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**REPORT ON THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL MEETING TO FOLLOW UP ON  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY**

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## **REPORT ON THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL MEETING TO FOLLOW UP ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Caribbean Regional Meeting to follow up on Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy convened in St Kitts and Nevis from 5 to 7 October 2005. The meeting was co-sponsored by the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM),) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The meeting was attended by representatives of Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Netherlands Antilles, Montserrat, Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands. Also in attendance were United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations.

#### **Opening session**

The opening session was chaired by the representative of St. Kitts and Nevis.

The representative of DESA indicated that DESA had taken the initiative to convene to capitalize on the renewed resolve that had emerged from the Mauritius International Meeting and to further the actions that were then envisaged. She stressed that, while the international community had committed to assist the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), there was still much to be done at the national level to further the goal of sustainable development. There was a need to generate greater awareness and understanding at all levels of the importance of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. It was anticipated that the meeting would initiate actions to strengthen national implementation mechanisms and that there would be an examination of the possibility of designing a Caribbean Regional Mechanism for the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy.

The Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean reviewed the national and international milieu within which SIDS are constrained to operate. He stressed the necessity of building resilience in order to articulate responses to non favourable international developments, while drawing attention to a number of thematic areas in which sustainable development initiatives had been successful. These achievements had been made possible by recourse to country-to-country collaborative mechanisms and with the assistance of regional institutions.

He concurred with the Mauritius Strategy to the effect that sustainable development was primarily a national responsibility. However, there remained a need for increased regional collaboration to buttress the vulnerability of the region and to access resources. He called for the full participation of civil society in the process and extended the assistance of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean to further assist in the development and application of a regional coordinating mechanism to support the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy.

The Deputy Secretary General of CARICOM pointed to the relatively weak implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) and emphasized the need to develop an innovative and endemic Caribbean methodology for implementation of the Mauritius Strategy. She also stressed the importance of strategically utilizing the capacities of Caribbean institutions to overcome limitations imposed by small geographic size.

This Caribbean methodology must also provide opportunities for the international community to play a role and the engagement of the international community would ensure that decisions taken outside of the region were not at odds with the sustainable development initiatives of the Caribbean Community. She also drew attention to the possibility of obtaining assistance by “optimizing relations within the international environmental conventions”.

The CARICOM Secretariat had expended much effort towards conceptualizing a possible Caribbean regional implementation mechanism for the Mauritius Strategy. A proposal to this effect would be shared during the course of the meeting as a reflection of the desire of CARICOM governments to maximize benefits from the scarce resources available to the region, while avoiding duplication of effort.

The representative of UNDP, Barbados, assured the meeting of his organization’s support for the Mauritius Strategy and its commitment to SIDS issues more generally. The UNDP viewed the creation of a regional coordinating mechanism as a necessity for the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy. Such a mechanism would be particularly important given the limited capacities of individual Caribbean countries. The UNDP was disposed to provide financial resources to support such an initiative.

In his feature address Dr. The Honourable Timothy Harris, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade, Industry and Commerce of St Kitts and Nevis alluded to the social, environmental and economic repercussions of dismantling the sugar cane industry in his country. He indicated that the problems currently experienced as a result of this initiative, were typical of Caribbean SIDS. The manner of replacement of the sugar cane industry was intrinsically tied to the sustainable development of St. Kitts and Nevis, and the realization of sustainable livelihood for the people of St. Kitts and Nevis was primary.

In recognition of the cross-cutting nature of sustainable development, the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis had established a Ministry of Sustainable Development, to bring together the key agencies of government that played central roles

in policy formulation and coordination. The Minister recognized the need for assistance from developed countries together with coordination and strengthening of efforts among the Caribbean countries. This assistance was especially important to the Caribbean countries towards the development of an economic and social reconstruction plan to provide assistance after natural disasters.

He exhorted the Meeting to reassert the Caribbean presence on the global scene, as was done in Barbados in 1994, ensuring in the interim that the Mauritius Strategy became a reality not only in the Caribbean, but among all SIDS.

A vote of thanks was given by Mr. Carlisle Richardson, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of St. Kitts and Nevis to the United Nations, New York.

