. Independent regulation that balances the interests of and affords opportunities for input from all stakeholders.

Goal 2. Engagement with stakeholders (international, regional, and domestic).

Goal 3. Enhancement of The Bahamas economic growth and (domestic and international) competitiveness.

Goal 4. Private investment and innovation, including the use of incentives.

Goal 5. Provision of investment opportunities by citizens.

Goal 6. A knowledgeable and productive workforce.

Goal 7. Protection of the natural environment, including the increased use of renewable energy.

Goal 8. Energy security (availability and quality).

Goal 9. Safe supply and use of energy (to all consumers).

Goal 10. Efficiency in the transmission, movement and use of energy.

Goal 11. Provision of universal service and protection of vulnerable consumers.

Goal 12. Least cost supply of energy to all customers.

6 The Government's Energy Sector Policy Objectives

(1) The Policy Objective is a specific action that, when taken, will help achieve the Strategic Aims and Goal(s) it supports. The Government's Policy Objectives, when implemented, will be time bound and measured as per the Government's National Energy Policy Implementation Strategy ("the NEP Implementation Strategy"). Each Policy Objective also includes strategies to be considered in developing the NEP Implementation Strategy.

6.1 Policy Objectives for National Development

6.1.1 Economy

(1) Electricity is a cornerstone of economic growth and development, providing the reliable and affordable electrical power necessary for businesses and households to thrive. However, the Bahamas' energy system faces challenges related to high costs, small-scale island operations, and reliance on imported fossil fuels, which create vulnerabilities in both pricing and supply. This NEP seeks to address these challenges by improving energy affordability, reducing energy consumption, and supporting economic development through sustainable energy practices. Additionally, energy infrastructure must be disaster-resilient to mitigate the impacts of climate change and natural disasters. This NEP therefore aims to provide a framework for affordable and reliable energy, fostering economic growth while transitioning to cleaner energy sources.

(2) The Government is committed to advancing The Bahamas' Energy Sector by promoting sustainable, cost-effective, and resilient solutions across all areas of energy production and consumption. Energy services will be provided at the optimum long-term cost, to lower the burden on the national economy and to achieve competitiveness of locally produced goods and services. Key objectives include encouraging the adoption of renewable energy, improving energy efficiency, and optimizing demand-side management. This will be achieved through strategies such as incentivizing the use of energy-efficient appliances, introducing time-of-use tariffs, supporting the development of renewable energy technologies, and enhancing grid infrastructure to better accommodate renewable energy sources. Smart grid solutions and public education on energy-saving practices will also play vital roles in reducing energy consumption while fostering a culture of sustainability.

(3) Further efforts focus on modernizing the energy infrastructure to ensure a reliable and resilient system capable of meeting future demands and expand access to electricity

throughout The Bahamas. In expanding electricity access and promoting local development, the Government will champion initiatives such as small island interconnections, microgrid systems development, off-grid hybridization programmes, and distributed energy resources. Achieving total electrification is expected to significantly increase household incomes and expenditures. Investments will particularly be made in upgrading the grid, diversifying energy sources with LNG infrastructure, and facilitating the growth of renewable energy through incentives and workforce development. These initiatives will not only reduce dependence on imported fuels but also create new economic opportunities in clean energy sectors, from local manufacturing to renewable energy project development. Public-private partnerships will be key to accelerating these efforts and ensuring long-term energy security.

(4) Finally, the Government will encourage stable and affordable energy prices through regulatory measures and tax incentives aimed at fostering competition and innovation in the energy market. This includes offering tax credits for renewable energy investments, promoting variable pricing and off-peak usage, and ensuring long-term price stability for consumers. By implementing these comprehensive strategies, the Government aims to support the transition to a sustainable energy future, lower energy costs for Bahamians, and position The Bahamas as a regional leader in clean energy.

Policy Objective: Promote Demand-Side Management and Energy Efficiency

(5) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) incentivize the use of energy-efficient appliances through rebates and tax incentives;

(ii) implement energy audits for residential, commercial, and industrial sectors to identify opportunities for energy savings;

(iii) develop public education campaigns to promote energy-saving practices and technologies;

(iv) encourage the adoption of energy-efficient building codes and standards for new construction projects; and

(v) support research into new energy-efficient technologies and their adoption across sectors.

Policy Objective: Introduce Variable Pricing and Off-Peak Energy Usage

(6) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this policy objective:

(i) implement time-of-use (TOU) tariffs to encourage consumers to use electricity during off-peak hours. Variable pricing structures can help manage energy demand, reduce strain on the grid, and lower costs for consumers;

(ii) develop demand response programmes that incentivize consumers to reduce energy use during peak demand periods;

(iii) introduce tiered pricing structures that encourage energy conservation by charging higher rates for excessive use;

(iv) promote the use of smart meters to help consumers monitor their energy consumption and make informed decisions; and

(v) establish grid stability programmes to ensure that variable pricing does not negatively affect the overall reliability of the energy system.

Policy Objective: Invest in Energy Infrastructure

(7) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) upgrade the existing energy grid to integrate renewable energy sources and improve system reliability. Investments in reliable and resilient infrastructure are essential to ensure that the Energy Sector can meet future demand while accommodating renewable energy and drive down economic costs;

(ii) develop infrastructure for LNG import terminals to diversify the energy mix and reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels;

(iii) invest in smart grid solutions to enhance energy management, reduce transmission losses, and allow for real-time monitoring of energy usage;

(iv) plan for future energy capacity by evaluating generation, transmission, and distribution needs based on projected demand and technological advances; and

(v) ensure that new infrastructure projects are resilient to extreme weather events and can withstand the impacts of climate change.

Policy Objective: Encourage the accelerated growth of renewable energy technologies.

(8) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this policy objective:

(i) incentivize both utility-scale and small-scale solar, wind, and biomass energy projects;

(ii) provide funding and technical assistance to businesses and entrepreneurs seeking to enter the renewable energy market;

(iii) establish training programmes to up-skill workers in the renewable energy sector, including solar panel installation, wind turbine maintenance, and energy efficiency services;

(iv) promote local manufacturing and assembly of renewable energy technologies to create jobs and reduce costs; and

(v) develop supply chains for renewable energy projects, including equipment, maintenance services, and consulting expertise.

Policy Objective: Facilitate the development of LNG infrastructure.

(9) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this policy objective:

(i) plan and develop LNG import terminals and distribution networks across key islands;

(ii) create jobs in construction, operation, and maintenance of LNG facilities;

(iii) promote the use of LNG as a cleaner alternative to diesel and other petroleum-based fuels in the power generation sector;

(iv) ensure that LNG infrastructure meets environmental standards and is disaster-resilient; and

(v) encourage private sector investment in LNG infrastructure to promote competition and reduce energy costs.

Policy Objective: Achieve a stable reduction in energy supply product prices over the long term.

(10) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this policy objective:

(i) implement cost-saving measures such as improved grid efficiency, the expansion of renewable energy, and the introduction of more affordable alternative fuels;

(ii) URCA to promote regulatory measures to reduce the impact of fuel price volatility on electricity rates;

(iii) encourage competition in the energy supply market to drive down costs;

(iv) foster innovation and technological advancements that reduce the cost of energy production and distribution; and

(v) implement mechanisms to ensure long-term price stability and transparency for consumers.

Policy Objective: Offer tax incentives to encourage investments in renewable energy technologies.

(11) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this policy objective:

(i) provide tax credits or rebates for businesses and households that invest in renewable energy systems;

(ii) create a green investment fund to support the development of emerging renewable technologies;

(iii) offer incentives for research, development and implementation of renewable energy technologies in The Bahamas, particularly in solar, bio-mass, and storage solutions and to a lesser extent offshore wind and tidal energy;

(iv) implement policies that reduce the financial risks for investors in renewable energy projects;

(v) regularly review and adjust incentives to ensure they align with market developments and technological advancements.

6.1.2 Tourism

(1) The Government recognizes the vital role of tourism in The Bahamas' economy and its significant contribution to employment and national growth. The tourism industry, as The Bahamas' most significant economic driver, is inextricably linked with the Energy Sector. With its world-renowned natural beauty and vibrant culture, The Bahamas remains a top global tourism destination. However, global trends indicate that the tourism industry faces significant energy related challenges stemming from climate change, changing consumer energy preferences, and the need for sustainable energy practices.

(2) From the reliance on energy-intensive resorts and transportation, to the environmental impact of large-scale tourism operations, the need for a sustainable, energy-efficient tourism model is both evident and imperative if The Bahamas is going to remain a viable tourism destination of choice. With an increased global emphasis on sustainable travel, the Government is committed to promoting energy solutions that both reduce tourism's carbon footprint and enhance the resilience of tourism infrastructure against climate change. This approach ensures that the tourism sector thrives while minimizing its environmental impact, contributing to long-term sustainability. To ensure the continued success and resilience of this vital sector, the Government is further committed to adopting policies that promote sustainable tourism and strengthen the industry's long-term viability.

Policy Objective: Foster a resilient tourism industry that can adapt to environmental changes and energy challenges.

(3) The Government will implement the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) provide incentives for tourism establishments to adopt renewable energy systems (particularly solar and wind), as well as energy-efficient appliances;

(ii) develop green tourism certification programmes that incentivises resorts, hotels, and tour operators to implement sustainable energy practices;

(iii) support research and development in energy-efficient technologies that can be integrated into the tourism sector;

(iv) collaborate with international and regional bodies to adopt best practices and technologies to enhance tourism sustainability; and\

(v) establish climate adaptation measures for tourism infrastructure to ensure resilience to extreme weather events and energy disruptions.

6.1.3 National Security

(1) National security and community safety are closely tied to reliable and sustainable energy systems in The Bahamas. Energy resilience is essential for securing critical infrastructure in terms of law enforcement, emergency response systems and communication networks, especially in the remote and vulnerable areas throughout the archipelago of The Bahamas. The Government recognises that The Bahamas requires an energy strategy that not only meets the needs of its security forces but also empowers communities to be self-sufficient, ensuring that energy disruptions do not compromise public safety or undermine community development.

Policy Objective: Leverage energy solutions to strengthen national security and community safety.

