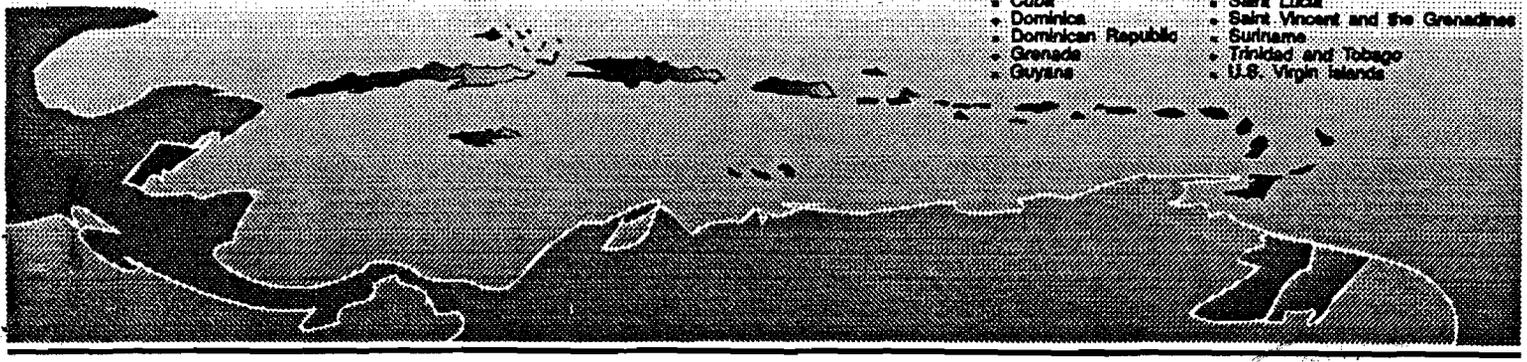


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- Antigua and Barbuda
- Aruba
- Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Br. Virgin Islands
- Cuba
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Jamaica
- Montserrat
- Netherlands Antilles
- Puerto Rico
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Suriname
- Trinidad and Tobago
- U.S. Virgin Islands



CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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**INTERIM REPORT ON
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS
FOR THE CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**



INTERIM REPORT ON ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (CCST)¹

A. Introduction

1. This paper is designed to review modalities for the continued, effective functioning of the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST) in varying degrees of linkages to, and support from, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). For a number of years now, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean in Port of Spain has been providing secretariat services to the CCST (in essence acting as the CCST Secretariat) in the absence of an established CCST Secretariat. The ECLAC Port of Spain Office has also been providing executive direction and substantive and administrative support to CCST in the execution of the ECLAC/CDCC work programme in the area of science and technology. This paper will review the current CCST arrangements with ECLAC and examine possibilities for future arrangements, involving varying degrees of administrative independence for CCST, as follows:

(a) Establishing a CCST Secretariat, outside UNECLAC: under this arrangement, CCST would have its own Secretariat, outside ECLAC, and would handle its administrative and logistical arrangements directly and independently. ECLAC would naturally provide substantive support to that Secretariat in backstopping and strengthening scientific and technological activities in the Caribbean subregion, however, ECLAC and the CCST Secretariat would have no administrative linkage between them.

(b) Establishing a CCST Secretariat outside ECLAC, but with continued support by ECLAC in selected administrative areas: under this arrangement, a CCST Secretariat would be established and would maintain substantive linkages with ECLAC as above; in addition, it would enter into an arrangement with ECLAC's Port of Spain Office, for the latter to provide to the CCST Secretariat, those administrative services which CCST should deem necessary. ECLAC would act, in essence, as provider of logistical and administrative support to the CCST Secretariat, under a mutual agreement between CCST and ECLAC.

(c) Continuing the current arrangement, whereby ECLAC acts as the CCST Secretariat and provides executive direction, staff, administrative and support services. In this case, however, some modifications could be introduced to remedy difficulties which have surged over the years.

2. The current CCST arrangement with ECLAC is described in paragraphs 19-21 below, while the three modification-alternatives noted above are discussed in paragraphs 22-34. However, for completeness of presentation, the history of CCST and its activities are reviewed first, in paragraphs 3-18.