### **Adoption of agenda**

The meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Panel presentation and policy dialogue on critical challenges and opportunities to be addressed by the region
2. Consideration of integrated approaches to the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI) - linkages and synergies between sectors, using the themes of CSD 14/15 (climate change, energy, atmosphere and industrial development) as examples
3. Consideration of Programmes for operationalization of the MSI with focus on regional and sub-regional programming based on priorities identified by the region.
4. Consideration of a regional mechanism/consultative framework for most effective, coordinate, coherent implementation of the implementation of the BPOA/MSI
5. Consideration of national mechanisms and frameworks for most effective implementation of the BPOA/MSI
6. Other Matters

### **Election of officers**

The Bureau of the Meeting was elected as follows: Ms. Shirley Skerritt-Andrews was elected Chairman of the Meeting. Mr. Hector Conde Almeida of Cuba and Mr. Roland Antonius of Netherlands Antilles were elected Vice-Chairmen, and Ms. Henna Uiterloo of Suriname was elected Rapporteur.

**B. AGENDA ITEM 1: PANEL PRESENTATION AND POLICY DIALOGUE ON CRITICAL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE REGION**

Panel presentations were made by a Consultant of the United Nations Environmental Programme/Caribbean Environmental Programme (UNEP/CEP); representatives of the University of the United States Virgin Islands (UVI) and the University of the West Indies (UWI); and a representative of a non-governmental organization.

The UNEP Consultant gave a presentation entitled *Moving Ahead on Coastal and Ocean Management in the Caribbean Region* which gave an insight into the role of the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands. This forum was mobilized in 2001 to put oceans, coasts, and SIDS issues on the agenda for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), and was formalized at that Summit in 2002. On the basis of a recently completed Rapid Assessment of the Caribbean SIDS, which involved a review of past work, the identification of top priorities and capacity building needs, a strategy was developed detailing specific actions that could be taken in the short term, to move forward on ocean and coastal management in the three SIDS regions.

The following areas were identified: climate change; impact of sea-level rise; natural and environmental disasters; management of wastes; and coastal and marine resources. For each thematic area the challenges and issues were identified and priority action areas determined. These areas were viewed together with the Mauritius Strategy and a list was prepared which identified the necessity for:

- A high level of political endorsement and ministerial commitment to programmes;
- Improved inter-agency coordination and collaboration;
- Increased South-South collaboration amongst SIDS with regard to lessons learnt;
- Development and management programmes that were long-term, designed, implemented and evaluated to develop and maintain coherence and continuity;
- The establishment of regional funding mechanisms;
- The establishment/formalisation/strengthening of the linkages amongst existing or ongoing projects such as the GEF Caribbean International Waters Project on Integrating Management of Watersheds and Coastal Areas in Small Island Developing States, the Large Marine Ecosystems and White Water to Blue Water Initiative and the MesoAmerican Barrier Reef Programme.

The meeting was challenged to determine whether the best use was being made of the available academic resources in the region, and to explore innovative and new partnership arrangements to fulfil the SIDS mandate of sustainably developing and protecting its coastal and marine resources.

The representative of the UVI examined the role of the Consortium of SIDS Universities in the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy. She stated that the Consortium was being designed to enhance present tertiary educational facilities, and to facilitate capacity building among SIDS. Thus far, preliminary work on curriculum development and promotion of resilience-building in SIDS had started. She observed that it was necessary to share and develop best practices and this was being done via shared research and projects. There remained the challenge of developing uniform standards for accreditation, but work was in progress in this area.

She then gave an insight into the structure and functioning of the Consortium, inclusive of its Board of Trustees, present work and the envisaged integration structure across the various regions of the SIDS. Commitments made to promote capacity-building and to provide some measure of financial input needed to be honoured, for the consortium was to succeed in its initiatives.

A presentation entitled *The Role and Relevance of the University of the West Indies (UWI) in the Implementation of the Mauritius Agenda* was given by the representative of UWI, in which he observed that UWI did not set regional priorities, but simply fulfilled the mandate set by CARICOM governments to provide training and research towards regional and national capacity building. Some indication was given of the breadth of coverage of subject areas of the UWI, highlighting the University's active participation in the processes leading to the Mauritius International Meeting to which it fielded a seven-member delegation.

With respect to participation in the Consortium of SIDS Universities, UWI hosted the first Post-Mauritius planning meeting of the Consortium in August 2005, in Jamaica and was currently involved in the formulation of policy guidelines and finalization of a draft Constitution for that proposed entity.

The Office of Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) was in the process of identifying critical areas of pure and applied research, while pursuing regional and international partnerships to achieve research objectives in a cost-effective manner. Stakeholder participation remained critical to this process to ensure its relevance.