(2) The Government will implement the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) invest in energy infrastructure that supports national security agencies, such as off-grid renewable energy systems for border patrol, surveillance, and communication stations;

(ii) promote and support the development of microgrids powered by renewable energy sources, ensuring energy resilience for critical infrastructure during natural disasters and crises;

(iii) provide energy access to underserved communities through solar-powered solutions, enabling greater participation in community development programmes and security initiatives;

(iv) strengthen disaster preparedness by integrating renewable energy solutions into emergency response systems, such as solar-powered shelters and medical facilities; and

(v) foster public-private partnerships to ensure energy solutions are aligned with both community development and national security needs.

6.1.4 Education

(1) The Government is committed to building human capacity in the Energy Sector through targeted educational programmes and initiatives, ensuring that consumers and the workforce in the Energy Sector are fully equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to support a sustainable energy transition for The Bahamas.

(2) The Government recognizes that URCA is required to promote the establishment and continuation of energy efficiency programmes by Electricity Sector licensees and consumers that must include:

(i) a detailed estimation of how much opportunity exists for energy efficiency measures and corresponding savings;

(ii) a proposal for cost-effective updates to electricity infrastructure to bolster energy efficiency measures;

(iii) proposed energy efficiency requirement targets for buildings and appliances; and

(iv) a three-year schedule and agenda for energy conservation education programmes for electricity customers.

(3) The Government further recognizes that URCA, in consultation with licensees in the Natural Gas Sector, is required to prepare programmes for industrial and technical education and training, including the grant of scholarships, and carry such programmes out diligently with a view to training nationals of The Bahamas to replace foreign personnel as soon as reasonably practicable and to afford nationals of The Bahamas every possible

opportunity for occupying senior positions in the operations of licenses in the Natural Gas Sector.

(4) The Government encourages and urges URCA to establish the necessary relations with education and training institutions such as the University of The Bahamas (UB) and the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI), as well as develop the appropriate regulatory programmes and framework to facilitate capacity building and knowledge transfer in the Electricity and Natural Gas Sectors.

(5) The Government considers the importance of raising broader public awareness about energy conservation, renewable energy, and demand-side management. The Government believes that for the successful implementation of the NEP, it is essential to integrate energy conservation and efficiency into educational curricula at all levels, from primary schools to higher education institutions. Additionally, the Government is committed to adopting a comprehensive approach to renewable energy education, including the revision of curricula and professional training programmes with a focus on renewable energy technologies.

(6) The Government is aware that since the launch of the 2013 NEP, the Ministry of Education organized initiatives such as the "Sustainable Energy for Caribbean Education in The Bahamas" workshop, which trained educators on how to incorporate renewable energy topics into the curriculum. The Ministry of Education has continued efforts to integrate energy education, particularly with a focus on electrical and renewable energy programmes in schools. There are also limited but growing academic and technical programmes related to energy and renewable energy at UB and BTVI. The Government supports and encourages the continuation of these programmes.

(7) Under this NEP, the Government emphasizes the need for continued development and expansion of academic, vocational and technical programmes to ensure that energy-related knowledge is accessible to the general public, including students and professionals in the Energy Sector. The Government believes that further development of these programmes is critical to preparing the workforce for the energy transition and ensuring that future generations can participate in and benefit from a sustainable energy economy.

Policy Objective: Develop energy studies curricula with a focus on renewables for secondary and tertiary institutions.

(8) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) integrating renewable energy studies into the educational curricula at secondary and tertiary levels to provide students with the necessary skills to support the energy transition;

(ii) establish specialized renewable energy programmes at the University of The Bahamas and BTVI to upskill existing, and train the next generation of, energy professionals;

(iii) expand the scope of energy studies in secondary schools, including courses on renewable energy technologies, energy efficiency, and environmental sustainability;

(iv) incorporate practical, hands-on training in renewable energy systems such as solar, wind, and battery storage in educational programmes;

(v) in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, develop certification programmes and short courses that provide specialized knowledge in emerging renewable energy fields; and

(vi) partner with international universities and organizations to offer exchange programmes and training opportunities for students and energy sector professionals.

Policy Objective: Integrate energy studies with a focus on renewables into general STEM education.

(9) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) promote the integration of energy education into subjects such as mathematics and science to ensure that students gain a broader exposure to and understanding of energy systems and renewable technologies;

(ii) promote renewable energy subject matter into existing STEM curricula at the primary and secondary levels, focusing on how energy technologies function and their environmental impact;

(iii) train and develop teachers to incorporate renewable energy concepts into existing pedagogical practices and lessons, including subjects that are not traditionally related to energy;

(iv) promote the development of online resources and educational materials to support teachers in delivering energy-focused content;

(v) promote programmes and initiatives to encourage students to engage in energy-related projects and research to foster innovation and problem-solving skills; and

(vi) promote school competitions and initiatives that encourage students to explore renewable energy solutions.

Policy Objective: Promote partnerships between key stakeholders in the Energy and Education sectors.

(10) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) establish partnerships between the Ministry of Energy and Transport, the Ministry of Education, universities, and vocational institutions to facilitate a coordinated and effective approach to energy education. Local and foreign investors will be encouraged to provide training and development opportunities and knowledge transfer on skills pertaining to the Energy Sector;

(ii) establish a formal partnership between the Ministry of Energy and Transport, Ministry of Education, UB, and BTVI to create a clear pathway for energy-related education and workforce development and certification;

(iii) collaborate with URCA, private sector organizations and energy companies to develop internships, apprenticeships, and job-shadowing opportunities for students;

(iv) engage with international organizations, such as the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), to support educational initiatives and attract global best practices to The Bahamas;

(v) establish advisory councils comprising industry experts to provide input on curriculum development and ensure that educational programmes align with industry needs; and

(vi) support joint research initiatives and exchange programmes between universities and energy companies to advance the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency in The Bahamas.

Policy Objective: Mobilize funding for training and development of Energy Sector professionals.

(11) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) promote investment in the development of the sector workforce to equip professionals with the knowledge and skills required to transition The Bahamas to renewable energy technologies;

(ii) establish government-funded scholarships, grants and programmes for students pursuing degrees and/or certifications in renewable energy and related fields;

(iii) partner with international organizations and financial institutions to secure funding for training programmes and educational initiatives in the energy sector;

(iv) develop industry-led training programmes that focus on upskilling the existing workforce, particularly those in fossil fuel-based industries, to transition to renewable energy roles;

(v) provide incentives for companies in the energy sector to offer on-the-job training, development and mentorship opportunities to employees; and

(vi) launch a national campaign to encourage lifelong learning and professional development in the energy sector.

Policy Objective: Facilitate the creation of new jobs and career paths in the Energy Sector.

(12) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this policy objective:

(i) promote a sustainable Energy Sector that will create new employment opportunities in the renewable energy, energy efficiency, and related industries;

(ii) encourage and support the development of green jobs in solar energy, wind energy, energy auditing, and electric vehicle infrastructure;

(iii) support the creation of a renewable energy workforce by offering incentives to private companies to hire and train new workers in renewable energy fields;

(iv) foster investment and entrepreneurship in the renewable energy sector by providing financial and technical support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);

(v) promote gender equality in the Energy Sector by encouraging the recruitment and training of women in energy-related fields; and

(vi) support a national employment strategy for promoting green jobs, with a focus on sustainability, innovation, and economic growth.

Policy Objective: Expand the number of qualified professionals in renewable energy production and management.

(13) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this policy objective:

(i) promote training and certification programmes in renewable energy technologies and energy management;

(ii) foster partnerships with educational institutions and international organizations to build local capacity;

(iii) create pathways for skills development and employment in the renewable energy sector;

(iv) support the growth of a local workforce capable of maintaining and operating renewable energy systems;

(v) promote international best practices in energy management and workforce development.

6.1.5 Environment

(1) The Government recognizes that energy production, transport and use have a direct impact on the environment and if not carefully managed and monitored can have a potentially adverse effect on marine life, air and land quality, and potable ground water. The Government is particularly mindful of the atmospheric emissions of particulates known to negatively affect human health, emissions of greenhouse gases and other environmental pollutants, as well as non-sustainable land-use practices consequential to energy production and use. The Government therefore firmly believes that national development should favour policies and practices for the energy sector value chain that minimize any adverse environmental impacts, while simultaneously creating conditions that are conducive to sustainable economic growth.

(2) The Government also recognizes that current international environmental discussions are focused on the urgent need to address climate change and the issue of global warming. The Bahamas, as a party to and having adopted the Paris Agreement, will continue to be a world leader in the reduction of atmospheric emissions and greenhouse gas (GHG) by establishing energy policies towards providing affordable and clean energy congruent with Sustainable Development Goal number seven (SDG7) and the year 2030 targets.

(3) The Government aims to balance the development of the Energy Sector with the need for environmental protection, particularly in the context of climate change, public health, and biodiversity. By transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources, the Government endeavours to establish energy policies to reduce climate change impacts, protect natural ecosystems, and cut pollution. These policies are also intended to improve public health, safeguard environmental habitats, and ensure compliance with international climate commitments, particularly the Paris Agreement.

(4) In the short term, the Government is focused on strengthening existing environmental regulations, scaling-up renewable energy projects, and establishing environmental monitoring systems. The Government's medium-term Policy Objectives will centre around promoting mandatory renewable energy adoption in medium and large-scale development projects, building local technical expertise, and encouraging innovation in green technologies. Long-term Policy Objectives will include a complete transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy and the development of resilient, sustainable energy infrastructure.

(5) The Government therefore encourages URCA, the Ministry of Environment (particularly the Dept. of Environmental Planning and Protection - DEPP), the Ministry of Energy and Transport, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and other relevant agencies to adopt a collaborative approach to developing legal and regulatory frameworks, enforcing environmental standards and regulations, which form the backbone of The Bahamas' energy transition.

Policy Objective: Reform and strengthen energy sector environmental governance.

(6) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) facilitate reform and enhancement of Energy Sector legal and regulatory frameworks for robust environmental protection;

(ii) foster and support inter-agency co-operation regarding monitoring, compliance and enforcement mechanisms of environmental laws, regulations, standards and codes to minimize environmental impact and violations with respect to the Energy Sector;

(iii) strengthen environmental monitoring systems to track pollution levels, emissions, and other critical environmental factors;

(iv) facilitate working relations and protocols between relevant Government agencies and independent regulatory bodies to manage, monitor and enforce environmental compliance in Energy Sector related activities and projects;

(v) promote public participation in environmental decision-making processes, allowing all relevant stakeholders to have a voice in energy development projects;

(vi) improve Energy Sector data collection, management, and dissemination; and

(vii) report annually on the environmental impacts and mitigation measures relevant to and applied in the Energy Sector.