¹ Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) Resolution 38(XIV)

B. History of CCST

3. The CCST was formally established by decision of the CDCC during its Second Plenary Session, held in Santo Domingo in March 1977, as a specialized instrument designed to implement the CDCC mandate in the field of science and technology for development in the Caribbean.

4. The need to establish a Council to consider matters related to science and technology was proposed in the document CDCC/WP/78/6: Science and Technology for Development, which offered member States an opportunity to review the "Feasibility Study on the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology" prepared jointly by ECLAC and UNESCO.

5. The document was considered at UNESCO's Consultation on Science and Technology Policies for the Caribbean, held in Guyana in December 1977. After consultations with member States, the proposal was presented to the Second Plenary Session of the CDCC. Representations were made to the pertinent budgetary instances of the United Nations for resources to set up the interim secretariat for CCST². As a result, posts were allocated to the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean in Port of Spain, to carry out substantive activities and provide secretariat services in the area of science and technology.

6. The Statutes of the CCST were adopted and signed in Jamaica in April 1980 and its First Plenary Session was held in Barbados in 1981.

7. The Council was established to "...promote cooperation in the field of science and technology aimed at furthering the social and economic development of its member countries, including the implementation of provisions of the Constituent Declaration of the CDCC to promote efforts to cooperate in the mutual transfer of science and technology in order to facilitate the adaptation of imported technology and the development of domestic technologies and increase the bargain power of the Caribbean countries in their relations with countries outside the area."³

8. It was indicated that, in order to implement the CDCC mandate, the CCST must:

- " - Establish 'a system for collecting technological and methodological data covering the subregion... in close collaboration with the universities and other research institutions of the area.'
- Contribute to 'mutual sub-regional co-operation in the transfer and adaptation of imported technologies and the development of indigenous technologies, particularly food technology and food production.' "

² Agenda item 2(b) Thirteenth Executive Committee Meeting of the CCST, Puerto Rico, 17-19 March 1992, LC/CAR/G.355

³ Article 2 of the Statutes of the CCST.

9. The Statutes⁴ also address the specific objectives to be pursued by the CCST as follows:

"The Council shall pursue the following specific aims:

- i. to implement CDCC objectives by designing and executing appropriate joint scientific and technological projects, and also advise the CDCC and its member countries on scientific and technological issues requiring attention;
- ii. to identify institutions that could participate in the projects, and establish the mechanisms for cooperation;
- iii. where no institutions exist, to propose measures for the implementation of particular projects;
- iv. to devise procedures for the effective dissemination of the results of Caribbean research and development projects and their application in member countries;
- v. generally, to promote the establishment and strengthening of appropriate national and Caribbean organs and mechanisms for science and technology development and application."

10. In view of the above-mentioned objectives, which constitute the bulk of the CCST mandate, the Statutes also provide for a Permanent Secretariat to be "staffed by paid full time personnel as might be authorized by succeeding Regular Plenary Sessions... to be headed by a duly qualified secretary, ... responsible to the Council."⁵ and with the following specific responsibilities:

- "i. (to) deal with the day-to-day technical, financial and administrative affairs of the Council;
- ii. (to) maintain links with international governmental and non-governmental organizations as approved by the Council in Regular Plenary Sessions, to which reference is made in Article 17 iii and iv;
- iii. (to) maintain the Council's accounts mentioned under Article 209 hereinafter;

⁴ Article 3 of the Statutes of the CCST.

⁵ (Chapter V, Article 15 of the Statutes)

- iv. (to) submit, for approval by the Honorary Treasurer, at least one month before its presentation for acceptance by a Council Plenary Session, the Annual Balance Sheet mentioned in Article 29 hereinafter;
- v. (to) prepare the draft Annual report and draft Annual Programme and Budget to the Council;
- vi. (to) prepare all publications, reports, studies, surveys and any other written or audiovisual material required for the Council's operations;
- vii. (to) convene and technically organize all meetings held under the Council's auspices."

11. Membership of the Council is open to all members and associate members of the CDCC and currently comprises of: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States Virgin Islands. It is to be noted that in addition to the participation of CDCC member States, the Statutes were amended in 1987 to permit the admission of non-independent Caribbean territories.