He informed that the former UWI Centre for Environment and Development (UWICED) was to be renamed the Institute for Sustainable Development. Wide regional participation of all stakeholders in the UWI was envisaged in this process, and a governance structure was under consideration. He also gave examples of three initiatives undertaken by UWI in marine management, biological diversity and disaster management.

The UWI now had a centralized database of skills that was readily accessible by regional governments, the private sector and civil society.

**The NGO representative referred to the meeting of Non Governmental Organizations** which convened in the context of the Mauritius International Meeting, which produced an Action Plan and facilitated the building of information and personnel networks. Two important aspects of the Action Plan were the development of a programme for education on SIDS issues and systematic work on sustainable development indicators.

Other issues that engaged the attention of the non-governmental organizations included the need for clearly defined participation mechanisms with State actors, the lack of coherency in the work of various institutions, the challenge of resource mobilization and, relatedly, inadequately trained persons being placed to manage these scarce resources.

Non-governmental organizations agreed that a regional strategy for financial mobilization was still lacking, while creative mechanisms focusing on domestic and foreign debt control were yet to be initiated. Further, long-term programmes demanded technologies and methodologies for implementation which thus far had not been accessed. In addition, the negative effects of global actions demanded the devising of a counteracting mechanism to protect the claims of national/regional SIDS in the international arena.

From the perspective of the non-governmental organizations, the primary challenges for the Caribbean were:

- The slow pace of the Caribbean integration process and thus the absence of a “Caribbean Commons”;
- A lack of awareness on the part of the regional population on SIDS issues and thus little participatory planning, which could lead to further squandering of limited resources;
- The need to combat a prevailing ethos of fatalism and pessimism by encouraging the emergence of development actors;
- The necessity to continue cooperation in a multilateral vein, even though bilateralism was being fostered internationally;
- The creation of a Caribbean economy for persons to engage their skills, to ensure the preservation of a peculiar and particular society.

The content of the discussions which followed the presentations are summarized below:

a) There is need for appropriate training and capacity-building to provide the requisite skills in the various domestic sectors. Purely academic training is not necessarily the most useful option.

b) There remains a lack of relevant data for planning and decision-making in the region. Too often, policies which are crucial to sustainable development are drafted on the basis of inadequate data or data estimates.



c) A mechanism for the sharing of best practices needs to be developed and implemented. The lack of such a mechanism may perpetuate the impression that national or regional initiatives towards sustainable development are isolated and uncoordinated.

d) There is no comprehensive plan for provision of assistance to Caribbean nations following natural disasters; relatedly, disaster planning, including enforcement of building codes and standards, is still not adequate considering the vulnerability of the Caribbean SIDS to natural and environmental disasters.

e) Institutions need to develop endemic tools for dealing with the challenges of the region. Innovation and creativity should be encouraged.

f) There is no reporting system for the sharing of documentation, from which lessons can be learnt, or which can prevent duplication of effort and study.

g) Regionally, there is inadequate synergy among related institutions in the Caribbean region, so that resources are not used as efficiently as they can be.

h) A revision of systems of land tenure, land use and land management should be undertaken: this should include capacity development for the drafting of physical development plans.

i) Greater integration of the public and private sectors programmes is necessary to provide for a coordinated development approach. This should include the building of national and regional competitiveness.

j) More attention should be directed to coastal zone and water resources management and the coordination of environmental standards across the region. Active implementation of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), to which many countries are signatories, may prove useful in this regard.

k) The impact of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) on the region needs to be more thoroughly assessed; there has been little work focusing on framing sustainable development options within CSME.

l) There should be prioritisation of the targets set within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially with respect to poverty eradication and building of social resilience.

m) Implementation of MEAs .

**C. AGENDA ITEM 2: CONSIDERATION OF INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION (MSI) - LINKAGES AND SYNERGIES BETWEEN SECTORS, USING THE THEMES OF CSD 14/15 (CLIMATE CHANGE, ENERGY, ATMOSPHERE AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT) AS EXAMPLES**

This session began with a panel discussion. The panelists were the representatives of Barbados and St. Kitts and Nevis and an energy consultant.

The representative of St. Kitts and Nevis spoke on the development of a Ministry of Sustainable Development within the context of St. Kitts and Nevis. She spoke about the lack of coordination among units of the various ministries which had responsibility for related sectors. This situation had led to overlap, duplication and the extension of already scarce human and financial resources. In response, there was a rationalization of the functions of the ministries and eventually the creation of the Ministry of Sustainable Development, to further promote and sustain this effort.