Policy Objective: Reduce climate impacts and atmospheric pollution by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air and water quality, and mitigating climate change impacts.

(7) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) implement measures to accelerate the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources (particularly solar, wind, and biomass) to reduce CO_2 emissions and other atmospheric pollutants;

(ii) establish clear standards and protocols in conjunction with other relevant agencies for the safe disposal of Energy Sector waste, equipment and devices to safeguard against environmental impact and harm;

(iii) guide the development of rehabilitation and disposal practices throughout the Energy Sector;

(iv) encourage the development and enforcement of air and water quality regulations to minimize the impact of energy production on human health and environmental ecosystems;

(v) promote energy efficiency and demand-side management programmes to reduce energy consumption and associated environmental impacts; and

(vi) implement targeted programmes to lower the environmental footprint of energy production, focusing on reducing emissions from power plants and other Energy Sector infrastructure.

Policy Objective: Protect environmental ecosystems and biodiversity.

(8) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) integrate environmental safeguards into Energy Sector projects to prevent harm to vulnerable habitats and species;

(ii) establish exclusion zones around environmentally sensitive areas, such as coral reefs and mangrove forests, to limit energy infrastructure development in these areas;

(iii) require environmental impact assessments (EIAs) for all major Energy Sector facilities, plants and projects, with a focus on marine and coastal ecosystems;

(iv) foster collaboration with environmental agencies and organizations to support biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration efforts;

(v) promote sustainable land and water management practices in Energy Sector projects to protect local ecosystems and ensure long-term ecological resilience;

(vi) manage adverse environmental impacts in the energy sector in collaboration with relevant agencies and organizations;

(vii) foster a culture of environmental responsibility and stewardship throughout the Energy Sector; and

(viii) develop local capacity to effectively monitor, manage and mitigate environmental risks associated with the Energy Sector.

Policy Objective: Promote renewable energy development by expanding the role of renewable energy in The Bahamas' energy generation mix.

(9) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) set clear renewable energy targets, aiming for 30% of the national energy mix from renewable sources by 2030;

(ii) encourage public and private sector investments in utility-scale and small-scale renewable energy projects, including solar, wind, and ocean energy;

(iii) support the development of clean energy technologies through funding, research, and partnerships with international stakeholders;

(iv) incorporate waste-to-energy solutions and biomass technologies into the national energy strategy to diversify the renewable energy portfolio; and

(v) establish incentives for businesses and households to install renewable energy systems, including tax credits and rebates.

Policy Objective: Ensure resilience and community health by transitioning to cleaner energy sources and building resilient infrastructure.

(10) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this policy objective:

(i) develop energy resilient infrastructure to ensure that energy systems can withstand extreme weather events and climate-related disasters;
(ii) promote the use of clean energy solutions in public health facilities, schools, and other community spaces to improve air quality and reduce health risks;
(iii) implement public education campaigns to raise awareness of the benefits of clean energy in improving community health and reducing pollution;
(iv) provide incentives for the adoption of clean energy technologies, particularly in high-risk areas, where the effects of climate change are most pronounced; and
(v) develop community-based energy resilience programmes that empower local communities to take ownership of their energy needs while protecting the environment.

Policy Objective: Limit total per capita GHG emissions to meet, at a minimum, international standards and obligations.

(11) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:
(i) encourage energy efficiency measures and technologies in both residential and commercial sectors to reduce the carbon footprint;
(ii) explore carbon offset programmes to complement emission reduction efforts, focusing on the sequestration potential of local ecosystems;
(iii) monitor and regulate emissions from existing energy sources to ensure they remain in line with national targets;
(iv) promote the use of cleaner energy technologies and alternative fuels, such as Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) or Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), to reduce overall emissions;
(v) engage with local, regional and international partners to align national emissions goals with global climate commitments.

6.1.6 Agriculture and Fisheries

(1) The Agriculture and Fisheries industries of The Bahamas are essential to the socio-economic and cultural fabric of the country, providing food security, employment, and opportunities for Family Island growth and development. The Government believes that in an archipelagic nation such as The Bahamas, progressive and well considered policies are vital to balancing the symbiotic intersection between the Energy Sector and Agriculture and Fisheries to ensure the sustainability and productivity of these key industries.

(2) The Government recognizes that The Bahamas' Energy Sector must be transformed to meet the growing Agriculture and Fisheries energy demands; to become more inclusive, secure, and sustainable; and to come into alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.[33] The Government believes that as the Agriculture and Fisheries industries value chains modernise, alternatives to fossil fuel sources are required to ensure that The Bahamas' Agriculture and Fisheries energy needs are provided on infrastructure that is resilient, secure and environmentally sustainable.

(3) Renewable energy can play a critical role in meeting the demand for electricity, heating, cooling and transport needs in the Agriculture and Fisheries industries. Sustainable energy measures, such as solar-powered irrigation systems and energy-efficient refrigeration for agriculture and fisheries products, can transform these industries, making them more resilient to disruptions and more environmentally friendly. Through the efficient and effective use of renewable energy, the Government can also advance its efforts to lower greenhouse gas emissions and lessen the environmental impact of the Agriculture and Fisheries industries in The Bahamas. The Government is therefore committed to implementing Policy Objectives focused on energy solutions and energy resource management that enhance the resilience of Agricultural and Fisheries industries – especially in the face of climate change – essential for securing food supply in The Bahamas and protecting livelihoods.

(4) The intersection between the Energy Sector and the agriculture industry also brings to focus for the Government the limitations on accessible land that may be required to provide

[33] IRENA and FAO 2021: Renewable energy for agri-food systems – Towards the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris agreement. Abu Dhabi and Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cb7433en

renewable energy technologies in The Bahamas, particularly in New Providence. The Government is fully cognizant of the land intensive nature of renewable energy projects such as establishing solar farms in the islands of The Bahamas. This challenge is exacerbated by the perceived risks of lowered home and property values, productive farmland, wildlife and human health. The Government, under this Energy Policy, endeavours to respond proactively to these potential concerns by implementing innovative and strategic Policy Objectives that will facilitate the fair and fast transition to renewable energy and clean energy technologies throughout The Bahamas.

Policy Objective: Reduce energy consumption in Agriculture and Fisheries operations, promote renewable energy adoption in farming and fishing communities and improve climate resilience in Agricultural and Fisheries industries.

(5) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) encourage the use of solar-powered irrigation and water pumping systems to reduce reliance on fossil fuels in agricultural operations;
(ii) facilitate the installation of energy-efficient refrigeration and cold storage solutions for agriculture and fisheries operations to reduce energy consumption and minimize food waste;
(iii) support local farmers and fishers in accessing renewable energy technologies, providing subsidies or incentives for the adoption of renewable energy systems;
(iv) promote training programmes that teach sustainable farming and fishing techniques, including energy-efficient practices; and
(v) partner with international organizations to fund climate resilience projects that integrate renewable energy solutions into agriculture and fisheries operations.

Policy Objective: Establish optimal locations for large-scale renewal energy siting that have the potential to adversely impact agricultural farmland and community development.

(6) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) develop consensus-based solutions with stakeholders for large-scale renewable energy siting that may adversely impact host communities;
(ii) identify strategic locations for future renewable energy infrastructure to minimize adverse farmland development and economic impact;

(iii) strategically earmark in advance the siting of power plants and renewable energy infrastructure in a manner that minimizes the adverse effect on agricultural and community land development, and public planning; and

(iv) identify and publish suitable future locations for energy sector pipelines (gas and petroleum) routes giving priority to shared corridors for the benefit of national infrastructure planning and development and to minimize adverse effect on agricultural and community land development.

6.1.7 Public Health and Safety

(1) The Government of The Bahamas is committed to improving the health and safety of its citizens through comprehensive and responsive public health systems and safety infrastructure. The Energy Sector plays a pivotal role in public health and safety, particularly in an island nation like The Bahamas, where energy access directly impacts healthcare services and emergency response capabilities. The Government believes that a reliable and sustainable energy system ensures that healthcare facilities, emergency services, and public safety systems are equipped to operate effectively and efficiently, even during disruptions caused by natural disasters or other crises. The Government will therefore integrate clean and renewable energy solutions within the public health and safety infrastructure and disaster management systems to enhance service delivery, reduce costs, and promote overall community resilience.

(2) The Government also recognizes the inherent risks to public health and safety associated with the Energy Sector. These risks relate to the installation, interconnection, maintenance and consumption of grid-tied and off-grid systems, equipment and energy services, and renewable energy technologies. The Government encourages the relevant agencies, entities and regulatory bodies to establish robust public health and safety frameworks, measures and standards to safeguard against the potential risks in Energy Sector.

Policy Objective: Ensure reliable and sustainable energy supply for healthcare facilities and public safety systems and promote energy efficiency in public health and safety operations.

(3) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) promote investment in solar and backup energy systems for hospitals, clinics, and emergency services to ensure the continuity of operations, particularly during power outages;

(ii) promote and support microgrid investments and projects powered by renewable energy to serve remote and off-grid areas, improving energy access for healthcare delivery;

(iii) implement energy efficiency measures related to public health and safety buildings, including the use of LED lighting and solar water heating systems;

(iv) promote the adoption of smart grid technologies that enable more efficient energy management and disaster resilience in the public health and safety sector; and

(v) partner with international organizations to secure funding and technical support for energy-efficient public healthcare and safety infrastructure projects.

Policy Objective: Minimize risks inherent to public health and safety in the Energy Sector.

(4) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) facilitate the development of standards for equipment, products, protective equipment, facilities and operating practices in the Energy Sector to ensure safe operations. Relevant international standards may apply where there are no local standards;

(ii) facilitate inter-agency collaboration and cooperation to reform and/or develop public health and safety regulations, standards and other measures in relation to the Energy Sector; and

(iii) strengthen the Ministry of Energy and Transport's capacity to provide leadership and enforce environmental health and safety regulations, standards and other measures, environmental disaster risk management and response in the Energy Sector, in consultation with other relevant authorities.

6.1.8 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

(1) The Government considers that the energy and ICT networks support essential national functions and that these interdependent systems form part of the critical infrastructure for The Bahamas. The Government also believes that the energy and ICT networks play an integral role in driving socio-economic development, innovation and public service

delivery. The ICT network enables vital interconnectivity and communication generally in The Bahamas, especially during recovery after a natural disaster.