12. CCST was intended to be an advisory body to the CDCC, but also to carry out a project implementation role while executing the projects for which it could mobilize resources from the wider community. This led to the need to establish its own identity and the creation of a CCST Executive Committee and operational and technical focal points in each member State. That identity was in keeping with the special nature of a the dual role outlined for the Council. Lack of funding was the major factor that necessitated the arrangement that the CDCC serve as the Interim Secretariat of the CCST.⁶

C. CCST Activities

13. The Council is involved in strengthening the national capabilities of its member countries in developing their technological base. It focuses on the use of science and technology for development. The Council sources funding from its members in order to implement its work programme and from external donors to execute a number of project-type activities. These activities include the convening of workshops and seminars as well as the provision of technical services to its members.

⁶ Rule 15.2 of the rules of Procedure for regular and extraordinary Plenary Sessions of the CCST States: "In accordance with article 34 of the Statutes of the council, until such time as an Executive Secretariat of the council is established, the CDCC Secretariat shall assist in provision of secretariat services".

14. CCST's approved five-year work plan includes a number of projects to be completed or initiated during the period 1994-1998. Among these activities are projects on an integrated approach to the management of water resources; renewable energy; teaching of science and technology and mathematics; popularization of science and technology; and new technologies in production.

15. The Council has embarked on a programme which includes development of mechanisms for sharing information on technology and for promoting the work of the CCST among its member countries. Its functions also include providing support to improve the documentation and evaluation of project activities and their impact on its member countries. The CCST is addressing the constraints to development posed by the small-island status of most of its member countries by considering ways of applying technology, in particular "computer-based communications and information technology to create and strengthen linkages". In this regard, CCST pays particular attention to the Programme of Action (POA) of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the problems of management of the environment as it relates to the introduction of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs).

16. During the early years, member countries of the CCST showed reluctance to contribute financially to the work of the CCST which led to the shortfall in funding for CCST to adequately carry out its planned activities. CDCC Resolution 38 (XIV) called for "member countries of the CCST to pay up their subscriptions to the CCST". It should be noted that the arrears of member countries, at the end of 1997, is estimated at US\$222,517.51. However, in recent years, CCST has been very successful in attracting donor support to carry out project activities on behalf of its member States. As a result, the Council has been able to ensure that most of the projects identified in this five-year programme has been funded or are in the process of receiving funding. On the other hand more demands have recently been made by member States on the Council since it is at present the one institution that has a broad view and mandate on science and technology matters in the Caribbean subregion.

D. Current Arrangements with ECLAC

17. As noted above, CCST was established as a specialized organ of CDCC, and with the idea that it should function with its own Secretariat. However, as that Secretariat was not formally established, the CCST has been effectively serviced by the ECLAC Port of Spain Office, as an extension of that Office's role as the Secretariat of the CDCC. The Director of the Office has provided executive direction and management while ECLAC/POS has been providing financial resources, administrative and logistical support, as follows:

(a) Resources

- ▶ Financing of salary and related costs of one substantive Science and Technology Officer; one Research Assistant and a partial Secretary. The cost of these staff, financed from ECLAC's regular budget resources, amounts to over US\$200,000

in the 1996-97 biennium. The Science and Technology Officer has been in effect acting as the CCST Secretary;

- ▶ Travel funds, also from ECLAC's regular budget, in the amount of about US\$15,000 in 1996-97, to attend CCST meetings and carry out related missions, by the acting Secretary and other staff of the Port of Spain Office.

(b) Administrative and logistical support

These have been provided by ECLAC's Port of Spain Office, in the form of:

- ▶ Office accommodation to the above staff;
- ▶ Provision of related furniture and equipment, including personal computers and communications;
- ▶ Attending to all arrangements for meetings and workshops, including editorial and printing requirements, conference facilities, travel and hotels, etc;
- ▶ Financial and accounting services in handling CCST funds; and
- ▶ Generally attending to day-to-day requirements of the CCST-related staff and activities.