The representative of Barbados reviewed the Barbados experience in sustainable development and suggested that the country had been almost compelled by events, to be at the forefront of SIDS issues and sustainable development. This, by virtue of Barbados' having been the first country to hold an international SIDS conference, and the consequent name branding that resulted from the generation of the document entitled the "Barbados Programme of Action" (Barbados PoA).

He outlined the problems experienced by Barbados with the erosion of beaches due to the non enforcement of planning practices, and the consequent threat to the tourism industry. This threat was a major driving force behind the establishment of a Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU) which retains responsibility for all activities that take place or affect the coastal areas of Barbados. The type of collaboration spawned by this initiative has encouraged the government to undertake a similar rationalization of functions among other governmental departments.

Barbados now had a Sustainable Development Strategy which was being drafted after extensive discussion and active stakeholder participation. Further, a Sustainable Development Commission has been established, though new appointees have yet to be installed. The Barbados Sustainable Development model was guided by the following principles and objectives: quality of life; conservation of resources (acknowledging that there are bio-physical limits to growth); determination of the carrying capacity of the island, and ensuring economic efficiency and equity.

He pointed out that while there was an active non-governmental organization movement in Barbados, they tended to be isolated from each other and to be lacking in financial resources and technical expertise. This situation lessened their potential impact on policy-making.

Both speakers saw the utility of accessing the technical assistance mechanism of the CARICOM Secretariat (under the work programme of the CSME), the need for a pool of regional experts who can be readily deployed, a more facilitative approach between policy-making and implementation and noted the continuing lack of trained personnel in specialist areas such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and environmental impact assessment.

The presentation of the Energy Consultant was directed towards the possibilities of utilizing renewable energies in SIDS. He proposed the availability of energy as being a prerequisite for development. Thus the lack of fossil fuels in most SIDS made it imperative to locate fuels that were renewable, economically viable and for which technology was readily accessible. He proposed the use of sugar cane as an alternative energy source. However the major focus of the presentation was on technologies used in Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) and the possibility of the use of OTEC in the Caribbean. He pointed to its ease of use, non-polluting nature, renewability, economic viability and spin-off ecosystem benefits. He also shared with the meeting some ways in which energy was daily wasted in the Caribbean.

**D. AGENDA ITEM 3: CONSIDERATION OF A REGIONAL MECHANISM/CONSULTATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR MOST EFFECTIVE, COORDINATE, COHERENT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPOA/MSI**

During this Session presentations were made by the representatives of ECLAC and CARICOM.

Both presentations focused on the key functions that might be envisaged for the Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) namely:

- (a) Building public awareness and coordination of sustainable development initiatives in the Caribbean region;
- (b) Monitoring implementation of the MSI and the promotion/ establishment of cooperative arrangements and partnerships among interested members;
- (c) Provision of technical, advisory and policy services to member States in support of their sustainable development efforts;
- (d) Supporting preparation of regional and national project proposals and the mobilisation of technical and other resources;
- (e) Conduct of research, support for formulation of subregional sustainable development strategies; refining concerns into draft project proposals.

**The Regional Advisor** identified two possible approaches to the design of the coordinating mechanism. These he identified as Coordinated Decentralisation and Centralised Coordination. He explained these terms as follows:

#### **Coordinated decentralisation**

- Autonomous Implementation Units (internal); Coordination via a consultative mechanism, comprising selected members of each Unit and the relevant secretariats. These would be supported by representatives of agencies, lending support to as many Implementation Units as necessary. Closed meetings of member States possible;
- Consultative Mechanism entrusted with reporting function on the basis of inputs from the member States and the secretariats of the implementation Units.

#### **Centralised coordination**

- A central mechanism, comprising a nucleus of representatives of each subregion, supported by subregional secretariats, coordinating the development and implementation of a Regional Work Programme agreed by all regional SIDs and supported by regional and regionally-based agencies.