(2) The ICT sector is both a significant consumer of energy and a powerful enabler of energy efficiency across other sectors. As data centres, mobile networks, digital networks and digital infrastructure expand, their energy demands are also increasing posing new challenges and opportunities for reliable and sustainable energy management. Conversely, the energy sector requires reliable ICTs to facilitate the delivery of services across the archipelago. The Government accordingly recognises the ICT sector as a strategic area for national development with dual relevance in ensuring energy sustainability in the sector while leveraging its capabilities to optimize national energy use. The Government, therefore, encourages coordination between the energy and ICT sectors to ensure the effective and efficient functioning of energy and ICT providers in the delivery of their respective services throughout The Bahamas.

Policy Objective: Foster cross-sector collaboration between the ICT and energy sectors to enhance reliability, sustainability, efficiency, and resilience of the ICT and energy services in The Bahamas.

(3) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) encourage URCA to develop regulatory frameworks to facilitate cross sector collaboration between the energy and ICT sectors with a common goal of fulfilling the national energy policy;

(ii) support the adoption of energy-efficient technologies in ICT infrastructure; and

(iii) establish formal mechanisms for bilateral cooperation between ICT and energy providers.

6.1.9 Regional and International Participation

(1) The Government of The Bahamas recognizes its responsibility to contribute to global efforts in combating climate change and promoting environmental sustainability. As a small island developing state (SIDS), The Bahamas is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, and meeting international environmental commitments is not only a global obligation but also critical to the nation's long-term resilience and sustainability. By

aligning its energy policies with international climate agreements, The Bahamas aims to reduce its carbon footprint while fostering a clean, low-carbon energy future.

(2) The Government will set clear emission reduction targets that are in line with international climate goals and monitor progress regularly. Strengthening regional and international cooperation will be crucial in sharing best practices, accessing climate finance, and receiving technical support for renewable energy projects and climate resilience initiatives. Furthermore, the Government will ensure that its energy policies and projects are designed to support global climate action, reinforcing its commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable development on the international stage.

(3) The Government also recognizes that the Energy Sector in The Bahamas forms part of a global ecosystem for energy developments, evolution and reform in respect of which the Government is determined that The Bahamas must continue to participate. The Government believes that The Bahamas' participation in regional and international discussions, fora, meetings conferences and other similar activities will position The Bahamas as a leading advocate on energy related matters, such as climate change, and other like matters that directly impact The Bahamas and the global community. The Bahamas' participation in regional and international activities will also provide opportunities for national capacity building and knowledge transfer that will further enhance and accelerate the development and transformation of the Energy Sector in The Bahamas.

(4) The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), of which The Bahamas is a member, has Energy Sector-related bodies such as the Caribbean Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency and Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC). The Bahamas participates and will continue to participate in the deliberations and activities of these bodies. The Government notes that these bodies, respectively, aim at improving access to modern, affordable and reliable energy services, energy security and mitigation of negative externalities of the energy system (e.g., local pollution and greenhouse gas emissions) by promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency; and coordinate the Caribbean region's response to climate change, working on effective solutions and projects to combat its environmental impacts and global warming. The Government believes the objectives of these bodies are directly aligned with the Government's Policy Objectives for the Energy Sector in The Bahamas.

(5) The Government also supports and encourages The Bahamas' continued participation in the activities held by the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All). The Government recognizes that SE4All is an independent organization, hosted by United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), with a global mandate to accelerate progress on the energy transition in emerging and developing countries and works at the intersection of energy, climate, and development. SE4All collaborates with governments and partners worldwide to end energy poverty, accelerate the deployment of renewable energy solutions, and combat climate change. The Government therefore believes that The Bahamas' continued participation in events and activities under the auspices of this organization is vital to the speedy development and transition of the Energy Sector in The Bahamas.

(6) The Government considers that regional and international participation is essential for establishing standards and best practices for the Energy Sector in The Bahamas and affords The Bahamas the opportunity to take advantage of the experiences of other nations in the transition and development of Energy Sector in The Bahamas. The Bahamas' representation at these bodies and organisation is therefore imperative. The Government particularly recognizes that URCA is mandated to represent the Government in regional and international organisations where the Minister responsible for relations with URCA delegates such tasks to URCA[34].

(7) The Government is also aware that the Ministry of Energy and Transport typically assigns a team or specific individuals to attend regional and international fora, and depending on the subject matter focus, technical experts and advisors from across Government agencies may also be part of the delegation. The Government therefore encourages and supports the coordination, collaboration and co-operation between URCA, the Ministry of Energy and Transport, the Department of Energy, and other relevant agencies to participate in and represent The Bahamas at regional and international Energy Sector related fora.

(8) The Government encourages URCA, as the independent regulator for the Energy Sector in The Bahamas, to continue to develop capacity and engender good relations with regional and international organisations and regulatory bodies, with the goal of enhancing its regulatory activities. URCA, in conjunction with other relevant agencies, should also

[34] See Section 14(1)(f) of the Electricity Act, 2024.

ensure that The Bahamas meets its regional and international Energy Sector obligations, while simultaneously deriving the maximum benefit from international co-operation, experiences and best practices in these areas.

Policy Objective: Meet or Exceed International Environmental Commitments.

(9) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) establish clear emission reduction goals consistent with international climate agreements and regularly monitor progress;
(ii) strengthen cooperation with regional and international bodies to share best practices and resources for achieving climate and energy goals;
(iii) advocate for climate finance and support from international organizations to help implement renewable energy projects and climate resilience initiatives;
(iv) report regularly to international bodies on The Bahamas' progress in meeting its climate commitments; and
(v) ensure that energy policies and projects are designed with international climate goals in mind to contribute meaningfully to global climate action.

Policy Objective: Position The Bahamas as a leading advocate for the Caribbean and other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) by 2030 and beyond.

(10) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) engage and support local experience, expertise and talent in the Energy Sector to champion participation and advocacy on behalf of The Bahamas and the region at international Energy Sector meetings/fora;
(ii) establish a formal framework for co-operation between key stakeholders to engage, participate and advocate on Energy Sector related matters;
(iii) leverage existing relations and partner with regional SIDS to foster consensus building on Energy Sector related matters of mutual interest;
(iv) develop funding and other resource mechanisms for attending and participating in regional and international fora; and
(v) facilitate regional and international collaboration in Energy Sector related education, research, and exchange of data and information.

Policy Objective: Position The Bahamas to lead regional and international representation and participation at international meetings/fora, with a view to influencing regional and international energy policy positions and decisions.

(11) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) facilitate, host and take leadership roles in, regional and international discussions and fora on Energy Sector issues such as climate change, global warming and carbon credits;
(ii) encourage regional support for international energy policies, innovations and technology adoption that facilitate and promote inclusion of and partnership with SIDS; and
(iii) promote, enhance and accelerate the adoption of energy related innovations and technologies throughout The Bahamas (lead by example).

Policy Objective: Position URCA as a globally recognized regulator through impactful regulations aligned with international policies, standards and best practices, with the ability to effectively manage cross-border issues related to the Energy Sector.

(12) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) support URCA's representation of the Government and participation in regional and international organisations and obligations in relation to the Energy Sector;
(ii) support measures to enhance URCA's capacity as the regulatory body and advisor to the Government on international policies, standards and best practices for the Energy Sector; and
(iii) promote cooperation and collaboration between URCA and other regional and international Energy Sector regulators.

6.2 Policy Objectives for the Electricity Sector

Electricity Generation

(1) The Government recognizes that energy generation in The Bahamas is almost entirely dependent on imported petroleum products, including heavy fuel oils (HFO) such as diesel, gasoline, and kerosene, along with limited use of propane and natural gas. The Government

believes that this dependency exposes The Bahamas to the volatility of global fuel markets, which can lead to significant fluctuations in energy prices.

(2) To mitigate this, the Government is aware the state-owned electricity utility, Bahamas Power and Light (BPL), has implemented a fuel hedging initiative aimed at providing more predictable fuel charges for consumers. Despite these efforts, the energy mix remains heavily and unacceptably reliant on fossil fuels. Renewable energy sources are minimal, with small-scale distributed solar photovoltaic (PV) systems and plants currently providing a small but growing portion of the energy supply. As a result, per capita CO_2 emissions from fossil fuels in The Bahamas stand at approximately 6.0 tonnes annually. [35]

(3) In response to the urgent need for a cleaner, more sustainable energy future, the Government is committed to transitioning (BPL) to a diversified energy generation mix, with a focus on increasing renewable energy sources, reducing carbon emissions, and reducing dependence on imported fuels.

Policy Objective: Diversify fuel supply and reduce reliance on oil by shifting to alternative fuels, such as CNG and LNG.

(4) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) reduce the share of diesel and petrol fuel oils in electricity generation, replacing them with cleaner alternatives such as CNG and LNG;

(ii) set specific targets for LNG penetration in the energy mix by 2030, ensuring sufficient infrastructure and logistical capacity for fuel importation and storage;

(iii) ensure that the transition to alternative fuels is accompanied by the development of a flexible generation capacity to maintain grid reliability;

(iv) develop new supply chains for LNG and CNG, including investments in infrastructure such as terminals, storage tanks, and transportation networks; and

(v) promote research and development into alternative fuels to support long-term diversification goals.

[35] https://ourworldindata.org/co2/country/bahamas

Policy Objective: Transition from an ad-hoc, reactive energy planning model to a data-driven, proactive approach.

(5) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) establish an Integrated Resource and Resilience Plan (IRRP) that guides long-term generation and infrastructure decisions based on reliable data and forecasting;

(ii) promote collaboration between public electricity suppliers, independent power producers (IPPs), and URCA to improve planning and decision-making;

(iii) ensure that future energy infrastructure investments are aligned with resilience and climate adaptation goals to address the impacts of extreme weather events;

(iv) implement real-time monitoring and predictive analytics to inform decision-making and reduce system vulnerabilities;

(v) establish an institute or entity charged with collecting, collating and analyzing data from Energy Sector licensees and producers; and

(vi) encourage the establishment of clear regulatory frameworks to enable the integration of renewable energy into long-term planning processes.

Policy Objective: Promote liberalization and unbundling of the electricity sector, focusing on generation.