18. The value of the above logistical and administrative support, while difficult to quantify, in as much as it is provided as part of the overall, recurrent administrative services of the Port of Spain Office, was nevertheless significant in enabling CCST's activities. In tandem, during the biennium 1996-97, CCST generated some \$250,000 in donor-contributions. These funds have been handled by ECLAC as "project funds" under the United Nations financial rules, and some \$10,000 accrued to ECLAC as partial reimbursement for support costs ("overhead"), as per the same rules.

19. The above arrangement has obviously been beneficial for CCST, in as much as it has enabled it to function with an ECLAC-provided Secretariat, and without the need to incur these costs. In addition, it has received the full range of administrative support from ECLAC Headquarters. Nevertheless, a number of difficulties have been experienced. Notably, the application of United Nations financial rules and regulations to CCST-mobilized funds have caused friction and some CCST members have been advocating a separate Secretariat, implying that the existing operating environment is not conducive for CCST to achieve its objectives.⁷ The question therefore arises as to whether alternate arrangements could be found which would

⁷ Agenda item 8, Fourteenth Plenary Session of the CCST, LC/CAR/G.495

improve the efficiency and effectiveness of CCST.⁸ Ideas raised in recent years range from the establishment of an independent organization, outside the UN System and funded by contributions from member governments, to the outposting of a number of ECLAC/CDCC staff for the purpose of staffing a CCST Secretariat, to operate outside ECLAC. Three possibilities are examined below, covering (a) a fully independent CCST Secretariat, operating outside ECLAC; (b) one which is so, but seeks and receives selected elements of administrative support from ECLAC; and (c) continuation of the current arrangement of full ECLAC support to CCST, with some modifications.

E. Review of Possible Arrangements

(i) Establishing a CCST Secretariat, outside ECLAC

20. As noted above, the original idea was for CCST to have its own independent Secretariat. If this were to come into being, it could function outside ECLAC and independently from it. For that matter, it could be located outside Port of Spain and indeed, in the past, both Jamaica (in 1993) and Saint Lucia (in 1994) have indicated their willingness to serve as host. The issues and difficulties in establishing the separate Secretariat and in its future operations, center on the financial and logistical concerns: the separate physical location would require either added out-of-pocket costs on office accommodations, or an agreement with a host government to provide accommodations free of charge. Additionally, to function with administrative independence, the CCST Secretariat would require administrative support staff, also entailing costs. All in all, while the idea of an independently-functioning CCST Secretariat may be appealing to some, the costs therein would require financial support from a host government or from CCST resources, or both. Indeed, the uncertainty about the dependability of outside funding has deterred member governments in the past from establishing a separate Secretariat.

21. It should also be noted that, given the current financial reductions and zero-growth United Nations budget, the possibility of obtaining new resources for the Secretariat in the ECLAC regular budget are slim.

22. However, ECLAC's resources currently engaged in substantive support to science and technology activities (notably, the Science and Technology Officer and the Research Assistant) could continue to be so engaged, providing substantive support to the CCST Secretariat. It should be emphasized, however, that ECLAC staff cannot be outposted to the CCST Secretariat, and

⁸ see Resolution 42(XV), which requested the secretariats of CDCC and CCST to review the work of CCST, its mission, objectives, functions and structure, with a view to proposing the appropriate amendments to the CCST Statutes. Though this paper addresses certain parts of the above points, it does not deal with the entire range of the issues involved. This still needs to be accomplished.

certainly an ECLAC official would not be able to act as the Secretary of the CCST, given the independence of the CCST Secretariat from ECLAC. In essence, there would be two distinct institutions, ECLAC/POS and the CCST Secretariat, fully cooperating between them, but, nevertheless, each having its own staff and related internal reporting and supervision.

23. In Summary, creating a CCST Secretariat which would operate independently from ECLAC is, in principle, possible; however, one can foresee financial and administrative difficulties, which, while not insurmountable, would nevertheless require additional costs and governments or other donors willing to cover them.