The Special Assistant to the Secretary General of the CARICOM Secretariat indicated that her presentation was one which represented a fusion of ideas from the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Secretariat and the CARICOM Secretariat. This presentation proposed the following system:

- **A core or hub** which will function as a Secretariat - could be a permanent Secretariat or a pro-tem Secretariat based on a rotational arrangement over an agreed period of time;
- **A Technical Advisory Body (TAB)** which would consist of representatives of :
  - regional institutions/agencies having a mandate for sustainable development issues/activities and/or implementation of the SIDS/POA and MSI; and
  - Caribbean SIDS (based on an agreed number and rotational arrangement)
- **A Ministerial Council** which will have oversight functions and will provide policy direction to the Mechanism

A discussion then followed at the end of which it was agreed that the RCM should have the following characteristics and functions:

- The membership of the RCM should be Pan-Caribbean in scope;
- The RCM should also provide assistance at the national level in focusing and obtaining resources to fulfil national priorities and support national implementation;
- It should be able to create synergies among regional institutions and facilitate cooperation in similar initiatives;
- The RCM should maintain a database of persons with skills in sustainable development;
- It should provide information and monitor/evaluate sustainable development indicators and provide advice on global and regional SD issues;
- There should be a clearly articulated political directorate for oversight and arrangement on the functions of the mechanism.

The meeting agreed on the need for national mechanisms as a means of ensuring the maximum efficiency of the proposed RCM.

The consideration of elements to guide the proposed RCM was entrusted to a Core Group comprising representatives of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), ECLAC, CARICOM, OECS, United States Virgin Islands, Saint Lucia, Belize (not present), Cuba, Jamaica, Guyana, Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) (facilitating and coordinating with non-governmental organizations). The recommendations of the Core Group are set out in Annex 1.

#### **E. AGENDA ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF NATIONAL MECHANISMS AND FRAMEWORKS FOR MOST EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPOA/MSI**

Under this item reports were presented by a number of delegations outlining their national mechanisms for promoting sustainable development. While no specific mechanism had been established in some countries, others were in the process of articulating such a mechanism, while others had a fully functional mechanism, though in some cases still skewed towards environmental matters. The major challenges confronting the establishment of a sustainable development mechanism included lack of support by the political directorate and lack of national capacity.

**F. AGENDA ITEM 5: CONSIDERATION OF PROGRAMMES FOR OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE MSI WITH FOCUS ON REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL PROGRAMMING BASED ON PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE REGION.**

This session was chaired by the representative of St. Kitts and Nevis. The representatives of CARICOM and DESA presented via matrices, the thematic areas of work related to sustainable development in the Caribbean, and identified agencies that would be able to assist in these areas. Agencies were suggested based on their respective mandates and capacities. The CARICOM Secretariat focused on institutions and agencies in the Caribbean, while the DESA presentation was based on discussions that had been undertaken with the headquarters of the respective agencies. Organizations and agencies that had not completed the matrices which outlined the thematic areas and related agencies, were requested to fill in the thematic areas for which assistance would be provided to Caribbean SIDS.

**G. AGENDA ITEM 6: OTHER MATTERS**

This session was chaired by the representative of St. Kitts and Nevis. The draft report of the meeting was presented by the Rapporteur and it was proposed that barring any substantive changes, the report be approved by acclamation and the DESA Secretariat would be charged with its final compilation and distribution.

The representative of DESA, informed the meeting of an Interregional Meeting of SIDS which was due to be convened in Italy towards the middle of November 2005. It would be necessary to have reports and other proposals from the Caribbean Meeting ready for presentation at this forum.

**Closing**

A representative of a Youth Caucus from Dominica read a statement to the meeting expressing the sentiments of the non-governmental organizations, including their appreciation on having been invited to participate in the proceedings. The statement also encouraged agencies and governments to engage in continued collaboration with the non-governmental organizations sector.

The Chairman thanked the participants for their various inputs and declared the meeting closed.

Annex 1

**DRAFT INTERIM REPORT**

**ON**

**A REGIONAL COORDINATING MECHANISM**

**FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF**

**THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY**

**IN THE CARIBBEAN**

26 OCTOBER 2005

## **1. Introduction**

It will be recalled that at the Regional Consultation on the Implementation of the MSI (St. Kitts/Nevis 5-7 October 2005) a Core Group was established to give further consideration to some of the details regarding the establishment of a Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean (with particular attention to the implementation of the BPoA/MSI)

The following is submitted in keeping with the decision of the Core Group established; that the major elements of the Guiding Principles and the Objectives of the RCM as set out in the CARICOM-OECS and the ECLACC/CDCC Submissions were to be merged, taking on board the comments from Member States during the discussions. This decision was endorsed by the wider Meeting. The recommendations of the Core Group as endorsed by the Regional Consultation are provided at **Annex I**.