(6) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) incrementally increase the current share of generation capacity owned and operated by independent power producers (IPPs) to 55% by 2030;

(ii) ensure that the unbundling process fosters competition, efficiency, and greater innovation in the sector;

(iii) strengthen the regulatory framework to allow for equitable participation by both public and private sector players in the generation market;

(iv) promote transparency and accountability in the pricing, regulation, and operation of the energy market; and

(v) encourage investment in generation assets that support a diverse mix of energy sources, including renewables, natural gas, and conventional fuels.

Renewable Energy

(1) Assessments[36] have shown that The Bahamas has abundant renewable energy resources particularly in terms of solar, wind, biomass and biofuel that the Government believes a combination of these resources could be used to meet the islands' energy needs while decreasing electricity costs, increasing energy access, and promoting energy independence.

(2) The Government considers renewable energy (RE) as central to the transition towards a sustainable, low-carbon energy system in The Bahamas. While renewable energy sources, particularly solar PV, currently make up a small portion of the energy mix, the Government aims to significantly scale-up penetration to thirty percent (30%) by 2030. This step will be part of a broader long-term vision to achieve one hundred percent (100%) renewable energy generation in the future.

(3) The Government is cognizant of the key challenges including, but not limited to, the availability of land for large-scale renewable projects, especially solar farms; and the need for investments in grid infrastructure to accommodate intermittent energy sources. However, the Government is committed to supporting renewable energy integration through policy frameworks, financial incentives, and infrastructure development.

Policy Objective: Accelerate the adoption of renewable energy to account for 30% of total electricity generation by 2030.

(4) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) increase investments in utility-scale solar PV projects on New Providence and the Family Islands, particularly through micro-grids and decentralized energy solutions;

(ii) facilitate the development of other renewable energy sources, such as wind and biomass, where feasible;

(iii) introduce incentive programmes to encourage private sector participation in renewable energy projects;

[36] National Renewable Energy Laboratory and Organisation of American States (2011), "Energy Policy and Sector Analysis in the Caribbean (2010 – 2011)".

(iv) ensure the integration of energy storage systems to address the intermittency of renewable energy sources; and

(v) establish a comprehensive grid modernization plan to support higher renewable energy penetration without compromising reliability.

Policy Objective: Introduce a fair, transparent, and stable tariff regime to facilitate greater integration of renewables into the electricity grid.

(5) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) establish clear guidelines for renewable energy pricing and compensation for energy producers;

(ii) ensure that tariffs reflect the true cost of renewable energy integration while remaining fair to consumers;

(iii) implement policies that encourage long-term investment in renewable energy infrastructure;

(iv) align tariffs with international standards to attract foreign investment in the renewable energy sector; and

(v) encourage regular review and adjustment of tariffs to reflect technological advancements and changes in the energy market.

Policy Objective: Accelerate the use of renewable energy to comprise 30% of total electricity generation by 2030.

(6) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) expand renewable energy generation primarily through photovoltaic (PV) microgrids, along with biomass co-generation and waste-to-energy technologies, complemented by battery energy storage systems to improve reliability;

(ii) promote and facilitate the development of utility-scale solar projects, including microgrids, on New Providence and the Family Islands to enhance energy independence and resilience;

(iii) encourage citizens and businesses to participate in decentralized energy markets by facilitating small-scale renewable energy (RE) production, where households and enterprises can generate part of their electricity needs and sell excess power back to the grid;

(iv) ensure the integration of renewable energy into the national grid in a way that maintains grid stability and minimizes disruptions; and

(v) provide technical assistance and financing options to support the accelerated transition towards renewable energy, particularly for small businesses and residential systems.

Electricity Transmission and Distribution

(7) The Transmission and Distribution (T&D) infrastructure throughout The Bahamas, and particularly on New Providence, is largely outdated. Much of the system was installed in the 1980s and has not been routinely maintained and/or upgraded, leading to significant system losses and reliability concerns. As energy demand increases and renewable energy sources are integrated into the grid, it is essential to modernize the T&D network to improve efficiency, reliability, and capacity.

Policy Objective: Unbundle the T&D grid from the historic vertically integrated monopolies, such as Bahamas Power and Light Ltd. and Grand Bahama Power Company Ltd., by 2030.

(8) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) separate contestable segments, such as generation and supply, from non-contestable segments, such as transmission and distribution, to foster competition and efficiency in the electricity and gas markets;

(ii) urge URCA to develop the regulatory framework to facilitate the interconnectivity of Independent Power Producers (IPPs) with public electricity suppliers, ensuring timely integration into the grid;

(iii) promote regulatory reforms to encourage a more transparent, competitive market structure, allowing for more diverse generation and supply options;

(iv) provide incentives for private investments and public private partnerships in transmission and distribution infrastructure to increase reliability and reduce system losses; and

(v) ensure that the regulatory environment supports innovation and sustainability within the T&D market.

Policy Objective: Improve energy efficiency by reducing energy losses in the existing T&D network from 15% to 10% by 2030.

(9) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) modernize the T&D infrastructure by replacing outdated equipment and implementing state-of-the-art technologies such as smart grids and real-time monitoring systems;

(ii) facilitate and support the development of grid storage capabilities, including battery storage systems, to help balance intermittent renewable energy generation and improve grid stability;

(iii) encourage the implementation of advanced grid management and automation technologies to reduce system inefficiencies and improve outage response times;

(iv) prioritize the upgrade of transmission lines, substations, and switchgear to enhance the reliability and capacity of the grid; and

(v) facilitate and support the integration of renewable energy sources into the grid without compromising overall system efficiency.

Policy Objective: Decrease annual system outages due to failures in the T&D network by 30% by 2030.

(10) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) encourage and support the implementation of a comprehensive upgrade plan for the transmission and distribution network, including the construction of new switching stations and transmission lines;

(ii) encourage the improvement of fault detection and response systems to quickly restore power during outages;

(iii) encourage enhanced substation protection, voltage regulation, and distribution protection schemes to improve grid resilience;

(iv) encourage implementation of rigorous maintenance schedules and invest in training and capacity building for grid management staff; and

(v) encourage monitoring of system performance and reliability through regular audits and performance reviews.

Policy Objective: Ensure sustained investment in the modernization and expansion of energy transmission and distribution infrastructure.

(11) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) introduction of the private investment energy companies[37] for the management and enhancement of transmission and distribution infrastructure across New Providence and other islands;
(ii) support T&D projects that focus on critical infrastructure upgrades to ensure the grid can handle increased load and renewable generation;
(iii) encourage partnerships between government, private investors, and international development organizations to fund infrastructure improvements;
(iv) align long-term energy policy goals with infrastructure investments to ensure future needs are met; and
(v) promote public-private partnerships (PPPs) to accelerate the pace of modernization and increase private sector involvement in grid upgrades.

Electricity Supply

Policy Objective: Introduce smart meters as part of an advanced communication infrastructure for distribution management.

(1) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) deploy smart meters across the grid to enable real-time monitoring of energy consumption and improve grid management;
(ii) utilize data from smart meters to support demand-side management and optimize energy use;
(iii) enhance grid reliability by providing detailed data on energy flow and consumption patterns, allowing for quicker identification and resolution of issues;
(iv) facilitate the integration of intermittent renewable energy sources by providing consumers and utilities with better tools to manage demand; and

[37] The Government and BPL have duly executed Agreements with Bahamas Grid Company Ltd. (BGC) to, inter alia, upgrade the T&D system and services on New Providence.

(v) ensure that smart meter technology is compatible with other grid modernization initiatives and that data privacy and security are prioritized.

Conservation and Energy Efficiency

(1) The Bahamas' energy consumption continues to increase year over year as its economy experiences unprecedented growth. However, energy use and consumption in The Bahamas continues to be characterised by relatively low adoption and use of energy-efficient technologies and inefficient energy practices. Consumer behaviours are mostly not influenced by the actual time-of-use (TOU) cost of energy consumption. The Government believes that, while there has been some improvement in consumer behaviours in recent years, efforts to transform the energy sector's efficiency in general, and the uptake of energy efficient technologies and practices, have remained fragmented and largely limited in both scale and scope.

(2) The Government considers that it has an obligation to implement Policy Objectives regarding energy conservation and efficiency that would facilitate demand side management (DSM), with a view to promoting efficient energy use and mitigate climate change by lowering greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from conventional power generation. From the consumer's standpoint, energy efficiency and conservation measures will yield direct savings on energy bills; from the national standpoint, energy conservation and efficiency would significantly reduce the foreign exchange costs of oil imports, which would also minimise additional investment required in power generation capacity. The Government therefore aims to implement energy conservation and efficiency policy objectives that reduce energy demand without sacrificing consumer comfort, productivity or increasing costs, improve energy security, and will have a positive impact on the overall economy and people of The Bahamas.

(3) There are certain key drivers that have made energy conservation and efficiency a priority policy objective for the Government, particularly:

(i) high technical losses in electricity generation, transmission and distribution systems;

(ii) the high cost of optimisation technologies in energy consumption;

(iii) inadequate awareness of the potential benefits from efficient use and utilization of energy efficiency and conservation practices, technology and appliances;

(iv) slow adoption of energy conservation and efficiency opportunities and measures due to socio-economic factors;

(v) limited technical capacity, training and expertise in energy conservation and management; and

(vi) limited reliable energy audit data and information covering other sectors in The Bahamas.

(4) While the Government has a key role to play in encouraging energy efficiency and conservation, a collective multi-sectoral effort, including the sector Regulator (URCA), and electricity companies, is required for effective energy DSM. The Government however is aware that it is the consumer who ultimately determines whether and what energy conservation and efficiency actions they will take.

(5) The following sets out the Government's broad energy conservation and efficiency Policy Objectives:

(i) improve energy conservation and efficiency use throughout The Bahamas and in every aspect of the energy sector value chain;

(ii) encourage electricity utility companies to implement Demand Side Management (DSM) programmes;

(iii) encourage the promotion of energy efficiency programmes by URCA; and

(iv) encourage and incentivize consumer DSM action.

