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 CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
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REPORT OF MEETING WITH AGENCIES WHICH SPONSOR  
REGIONAL ACTIVITIES IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
 New Kingston Hotel, Kingston, Jamaica  
 Tuesday, 2 November 1982



**UNITED NATIONS**  
 ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean

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In his opening remarks the Chairman outlined the background to the Meeting and emphasised the need for a regionally coordinated programme in Science and Technology especially in view of the impending Meeting of Regional Ministers responsible for Science and Technology. He explained that a fully coordinated S+T programme would:

- (i) eliminate the gaps within the individual projects;
- (ii) place a greater emphasis on mobilising and developing indigenous human resources;
- (iii) harness more quickly and efficiently the financial resources available to S+T activities within the region;
- (iv) assist the smaller territories both in discriminating amongst the various offers of assistance as well as in better management of the assistance which they received;
- (v) develop a regional and more rational approach to technology transfer,

He was also confident that one of the major agenda items for the Meeting of Ministers would be the consideration of how S+T projects impacted on national development and it would therefore be useful if the various Agencies could arrive at a general consensus on how their various forms of assistance in S+T to the region could be rationalised.

The representatives from the various agencies were then invited to make individual presentations (see Annexes I-VIII) after which there was a wide-ranging debate on the modalities for coordination and rationalisation of S+T activities within the Caribbean Region. From the ensuing discussions it became evident that there was urgent need for regional collaboration in S+T activities so as to enhance their impact within the Caribbean.

Several examples were quoted to illustrate that most Governments and/or institutions were trying to cope individually with the issues of rationalisation, internal coordination and mobilisation of finances for S+T and therefore some mechanism would have to be created for pooling resources so as to ensure coherence of projects and moreover to demarcate certain areas of responsibility. For this to be accomplished, projects must be seen

as comprising a common framework of activity which harmonised with an overall strategy for regional development.

The representative from the United Nations Funding System for Science and Technology for Development (UNFSSTD) observed that many agencies, because of their financial influence, mistakenly assumed the role of policy-makers and in several instances the actual selection of projects was not based on sufficiently factual information. He therefore suggested that the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST), as a regional intergovernmental agency, should be regarded as the main policy-making organisation and should be involved in the preliminary selection of projects.

The UNESCO representative in agreeing with the observation, cited a current example of three agencies providing separate support for basically one regional project but from individual perceptions of needs and requirements. The acceptance of a rational framework of S+T activities would therefore allow the political decision-makers to be more selective in their choice of projects, by directing agencies to pool their several efforts for the eventual benefit of the region.

The representative from the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) observed that a serious problem endemic to developing countries was that the number of staff in most national planning ministries was limited and (apart from some notable exceptions) had only recently acquired skills in coordinating and assessing the impact of S+T on development. He therefore regarded CCST as providing a perfect interface between the politician and the technician and proposed that the Council should undertake an analysis of the assistance in S+T provided to each territory in the region (as had been done for education by UNESCO). The information obtained would be used to elaborate a mechanism for incorporating S+T within development strategies.

The Commonwealth Science Council (CSC) representative observed that despite the tremendous amount of interest in S+T, the considerable financial inputs and the enormous needs of the region, there were still several areas of neglect within the projects. For example, no one project focused specifically on such important issues as human resource development;

transfer of technology or the formulation of a regional policy for Science and Technology, all of which would cumulatively enhance the impact of the various individual projects and enable countries to be more selective both in the project implementation and in the assistance that would be required.

The representative from the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD) informed the meeting that the Centre was presently undertaking a survey to determine the extent to which the Vienna Action Programme was being implemented in various countries. It was agreed that the results of the survey for the Caribbean region would be useful parallel information and the UNCSTD representative was asked to make the data available to CCST when the exercise was completed.

The comments of the various representatives followed a similar vein and there were specific offers of assistance to formulate a regional collaborative programme from CDB, CSC and OAS.

The meeting therefore recommended that:

- (1) CCST should coordinate a regional collaborative programme in three phases:

Phase One

A document should be prepared itemizing all the activities in S+T of the various agencies within the region together with their specific interests.

Phase Two

The above document will be discussed by a small sub-committee of CCST which will attempt to demarcate areas of responsibility amongst the various agencies and along the lines of their specific concerns. This document could then be discussed by CCST at a plenary meeting to ensure consensus.

Phase Three

As an official CCST document it could then be forwarded to the various member governments for their modification and/or approval. Once general approval was obtained the document could also be used to elaborate a regional policy in Science and Technology.

- (ii) An annual inter-agency meeting should be held immediately prior to the plenary meeting of CCST;
- (iii) The generous offer from OAS to sponsor a consultant to undertake Phase One of (i) and at least one inter-agency meeting should be accepted; and
- (iv) CCST should pursue the offers from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Commonwealth Science Council (CSC) to sponsor a regional seminar/workshop on the Management of Research.

A G E N D A

1. Statement by Dr. D. H. Irving, Chairman, CCST
2. Presentation of Reports/Statements by Agencies engaged, in S+T activities with the Caribbean Region
  - (i) Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM)
  - (ii) Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
  - (iii) Commonwealth Science Council (CSC)
  - (iv) Organisation of American States (OAS)
  - (v) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
  - (vi) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
  - (vii) United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development (UNESSTD)
  - (viii) University of the West Indies (UWI)
  - (ix) United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD)
  - (x) World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)
3. Consideration of modalities for coordination and rationalisation of S+T activities within the Region
4. Any other business

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION/AGENCY</u>	<u>DESIGNATION</u>
Dr. M.N.G.A. Khan	Commonwealth Science Council (CSC)	Deputy Secretary
Carolyn Cozier	Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)	Project Officer (Communications) Technology + Energy Unit
Philemon Hollett	Meteorological Service - Jamaica (WMO)	Climate Branch (Head)
Fay Housty	CARICOM Secretariat	Senior Economist, ERP Section
Ernst Von Weizsacker	United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD)	Director, Policy, Analysis and Research Division
Hugh Cholmondeley	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) - Caribbean Office	Director
Niels Brandt	United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development (UNFSSTD)	Chief, Section for Latin America and the Caribbean
Manuel Marf	Organisation of American States (OAS)	Project Officer for S&T policy in Caribbean area
Dennis Irvine	Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST)	Chairman
Iwan Kortram	Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST)	Executive Member
Patrick A. Munroe	UN Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA)	Senior Economic Affairs Officer
Christine David	UN Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA)	Research Assistant