## **2. Proposed Guiding Principles of the RCM**

In pursuance of its objectives, the Regional Coordinating Mechanism shall be guided by the following principles:

1. Supporting/reinforcing/assisting sustainable development initiatives at the national level;
2. Promoting capacity building and strengthening the human resource base through education and training to enhance the Region's sustainable development programmes;
3. Coordinating, distilling and sharing information across a wide range of issues and institutions, sharing best practices, including setting goals and identifying the necessary means for achieving them;
4. Ensuring the optimal utilisation of resources and strengthening of institutional arrangements to avoid any (unnecessary) duplication of activities;
5. Facilitating and forging partnerships among stakeholders operating in the Caribbean region;
6. Encouraging the use of precautionary approaches to sustainable use and management of the region's natural resources;
7. Encouraging the full and effective participation of NGO organizations in sustainable development activities, including the private sector, the labour movement, community based and civil society;
8. Promoting public awareness of sustainable development issues and activities;
9. Promoting sustainable development as a means for the efficient and effective use of human and natural capital to develop so that human, cultural, historical and natural



resources are used and managed efficiently and for the greater good nationally and regionally;

### **3. Proposed Objectives Of The RCM**

The RCM will have as its Objectives:

1. Coordinating sustainable development initiatives in the Caribbean region with a view to the removal of fragmentation at the national and regional levels where a multiplicity of governmental and non-governmental organizations operate outside of an organised and cohesive framework and without clearly identified roles and responsibilities;
2. Promoting, strengthening and establishing of cooperative arrangements and partnerships among interested government agencies, NGOs, the private sector, and other stakeholders;
3. Providing technical advisory and policy services to Member States in support of their sustainable development efforts;
4. Facilitating joint technical assistance to Member States;
5. Building and maintaining institutional memory on sustainable development activities in the Caribbean Region;
6. Establishing a regional database on sustainable development activities
7. Ensuring suitable arrangements are in place for the effective coordination, coherence and complementarity of sustainable development initiatives in the Caribbean;
8. Facilitating the identification and/or development of finance and investment opportunities for sustainable development
9. Establishing regional bench marks on sustainable development goals and facilitating the sharing and transfer of experiences, knowledge technology and techniques among the countries

## **Annex I**

### **Recommendations of the Core Group Regarding the RCM**

1. With respect to the **guiding principles and proposed objectives**, it was agreed that:
  - The CARICOM-OECS and the ECLACC/CDCC Submissions would be merged, taking on board the comments from Member States during the discussions.
  - The merged document – to be called the Interim Report on the RCM - would be completed by 21 October for circulation to Member States and to facilitate the preparation of briefs for Ministers and other Officials attending the (UNEP) Forum of Ministers of Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean to be held in Venezuela in October/November 2005;

- The opportunity of the UNEP Meeting should be taken for further discussions among Caribbean SIDS on the Interim Report.
2. As regards the **Structure of the RCM**, the Core Group agreed that;
- Taking on board the recommendations of Member States and bearing in mind the Pan-Caribbean scope of the RCM Membership, the Secretariat functions for the RCM would be performed, in the first instance, by the CDCC Secretariat. The RCM Secretariat would work collaboratively with the Core Group;
  - The Core Group should continue to provide coordination services to the RCM. Secretariat. A Coordinating Committee should be formally established at the time of the CDCC Ministerial Meeting to be held in January 2006. Its functions will be elaborated on in a report which will be submitted to Member States for comment by mid-November with a view to finalization in time for consideration and endorsement at the CDCC meeting. **(This will signal the completion of the mandate of the aforementioned Core Group).**
  - To facilitate the smooth functioning of the RCM at the national level, the Core Group recommended that steps be taken to identify national focal points. To this end, Terms of Reference of the focal points will be elaborated in the report to be submitted to Member States in mid-November with a view to finalization in time for consideration and endorsement at the CDCC Meeting.
3. With respect to the **recommendations set out in decision 4 of the Fourteenth Forum of Ministers of Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean (Panama, November 2003)**,
- The Core Group underscored that the Coordinating Mechanism for Sustainable Development being established through this MSI implementation process was being created on the basis of a "... *well-established, well defined regional co-ordinatory mechanism.*." as articulated in decision 2(e) which calls **for "Support for a well-established, well defined regional co-ordinatory mechanism for the further implementation of the BPoA."**

The Core Group therefore:

- Called on UNEP to lend support to the RCM
- Agreed that it would be critical for the RCM to collaborate with UNEP and other Agencies in the implementation of the RCM's Work Programme

### **MEMBERSHIP OF THE CORE GROUP**

#### **Countries**

- **Belize** – Membership to be confirmed by Belize
- **ACS**- to nominate a representative to the Group
- **Cuba**

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