<u>The Government's role in Energy Conservation and Efficiency</u>

(1) The Government has been making consistent and sustained efforts to meet its international obligations regarding climate change and energy efficiency, evidenced in part by the identification and execution of energy-saving measures within Government-occupied buildings. In 2023, energy audits were conducted on more than seventy such buildings, assessing their energy use and identifying opportunities for savings. The audit results show the potential for an annual savings exceeding One Million Dollars (B$1,000,000.00), with some Government buildings currently realizing such benefits.[38] To date, twenty-five

[38] To illustrate, the Bahamas Customs Headquarters building reported a savings of over B$65,000 in electricity bills in 2023 compared to the preceding year.

percent (25%) of Government buildings' energy consumption have been audited and it is a goal of the Government to aggressively audit all Government occupied buildings by 2026. The Government, through the Ministry of Energy and Transport, is also committed to promoting energy efficiency in Bahamian homes to mitigate cost of living and enhance climate change resilience through energy DSM.

(2) The following are strategies that the Government will adopt to promote, encourage and facilitate DSM including, but not limited to:

(i) ensure that the necessary legal and regulatory frameworks are developed for the sector-wide adoption of demand side and energy efficiency measures;
(ii) make necessary amendments to legislations governing fuel use, environment, transport and buildings to regulate energy use;
(iii) develop a specific National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Plan in consultation with relevant stakeholders;
(iv) promote energy efficiency and conservation initiatives in all sectors;
(v) promote the value of and need for energy audits and advisory services throughout The Bahamas;
(vi) disseminate information on energy efficiency and conservation to consumers;
(vii) broaden the scope of energy conservation and efficiency efforts by Government agencies responsible for environment and energy matters;
(viii) promote the concept of green design in buildings (including solar water heating, natural lighting, ventilation and open office design, among others);
(ix) promote the development of standards and codes of practice on energy efficiency and conservation;
(x) promote efficiency and improvement in conservation, generation, transmission distribution and consumption of energy;
(xi) promote research and development in the field of energy conservation and efficiency;
(xii) ensure that vulnerable and low-income consumers have targeted information regarding affordable, modern and sustainable energy products;
(xiii) reduce or eliminate import duty and taxes on energy efficient products;
(xiv) encourage URCA to develop a demand side and energy efficiency regulatory framework;

(xv) encourage URCA to ensure the implementation of demand side and energy efficiency measures and programmes by Licensees; and

(xvi) ensure that demand side and energy efficiency measures and programmes are effectively implemented, monitored and evaluated.

URCA's role in Energy Conservation and Efficiency

(1) The Electricity Act, 2024[39] requires URCA to promote and approve the establishment and continuation of energy efficient programmes by sector Licensees and consumers. Each efficiency programme must include:

(i) a detailed estimation of how much opportunity exists for energy efficiency measures and corresponding savings;

(ii) a proposal for cost-effective updates to electricity infrastructure to bolster energy efficiency measures;

(iii) proposed energy efficiency requirement targets for buildings and appliances; and

(iv) a three-year schedule and agenda for energy conservation education programmes for electricity customers.

(2) The Government therefore encourages URCA to establish the regulatory framework for the promotion and approval of energy efficiency programmes.

Electricity Utility Companies role in Energy Conservation and Efficiency

(1) The Government recognises that electricity supply companies, including BPL, have implemented DSM in various forms with a view to minimize energy consumption. This is consistent with the requirements imposed under the Electricity Act, 2024,[40] and should translate into a reduction in demand for electrical energy which is a very effective means of controlling peak demand especially in capacity constrained systems. The Government encourages electricity companies' DSM programmes to also include, but not be limited to, a combination of or all the following:

[39] See Section 15 of the Electricity Act, 2024.
[40] See Section 15(1) of the Electricity Act, 2024.

(i) improve the reliability of the electricity grid through the right balance of conventional and renewable technologies and the use of transitional fuels such as liquefied natural gas (LNG);

(ii) public information campaigns on energy-saving practices to raise DSM awareness among consumers;

(iii) energy audits in order to provide energy efficiency advice to consumers;

(iv) installation of prepaid meters which, in addition to reducing non-payment and accounts receivables, also have the effect of increasing energy-efficiency behaviour by customers;

(v) consider the viability of implementing tariff structures that encourage efficient use of electricity, such as:

(a) Time of Use (TOU) Tariffs – which typically charge more for energy consumed during peak periods thereby incentivizing load shifting to off-peak periods; and

(b) Dynamic or "Real-time" Pricing- a tariff structure in which the electricity price continuously fluctuates based on availability and demand.

(2) The Government will set out in its National Energy Policy Implementation Plan full details for achieving the Energy Conservation and Efficiency Policy Objectives.

6.3 Policy Objectives for the Natural Gas Sector

(1) The Government's Policy Objectives for the newly established Natural Gas Sector (NGS) in The Bahamas go beyond the introduction of natural gas as a novel fuel source in the generation mix for electricity. The Government's Policy Objectives for this sector are aimed at achieving sustainable economic growth and development for The Bahamas and protecting the environment.

(2) The Policy Objectives for the NGS are also intended to address potential regulatory, economic, environmental, and public health and safety issues that may arise in the sector. The Government expects that URCA, in accordance with the Natural Gas Act, 2024, will establish and issue regulations, codes, standards and other regulatory measures to effectively govern the Natural Gas Sector in The Bahamas.

(3) The Government further encourages URCA to establish a robust licensing framework for the grant of licences in relation to each activity of the Natural Gas Sector value chain. The licensing framework should, where appropriate, promote and foster sustainable competition in the Natural Gas Sector in accordance with the Natural Gas Act, 2024. The Government also requests that URCA establish a concomitant fee structure, methodology and framework for activities in the Natural Gas Sector that are aligned with the Government's Policy Objectives for the Natural Gas Sector. The Government therefore encourages URCA to issue licences for all Natural Gas Sector value chain activities within The Bahamas and impose and collect the appropriate licence fees for such activities.

(4) The Government recognizes the potential adverse effects that natural gas operations and activities may have on the environment and public health and safety. The Government believes that adherence to good industry standards and best practices will contribute significantly to preventing or mitigating such effects. The Government is committed to the effective and efficient regulation of these operations to ensure that natural gas activities are conducted taking environmental, and public health and safety issues into serious consideration. The Government therefore urges all regulatory bodies and agencies responsible for the Natural Gas Sector, particularly the Department of Energy, URCA and the Department of Environmental Planning and Protection, to monitor and enforce the laws, regulations and other regulatory measures in relation to the Natural Gas Sector to safeguard public health and safety and the environment.

(5) The Government believes that the Natural Gas Sector can stimulate the development and growth of other sectors and sub-sectors of the economy such as agriculture and fisheries, transport and education. Additionally, activities in the Natural Gas Sector, such as construction and system operations will further create demand for labour, goods and services. The Government considers that there is immense spin-off potential in the Natural Gas Sector that will contribute to the further development of the wider economy and people of The Bahamas.

(6) The Government recognizes that, currently, most of services in the Natural Gas Sector are not provided by Bahamians due to inadequate requisite local expertise and skills. The participation of Bahamians in various aspects of the Natural Gas Sector value chain is important for the long-term stability of the sector and requires the implementation of sound policies, strategies, action plans, continuous consultation amongst key stakeholders and

strengthening capacity of various institutions such as the University of The Bahamas and the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute. The Government believes that strategic measures and interventions for the employment and training of a local workforce may be required to develop local capacity to service the Natural Gas Sector. Such measures should also ensure that opportunities to provide services to the sector by Bahamians are eventually made available by the operators in the sector commensurate to the capacity, experience and skill set acquired by the local workforce. In this regard, the Government believes that its Policy Objectives for the Natural Gas Sector must be participatory, inclusive, monitorable, and buttressed by regulation-based incentives, where appropriate and necessary.

Policy Objective: Develop a competitive and efficient domestic market for natural gas and ensure that the Government and Bahamians participate effectively in the Natural Gas Sector. Regulatory Licensing

(7) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) encourage and support the effective regulation and licensing of all activities in the natural gas value chain;

(ii) promote sustainable competition in the Natural Gas Sector;

(iii) ensure that transparent and non-discriminatory licence terms and conditions are developed to promote fair participation and sustainable competition in the Natural Gas Sector;

(iv) promote public private partnerships in the Natural Gas Sector; and

(v) encourage the establishment and imposition of a regulatory fee structure, methodology and framework that is commensurate with the activities in the natural gas sector value chain.

Policy Objective: Support local capacity building, training and development for Bahamians to participate effectively in the natural gas value chain.

(8) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(ii) encourage partnerships between local and international universities, and vocational institutions to facilitate a coordinated and effective approach to developing natural gas related programmes. Local and foreign investors will be encouraged to provide training and development opportunities and knowledge transfer on skills pertaining to the Natural Gas Sector; and

(iii) establish formal partnerships between the Ministry of Energy and Transport, Ministry of Education, UB, and BTVI to create a clear pathway for natural gas-related education and workforce development and certification;

(iv) collaborate with URCA, private sector organizations and natural gas companies to develop internships, apprenticeships, and job-shadowing opportunities for Bahamians;

(iv) support exchange programmes between universities and natural gas companies to advance the development of natural gas expertise and skill sets within the work force in The Bahamas;

(ii) engage with natural gas companies to ensure that opportunities for employment and investments are made available to Bahamians; and

(iii) promote inter-agency partnerships for the establishment of a natural gas centre of excellence to strengthen capacity of the local training institutions to impart requisite knowledge, skills and innovations to Bahamians.

Policy Objective: Promote linkages between the Natural Gas Sector with other strategic sectors of the economy.

(9) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) develop incentives that will ensure growth of the natural gas sector which supports strategic investments in other sectors of the economy; and

(ii) support private sector participation in the natural gas sector that fosters rapid growth and development of other sectors of the economy.

Policy Objective: To ensure compliance with Health, Safety and Environment standards in the natural gas value chain.

(10) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) require that health, safety, environmental and biodiversity issues are mainstreamed into all operations of the natural gas value chain;

(ii) promote compliance to health, safety and environmental protection and best practice in the sector; and

(iii) ensure disaster management systems to prevent and mitigate adverse impact in the natural gas operations are in established, monitored and enforced;

(iv) develop reporting, transparency and accountability guidelines for the natural gas sector; and

(v) monitor compliance with and enforce of reporting, transparency and accountability guidelines for the natural gas sector.

6.4 Policy Objectives for Fuels

(1) The Government of The Bahamas recognizes the vital role that fuel plays in driving economic growth, social development, and energy security. Given the country's heavy reliance on imported fossil fuels, the Government is committed to ensuring a diverse, affordable, and sustainable energy future, as well as meeting national commitments towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

(2) This National Energy Policy outlines key Policy Objectives aimed at achieving a balanced and secure fuel sector, supporting the transition to cleaner, renewable energy sources, and minimizing the economic and environmental impacts associated with fossil fuel dependence. These Policy Objectives particularly reflect the Government's commitment to creating a more resilient, efficient, and environmentally sustainable energy system for the people of The Bahamas.