(ii) Establishing a CCST Secretariat outside ECLAC, but with continued backstopping by ECLAC in selected administrative areas

24. Under this alternative, a CCST Secretariat would be established as above and would function independently from ECLAC, while receiving substantive support as above. It would also be fully responsible for its administrative and logistical support. However, if the new Secretariat were to remain in Port of Spain, it would be able to receive from ECLAC those administrative services which it could require, such as accounting (i.e., ECLAC handling CCST accounts), or document-reproduction: the choice would be that of the CCST Secretariat. The services would be provided on the basis of an CCST/ECLAC agreement similar, for example, to an agreement ECLAC has had for many years with United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) for administrative support in specific areas in Mexico. CCST, in turn would pay a certain amount to ECLAC as cost-reimbursement for the services involved.

25. The advantage of the above alternative is that it would mitigate in part the difficulties inherent in the establishment of an independent CCST Secretariat, discussed above. In the present alternative, the CCST Secretariat would be able to retain from ECLAC those administrative services it would be interested in, thereby reducing the difficulties and costs of running a full gamut of administrative services required for the Secretariat's operations.

26. It should be also noted that the above alternative is not limited to obtaining services necessarily from ECLAC. CCST could enter into the arrangement, at its choice, with other organs, such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which also have substantial administrative-support capacity in their country offices. Retaining a non-ECLAC organ will be, in fact, necessary, should CCST locate its Secretariat outside Port of Spain.

(iii) Continuing the present CCST/ECLAC arrangements, with some modifications

27. The last alternative is to refrain from taking the major step of creating an independent CCST Secretariat, and continue instead the present arrangement whereby ECLAC provides management, secretariat services and other administrative support to CCST. In this case the

question arises as to what modifications, if any, might be called for in the present CCST/ECLAC arrangement to improve CCST's substantive operations and effectiveness. This question is relevant not only in the context of theoretical examination of possible alternatives for future change, but also in an immediate, concrete sense: for, even if the independent-Secretariat alternative is selected, the time-frame required for eventual implementation would still call for improving the present arrangements, for the more immediate results.

28. In this respect, it is noted that CCST-related activities within ECLAC comprise three categories: (a) those activities which form part of the ECLAC/CDCC work programme under the UN regular budget; (b) those which cover activities, or projects, financed by extrabudgetary funds; and c) those activities relating to ECLAC's acting as the Secretariat of CCST, including the support to the CCST plenary and Executive Committee meetings. It would appear useful to delineate the three areas and distinguish between different ways of handling each.

29. As to the regular budget-related programme elements, these should be handled as part of ECLAC/CDCC overall activities in the region, under the general direction of the Director of the Port of Spain Office (and, indeed, ECLAC's Executive Secretary), with due reviews and consultations within the existing framework of the CDCC and CCST. This has been the case hitherto, and no changes in this area are required.

30. Changes also appear not to be required in the third category, that is in the Secretariat servicing by ECLAC of CCST. This task has been carried out principally by the Science and Technology Officer in the Port of Spain Office, who has been in effect acting as the CCST Secretary, while reporting to the Director of the Port of Spain Office. ECLAC has provided travel funds and other support as required, and these will continue as needed for the proper, successful holding of CCST sessions and meetings.

31. It is with regard to the second category, involving the use of extrabudgetary funds for specific projects and activities, where lies the major elements of CCST's *raison d'etre*, funds, operations, and results. Over \$250,000 in extrabudgetary funds have been received from donors in 1996-97 and present forecasts call for higher contributions in 1998-99. As noted above, these funds are handled by ECLAC as "project funds" under the UN financial rules and regulations. While such handling has been seen by some as too-restrictive, ECLAC, as part of the UN Secretariat, is unquestionably obligated to adhere to these rules in all respects, and no modification can be effected in this respect. However, an area where improvement is possible, would be the strengthening, as much as possible, of the programmatic content of the projects and other activities undertaken: seeking stronger links between project activities and the region's needs, and equally seeking, as much as possible, tangible outputs to be linked to the region's needs. This would require the members of the Council to take a more active role in considering, allocating and approving the use of project funds for specific activities such as travel, meetings, technical assistance, research and formulation of policy guidance to governments.

32. As another possible improvement, CCST project proposals should be submitted to the CDCC Projects Committees as in the case of all project proposals seeking extrabudgetary funds. The projects should be signed by the Director of ECLAC Port of Spain Office in consultation with the Chairman of CCST, and seen as a joint, coherent activity, aimed at benefiting the region in a clear and concrete manner.