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WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CCST - 1983



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean

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At the First Plenary Session of the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST), a Work Programme was prepared based on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Consultant's report and the expressed need to co-ordinate several initiatives already taken by national and regional organizations in Science and Technology. The Programme was planned to encompass a two-year period which would be considered as the establishment phase of the Council and projects were identified along certain general guidelines which were that they must:

- i) enhance co-ordination and collaboration in Science and Technology amongst member countries
- ii) produce tangible results within the time-frame of the proposed Work Programme
- iii) complement and support regional Science and Technology efforts and avoid duplication
- iv) bridge the gap between the academician, the technician and the end-user.

Based on the above, the following six projects were approved and assigned priorities:

- Project I - Assessment of National Science and Technology Capabilities
- Project II - Establishment of a Science and Technology Journal
- Project III - Preparation and Exchange of Audio-Visual Material for Education in Science and Technology
- Project IV - A Study of the Consequences of the Development of Energy Crops on Food Supplies in the Region
- Project V - Conservation and Exchange of Germplasm of Crop Plants

Project VI - Development of Agro-industries and Employment Opportunities Particularly at Rural Level.

Because of the current lack of funds to establish an Executive Secretariat, it was decided to request CDCC to continue providing secretariat services until the next Plenary Session of the CCST. During the past year the Interim Secretariat has attempted to implement all the above projects with varying degrees of success and the status of each project is described in the Annexes to the Annual Report of the CDCC (see document No. CDCC/CCST/82/9).

As the needs and requirements of the region are becoming increasingly dependent on Science and Technology, it is essential that Council continues its active role in ensuring that decision-makers are made aware of those newly emerging technologies (microprocessing, biotechnology, etc.) which can impact on industrial and economic development.

As the major co-ordinating Agency in Science and Technology within the Caribbean, Council is also expected to adumbrate a cohesive regional policy on Science and Technology which should be a harmonious blend of the various national policies. Such a document will greatly assist member countries in developing or strengthening their national capabilities in Science and Technology. Two additional projects are therefore proposed at Annex I and Annex II, entitled "The Potential and Limitations of Newly emerging Technologies for Developing Countries" and "A Science and Technology Policy for the Caribbean" respectively, and Council is asked:

- i) to decide on whether the time is now appropriate for the establishment of a Secretariat for the CCST or on whether the Interim Secretariat should continue to operate
- ii) to approve continuation of Projects I - VI with any necessary amendments
- iii) to discuss and endorse proposed Projects VII and VIII.

PROJECT VII

THE POTENTIAL AND LIMITATIONS OF
NEWLY EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Over the last decade there have been several dynamic advances in the field of technology and its burgeoning influence is now being felt at all levels on the global scene. The implications for developing countries of these newly emerging technologies were highlighted in Annex IV of document A/CONF.81/16 which was prepared for the United Nations Conference for Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD).

Since it is confidently predicted that efficient utilization of these technologies would substantially alter the future rate and pattern of industrial production, it is essential that developing countries in the region should become aware as soon as possible of the potentials as well as the limitations of these newly emerging technologies in order that decision-makers can take appropriate and timely action.

Within the rubric of the above considerations, and the objectives of the CCST, it is recommended that some activities be developed:

- i) to create an awareness of the implications of newly emerging technologies among senior officials and decision-makers in regional governments and institutions, and
- ii) to identify and implement the type of practical action that would be most effective for the beneficial utilization of these technologies.

A sum of US\$10,000 has been provisionally allocated to this programme for 1983 and Council is asked to comment on the programme and to give directions on how it should be implemented.

PROJECT VIII

A SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY
FOR THE CARIBBEAN

There is abundant evidence that the Caribbean, as a region, possesses a distinguished tradition in Science and Technology. However, most of the effort has been restricted to a few countries and has usually been concentrated to project the individual national and/or institutional concerns. However, as the burgeoning needs and requirements of the region are becoming increasingly dependent on Science and Technology as the cost of each project continues to escalate and as each technology becomes more sophisticated, the Governments of the region have become increasingly aware of the need to establish forms and mechanisms for co-operation amongst themselves.

The first example was the creation in 1975 of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC). On the initiative of the CDCC, the CCST was created in 1980 and is designed to maximize the role of the national institutions and thereby ensure that regional co-operation activities accord to the priorities of individual member countries. As such the CCST is expected to advise the CDCC and its member countries on Science and Technology policy issues which require attention and Project VIII is therefore proposed as a means of obtaining a consensus for formulating a regional policy on Science and Technology.

A sum of US\$15,000 has been provisionally allocated for the project and Council is asked to discuss and suggest mechanisms for its implementation.