Policy Objective: Reduce The Bahamas' over-reliance on any single fuel type by promoting the diversification of fuel sources, including a transition to cleaner and more sustainable alternatives.

(3) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) facilitate and promote the introduction and use of natural gas as a cleaner and more affordable alternative to conventional fuels;

(ii) encourage the development and use of renewable fuels, such as biofuels, to reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels;

(iii) support the exploration and adoption of emerging fuel technologies;

(iv) facilitate partnerships with international stakeholders to enhance fuel security and availability through diversified sources;

(v) develop infrastructure to support the distribution and use of diverse fuels across various sectors, including power generation, transportation, and industry; and

(vi) require major electric utilities to conduct integrated resource plans that factor in the need to diversify fuels used in production. For example, by installing generation that can operate on multiple fuel types.

Policy Objective: Balance the minimization of the cost of fuel to business and consumers, while encouraging and supporting and uptake in renewable and sustainable fuel alternatives

(4) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) establish measures to reduce the import duties and taxes on cleaner fuels and renewable energy technologies, making them more cost-competitive with traditional fuels;

(ii) negotiate favourable agreements with international suppliers to secure stable, competitive pricing for fuel imports;

(iii) support the development of local fuel storage infrastructure to enhance supply security and reduce transportation costs;

(iv) explore the introduction of subsidies or financial incentives for the adoption of renewable energy and alternative fuels, particularly in key sectors such as transportation and power generation;

(v) implement energy efficiency programmes and policies that reduce overall fuel consumption across industries and households;

(vi) promote the integration of renewable energy into the national fuel mix, with a focus on solar, wind, and other viable renewable energy resources;

(vii) encourage private sector investment in renewable fuel technologies by offering incentives such as tax credits, rebates, and grants for research and development;

(viii) expand the deployment of electric and hybrid vehicles by providing infrastructure support (e.g., charging stations) and offering incentives for consumers to adopt cleaner transportation options;

(ix) implement policies and initiatives that facilitate the transition to renewable energy in both urban and rural areas, focusing on the needs of local communities; and

(x) establish energy storage solutions and smart grid technologies to support the effective use of renewable energy sources.

Policy Objective: Consolidate the Regulation of the Fuel Sector under a Single Independent Regulator

(5) In order to ensure that the fuel sector is properly managed and regulated, the Government seeks to consolidate regulation of the sector under a single, independent regulatory body. The Government believes that this should enhance transparency, oversight, and accountability in the sector. The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) establish or empower an existing regulator to be responsible for overseeing all aspects of the fuel sector, including imports, pricing, distribution, and quality standards;

(ii) develop and implement a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework for the fuel sector that ensures fair competition, transparency, and long-term sustainability;

(iii) provide the regulatory body with the necessary regulatory powers to enforce fuel standards, monitor supply chains, and regulate the introduction of new fuels and technologies;

(iv) enhance public awareness and participation in fuel-related decisions through regular consultations and transparency in the regulatory process; and

(v) streamline the permitting and licensing processes for fuel projects to ensure timely development of new energy infrastructure, including renewable and alternative fuel projects.

6.5 Policy Objectives for the Transportation Sector

(1) The Government of The Bahamas recognizes that the transportation sector is essential to the nation's economic development, social well-being, and integration across the archipelago. However, this sector is also a significant contributor to energy consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which pose challenges to the country's sustainability goals.

(2) The Government is committed to transforming the transportation sector to promote energy efficiency, sustainability, and a reduction in environmental impacts. This National Energy Policy outlines key objectives aimed at increasing the adoption of renewable energy (RE) in transportation, reducing the sector's carbon footprint, improving efficiency, and

mitigating the energy consumption of various modes of transport across road, marine, and air.

Policy Objective: Integrate renewable energy into the transportation sector to reduce dependency on imported fossil fuels and decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

(3) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) promote the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) by providing incentives for both consumers and businesses to invest in electric vehicles and charging infrastructure;

(ii) develop the infrastructure for renewable energy-powered transportation, including EV charging stations, and establish guidelines for their integration into the existing grid;

(iii) encourage the use of renewable fuels in marine and aviation sectors, focusing on biofuels and hydrogen as alternatives to traditional fossil fuels;

(iv) support pilot projects and research into the use of renewable energy for public transportation, such as electric buses and hybrid ferries; and

(v) foster partnerships with private sector companies to accelerate the rollout of clean technologies in the transportation sector.

Policy Objective: Establish a baseline and decrease the contribution of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from road transportation.

(4) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) conduct a comprehensive assessment of current GHG emissions from the road transportation sector to establish a baseline for future reductions;

(ii) set clear, measurable targets for reducing GHG emissions from road transportation over the short, medium, and long term;

(iii) introduce regulations that incentivize the use of low-emission and fuel-efficient vehicles, including the gradual phase-out of high-emission vehicles;

(iv) promote the adoption of cleaner fuels, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), in road transportation to reduce the carbon footprint of the sector; and

(v) enhance public awareness campaigns on the environmental and economic benefits of reducing GHG emissions from personal and commercial road transport.

Policy Objective: Improve and incentivize energy efficiency in transport by road.

(6) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) encourage the use of energy-efficient vehicles, including both private and commercial vehicles, by providing incentives for upgrading fleets to modern, fuel-efficient models;

(ii) develop and implement measures to improve traffic management and reduce congestion, thereby reducing fuel consumption and emissions associated with idling and inefficient driving practices;

(iii) establish fuel efficiency standards for all newly imported vehicles, promoting the use of vehicles that meet high efficiency and low emissions criteria; and

(iv) promote the use of smart transportation technologies, such as vehicle-to-grid (V2G) systems and intelligent transportation systems (ITS), to enhance fuel efficiency and reduce energy consumption.

Policy Objective: Improve and incentivize energy efficiency in transport by water.

(7) The Government will adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective:

(i) promote the adoption of energy-efficient technologies and fuels, including the use of low-sulphur diesel, biofuels, and LNG, in the marine transport sector;

(ii) invest in port infrastructure that supports the transition to cleaner marine transport, such as shore power for vessels and efficient loading and unloading systems;

(iii) regulate and incentivize the use of green technologies and energy-efficient vessels, particularly in the passenger and cargo ferry fleets;

(iv) engage with international organizations to develop and enforce stricter energy consumption standards for vessels operating within Bahamian waters; and

(v) facilitate and support the decommissioning of outdated, inefficient ships and encourage the use of environmentally friendly alternatives.

Policy Objective: Reduce energy use and enhance energy efficiency in air transportation in Bahamian air space[41].

(8) The Government adopt the following strategies to achieve this Policy Objective and will support international initiatives aimed at making air transport more energy efficient, inclusive of:

(i) encourage the use of sustainable aviation fuels which can reduce CO2 emissions by as much as 80%[42];

(ii) promote winglet retrofit of Bahamian registered (C6) aircraft, where applicable;

(iii) exploring the use of new fuel technologies in the aviation industry such as electric and hydrogen;

(iv) improving the infrastructure at airports in The Bahamas to reduce taxi and waiting times for aircraft;

(v) broadly reduce emissions from air transport in The Bahamas by, inter-alia:[43]

(a) setting aircraft minimum fuel efficiency standards (aspirational);

(b) encouraging local air transport companies to invest in more fuel-efficient aircraft;

(c) exploring the viability of improved engine design for Bahamas registered and owned aircraft;

(d) establishing more efficient ATM planning, ground operations, terminal operations systems (departure, approach and arrivals) en route operations, airspace design and usage, aircraft capabilities at all airports in The Bahamas;

(e) facilitating and supporting the use of optimized flight paths in The Bahamas;

(f) installing airport infrastructure such as Fixed Electrical Ground Power and pre-Conditioned Air to allow aircraft APU (Auxiliary Power Unit) switch-off;

(g) commissioning the construction of additional runways and taxiways to reduce and relieve air traffic congestion;

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[41] The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development "Air Transport and Energy Efficiency" has noted that to avoid competitive distortion, a global approach is preferred, over national or regional policy. The Bahamas will endeavour to align its policy objectives related to energy efficiency in air transport with international best practice and standards.

[42] IATA Fly Net Zero Programme.

[43] In accordance with the Bahamas Civil Aviation Authority "Action Plan for CO2 Reduction from International Civil Aviation in the Bahamas".

(h) encouraging Bahamas registered airlines to optimized aircraft maintenance (including jet engine cleaning/washing);

(i) encouraging Bahamas registered airlines to select aircraft best suited to the mission/flight and optimized for fuel efficiency; and

(j) engaging with airlines to establish carbon offset programmes allowing passengers to contribute to environmental projects that mitigate the impacts of their travel.

7 Inter-agency Co-operation and Co-Regulation

(1) The Government recognizes that meeting the challenges to successfully transform the Energy Sector in The Bahamas and implement the Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives for the Energy Sector will require interagency co-operation and collaboration within and across various Government Ministries and Departments, other agencies, and the Sector Regulator. The Government believes that this must be backed by enabling policies and guidelines to strengthen coordination and governance across sectors. The Government considers that such interagency co-operation is particularly required for the multifaceted Natural Gas Sector that has been established by the Natural Gas Act, 2024.

(2) The NGA came into force on 1 June 2024 and established a legislative framework to regulate the importation, regasification, storage, transport, and retail of natural gas. It also provides for the licensing of natural gas facilities and terminals, and for safety standards in the Natural Gas Sector (NGS). The NGA outlines as the main goal of the gas sector policy, the creation of a regime for the safe, least cost, reliable and environmentally friendlier gas throughout The Bahamas.

(3) The Government recognizes that NGA designates URCA as the independent regulator for the natural gas sector and assigns to it the general administration of the NGA. URCA is therefore broadly responsible for regulating all aspects of the NGS, including licensing, safety regulation, environmental regulation, maritime regulation, economic regulation, and consumer protection. The Government notes that the NGA permits URCA to consult with Government Departments and Regulatory Authorities locally and of other countries to promote and facilitate the construction, development and functioning of the NGS.[44]

(4) The Government is also mindful that URCA is empowered in the performance and exercise of its functions, to authorize any person to assist in the exercise of its regulatory functions under the NGA either generally or in a particular case, which permits URCA to coordinate and cooperate with Participating Agencies in URCA's regulation of the NGS. The Government expects that the following Participating Agencies will cooperate and share capital and other resources to ensure that all parties work in a coordinated manner to

[44] See Sections 8(1)(c) and 8(6) of the Natural Gas Act, 2024.

address issues regarding the effective and efficient regulation and development of the NGS in The Bahamas:

(i) The Bahamas Maritime Authority;
(ii) The Department of Environmental Planning and Protection;
(iii) The Department of Inland Revenue;
(iv) The Department of Physical Planning;
(v) The Ministry of Works;
(vi) The Ministry of Energy and Transport;
(vii) The Port Department;
(viii) The Road Traffic Department;
(ix) The Royal Bahamas Defence Force; and
(x) The Royal Bahamas Police Force, Fire Services Unit.

(5) The Government particularly recognizes that the Participating Agencies have regulatory powers and expert personnel in relation to subject matter areas relevant to the NGS. The Government therefore encourages URCA and the Participating Agencies to formalize their co-operation and augment their statutory responsibilities in areas of co-regulation and other industry areas that may be determined from time to time.

8 Emerging Policy Issues

(1) As the Government endeavours to foster economic and social growth for The Bahamas and the people of The Bahamas, it recognises that the National Energy Policy Objectives must proactively contemplate, to the extent possible, emerging issues to keep pace with the rapid development of technological advancements that may significantly impact the Energy Sector in The Bahamas. These rapidly developing technological advancements make it challenging for the Government to formulate clear policies for emerging issues forehand that may impact the Energy Sector. However, the Government is committed to adapting and adopting a policy approach that is consistent with the emergence of new technologies and trends as they emerge.

(2) The Government considers that there are key emerging issues, including but are not limited to the Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity, which may impact or influence future energy policy objectives and regulatory measures.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Energy Sector

(3) The Government is aware that AI technology in the Energy Sector is rapidly progressing and becoming more reliable. The Government further believes that there are significant use cases for AI that can assist with improving efficiencies, service delivery, safety, grid reliability and resiliency, and customer experience in the Energy Sector of The Bahamas.[45]

(4) Smart power grids and meters that are AI-enabled will enhance grid efficiency and go beyond the conventional Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) networks to allow remote management of electricity networks, which is particularly relevant and important to an archipelagic nation as The Bahamas. Inevitably, this will give power companies, such as BPL, the ability to automate energy distribution, maintain equipment more efficiently and enhance the resiliency of their network against outages. Generative AI-enabled smart grids can be used by power companies to simulate optimal network configurations, test a variety of demand-side scenarios and network outage response strategies. Generative AI can also use big-data analytics for predictive maintenance of equipment, assets and network infrastructure.

[45] International Energy Agency (IEA) "*Why AI and energy are the new power couple*", 02 November 2023.

(5) AI technology can assist with managing and integrating renewable energy sources into power grids through forecasting renewable energy outputs and analyzing consumer consumption patterns against renewable energy sources. This ultimately will help power companies to contribute to achieving environmental sustainability goals.

(6) The Government considers that the future use of AI in the Energy Sector would enhance the existing electricity networks and transform the way energy is delivered and consumed in The Bahamas. AI can facilitate more automation to power grids by assisting in critical decision-making regarding electricity GTDS, power restoration, and network maintenance. The Government firmly believes that the use cases for AI and its integration into every aspect of the Energy Sector has the potential to enhance efficiency, sustainability and resilience in the Energy Sector in The Bahamas. The Government therefore encourages power companies in the Energy Sector to embrace and harness the vast potentials of AI.

Cybersecurity in the Energy Sector

(7) The Government further considers that safeguarding power companies in the Energy Sector from cybersecurity threats and vulnerabilities is critical to ensuring the stable and reliable supply of electricity, and to minimizing disruption in energy generation, transmission and distribution that can result in economic loss to the country. The hardening of Energy Sector networks from cybersecurity threats is particularly important to The Bahamas' economic growth and stability, and national security.

(8) As the Energy Sector becomes more digitized thereby improving grid stability and enabling the integration of renewable energy sources, this digitization also increases the potential for cyber-attacks. Smart grids and smart meters that interface with Internet of Things (IoT) devices will contribute to the widening of attack surfaces that can potentially cause catastrophic consequences for the Energy Sector, affecting both the economy and national security of The Bahamas. This may also have a cascading effect on other sectors such as healthcare, transportation and telecommunications. The Government believes that the cost of remediation and full recovery from such cyberattacks can be substantial.

(9) The Government therefore encourages power companies to implement robust cybersecurity protocols such as network segmentation, multi-factor authentication, and employee training that foster a culture of cybersecurity awareness and mitigate cyber threats and attacks. The Government will also support the development of a new generation

of technologies and regulatory measures that protect against cyber-attacks and maintain resilient Energy Sector infrastructure.

(10) As cybersecurity is constantly evolving, greater vigilance will be required by the sector regulator to establish fit-for-purpose cybersecurity standards across the Energy Sector. The Government encourages URCA to issue regulatory and other measures that may include stricter energy network cybersecurity requirements, mandatory reporting on cyber-incidents and enhanced information sharing and cooperation among industry stakeholders in relation thereto.

Capacity Building

(11) The transformation to a modern Energy Sector requires significant investment in the development of specialized skill sets that are specific to the sector. These skills are required to support innovations and technological advancements of an evolving Energy Sector ecosystem in The Bahamas. The Government is aware that the expertise in certain aspects of the Energy Sector, such as natural gas and renewable energy technology, may still be relatively low among the general populace in The Bahamas. This is especially the case regarding regulatory experience and expertise and translates into a skills gap which in turn signposts untapped benefits that the Energy Sector could potentially deliver to the socio-economic development of The Bahamas.

(12) The Government, in conjunction with other relevant entities, will therefore explore opportunities for capacity building within The Bahamas through formal education, training and development and appropriate industry experience. The target pool will include both the internal resources of the Government related to the Energy Sector and URCA, academia (particularly the University of The Bahamas and the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute), as well as suitable resources available within the sector.

(13) Having regard to the above stated emerging policy issues, the Government believes that it is important to keep the Energy Sector at the center of the national agenda, recognizing the vital role of energy as a critical pillar in national development and the attainment of social and economic growth of The Bahamas and people of The Bahamas. Where possible and pragmatic, the Government will establish clearly stated policy objectives to effectively address these emerging issues.

9 Strategic Plan - Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

(1) The Government is aware that the impact of policy actions is often not completely known forehand and believes that, for this reason, it is essential to establish a robust framework for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this National Energy Sector Policy.

9.1 Implementation

(2) The Government recognizes that the Electricity Act, 2024 and the Natural Gas Act, 2024 require URCA to perform its regulatory functions in accordance with the National Energy Policy. The Government considers that these statutory provisions essentially require URCA to implement this National Energy Policy when making regulatory decisions and/or issuing regulatory measures in relation to the Energy Sector. The Government therefore encourages URCA to implement the Energy Sector Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives set out in the National Energy Policy document and in accordance with the sector-specific legislation.

(3) The Government believes that the systematic and successful implementation of the Energy Sector Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives established under this NEP 2025 – 2030 document that are not directly related to URCA's role, powers and functions requires a standalone, detailed and prescriptive Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan led by the Department of Energy with the support of other relevant Government Departments and Agencies, where necessary. The Government also anticipates the involvement of non-state stakeholders, including the private sector and non-governmental and community-based organizations, in the policy implementation process. The Department of Energy (solely or by committee), after consultation with the Ministry of Energy and Transport, will have responsibility for consulting with relevant sector stakeholders and implementing this National Energy Policy.

(4) The Government considers it important to state that this National Energy Policy establishes certain high-level targets and goals for the Energy Sector in The Bahamas and is not intended to be overly prescriptive or to provide detailed implementation plans or actions to be taken to achieve the Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives set out in this document.

(5) To ensure that the Energy Sector Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives are effectively and efficiently implemented and achieved, the Government will issue a National Energy Policy Implementation Plan (NEPIP), which will be developed by the Department of Energy as a follow-up to this policy document. The NEPIP will include, but not be limited to, the following:

(i) detailed information on the specific strategic aim, policy objective and/or action being undertaken;
(ii) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs);
(iii) SMART goals;
(iv) SWOT and PESTLE analysis;
(v) clearly articulated, deliverables and outcomes (i.e., research, reports, etc.);
(vi) details on the implementing agency or agencies; and
(vii) likely costs.

(6) The Government believes that comprehensive the NEPIP and the timely collection of information about all activities geared towards implementation of the Energy Sector Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives will assist the Government with determining whether the objectives are being achieved and will help to identify and remedy any prevailing challenges quickly.

9.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

(7) The implementation of this National Energy Policy will also require effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation to measure progress and provide feedback on any implementation challenges and gaps. The NEPIP will therefore contain a clear methodology for monitoring and evaluation of the Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives with appropriate performance indicators, outputs and targets.

(8) The Government believes that ongoing monitoring and evaluation by the Department of Energy will inform whether the policy is having the intended impact on the Energy Sector and making a positive difference. Robust monitoring and evaluation should therefore keep track of key outcomes and impacts related to the various implementation initiatives and assess whether the Government's Energy Sector Strategic Aims and Policy Objectives are, in fact, being achieved.

(9) The Government considers that the framework for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this National Energy Policy, during and after implementation, will enable the Government to effectively review the currency of information in the policy document, and to make necessary changes to the overall direction of the National Energy Policy.

10 Duration

(1) The continued evolution of global energy trends and the Energy Sector of The Bahamas makes it imperative for this National Energy Policy document be reviewed on a regular and systematic basis.

(2) Amendments to this National Energy Policy document may be made during its term in accordance with:

(i) the Electricity Act, 2024; or

(ii) proposals by URCA and subject to the Minister's approval in accordance with the Electricity Act, 2024 in the case of unexpected changes of circumstances and/or to take account of technological advances and the evolution of the Energy Sector; or

(iii) international developments that may impact the Energy Sector in The Bahamas.

(3) Subject to Section 2 above, this National Energy Policy shall remain in force from the date of publication in the Official Gazette, subject to the right of the Government, in the interim, to amend, revise or repeal and replace this NEP in accordance with the process set out in the Electricity Act, 2024.