Fourth Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of
  the Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) for the Mauritius Strategy
  for the further implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action
  for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States
  (BPoA/MSI)
Georgetown, Guyana
25 May 2012

REPORT OF THE
FOURTH MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) OF THE REGIONAL COORDINATING MECHANISM (RCM) FOR THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY FOR THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BARBADOS PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (BPOA/MSI)

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A. DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   The following decisions and recommendations were made at the meeting:

a.   National and Institutional Strengthening:

- Political will is needed to strengthen the operations of the TAC
- Human resource and institutional capacity are challenges for The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of small island developing States and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of small island developing States (BPoA/MSI)
- The CARICOM role in supporting the RCM secretariat should be examined
- Look at the governance framework within which the sustainable development agenda will be implemented
- The national focal point mechanism (NFP) may find the responsibility of being the liaison between the country and TAC a challenge, and it is therefore necessary to design a modality for carrying out the work of the RCM
- Utilize the services of interns at the national level to support the national focal point mechanism. Budget support should be obtained to support this initiative
- The Caribbean needs to develop guidelines for preparing to participate in international forums.
- Examine where the BPoA/MSI fits into the broader operational development context
- Institutions addressing BPoA/MSI implementation should coordinate to create synergies and avoid duplication of effort
- Countries were concerned about the strengthening of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Since Cuba is the only Caribbean country to have representation at UNEP headquarters in Kenya, it was felt that no other Caribbean country would benefit from the strengthening of UNEP

b.   The RCM Secretariat

- Needs and vulnerabilities of Caribbean small island developing States (SIDS) must be reflected in the 2014 reporting process on progress made both in two decades of implementation of the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA+20) and in the first decade of implementation of the Mauritius Strategy (MSI+10)
- The extent to which the functionality of TAC could be incorporated into the work programme of Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) for the 2014-2015 biennium should be considered
The areas of the BPoA/MSI that will be addressed in the short term should be prioritized. Consideration should be given to United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution 20/10 and the Five-Year Review of the Mauritius Strategy

c.   Technical Matters

- Include the three pillars of sustainable development in the development of indicators
- Utilize, to the extent possible, appropriate indicators from other countries or organizations in measuring progress towards BPoA/MSI. E.g. Indicators developed by Barbados could be used in a consultative manner

- Consider the development of indicators that could track the progress of Caribbean SIDS in building resilience in key areas of vulnerability – Organisation of American States (OAS)
- Develop a mechanism for using information from the indicators to pursue the regional position especially in negotiating forums- Government of Jamaica
- Develop a system to strengthen the capacity of Caribbean SIDS in managing the policy cycle
- Strengthen systems of data collection and promote analysis of the data collected to inform policymaking
- Measure the impact of crime and drug trafficking on economies- University of the West Indies (UWI)
- Call on the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) to provide a report on the status of SIDSNet

d. Financing

- ECLAC needs to provide more budgetary support to the subregional headquarters for the Caribbean
- Resources need to be mobilized for financing the operations of the TAC

e. The vision of the RCM

- Utilize the Small Island Developing States Network (SIDSNet) to promote SIDS-SIDS cooperation
- Develop an information and communications technology (ICT) platform for improving communication and sharing information. In this regard, a proposal should be developed for donor funding consideration
- Prepare and circulate a newsletter that will reflect the main activities and developments in Caribbean SIDS
- Develop a web-based forum whereby communication among Caribbean SIDS would be enhanced
- Consider, in the medium term, development of a Caribbean Subregional Award in Sustainable Development

B. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. Place and date

2.   The fourth meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Caribbean Regional Coordinating Mechanism was convened by the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, on 25 May 2012 in Port of Spain.

2. Participation

3.   Experts in the areas of the green economy and institutional frameworks for sustainable development attended the meeting. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) were represented.

3. Agenda

4.　　The Chairman opened the floor for amendments to the agenda. Ms. Barnaby suggested that, given the importance attached to Agenda item 7 concerning a review of regional coordinating processes, the time allotted to Agenda item 6 should be reduced. Within this context, Ms. Gomes noted that instead of a presentation on Financing for Development, Ms. Elizabeth Thompson, Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD; also known as Rio+20) would make a statement. Further, the meeting was informed that a short presentation would be made by Ms. Quarless after Agenda item 7. The Chairman, therefore, called for flexibility and efficiency to ensure timely completion of the programme.

5.　　The following agenda was moved by Mr. Sinckler.

1.　　Opening of the meeting.

2.　　Adoption of the agenda.

3.　　Procedural matters and organization of work.

4.　　Review of the Regional Implementation Matrix .

5.　　Creating a regional monitoring mechanism to enhance BPoA/MSI implementation.

6.　　Making linkages between implementation of the BPoA/MSI and preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

7.　　Strengthening regional coordination to enhance BPoA/MSI implementation.

8.　　Conclusions and recommendations.

9.　　Closure.

4. Procedural matters and organization of work

7.　　The meeting was apprised of procedural issues related to attendance of participants and the order of work.

C. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

1. Opening of meeting

8.　　The Director of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, Ms. Diane Quarless, delivered the opening remarks. Ms. Quarless referred to the work of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) as a necessary forum for strengthening subregional coordination for monitoring implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (MSI). The Director highlighted the relevance of the work of TAC to the thematic areas of the upcoming meeting of the United Nations

Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in Brazil in June 2012. Finally, she stressed that lack of resources hindered impactful functioning of TAC, and challenged Member States to continue supporting the work of TAC, especially in terms of mobilizing financial resources for its operation.

2. Review of the Regional Implementation Matrix

9.   This agenda item involved a presentation of the Regional Implementation Matrix (RIM). This Matrix was developed by the Caribbean Community to document activities in implementing the Mauritius Strategy.

10.   Mr. Garfield Barnwell and Ms. Gita Chandarpal presented a review of the Regional Implementation Matrix developed by CARICOM. Mr. Garfield thanked ECLAC for hosting the meeting and informed the committee members that the RIM was developed to monitor implementation of progress on the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. The first goal of the Matrix was to cover all areas of priority and include areas that had been overlooked. The second goal of the Matrix was to develop a resource-mobilization strategy that would match resources with priority areas and identify areas where resources were required.

11.   Mr. Barnwell informed the meeting that the Matrix contained data on existing subregional institutions and their programmes. He added that the BPoA had allocated thematic tasks to CARICOM and other subregional institutions to ensure that Caribbean sustainable development goals would be fully addressed. Subsequent analysis had shown that 80% of the resources acquired to implement the BPoA had come from within the subregion itself. The Matrix provided the basis for reinforcing efforts to mobilize resources in areas where gaps remained.

12.   Another important development arising from the Matrix was that a growing number of donors have been adopting similar types of process for resource mobilization; for example, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has developed a website to which recipient countries were encouraged to post their proposals, the intention being to seek matching resources to implement each proposal, either partially or in full. CBD has also used this web tool to signal, to a group of countries or to a specific country, the thematic areas that they hope to support. However, some countries have been excluded from consideration and he was alerting the meeting to this nuance.

13.   In conclusion, Mr. Barnwell reported that the Secretariat was still struggling with preparations for RIO+20.

14.   Ms. Gita Chandarpal thanked ECLAC for giving her the opportunity to work on updating the Matrix and provided a general overview of the updating process. The Matrix covered an assessment of development activities undertaken in the subregion, inclusive of achievements of Member States and regional organizations, including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

15.   In discussing the challenges to gathering information, Ms. Chandarpal noted that there was no one central source where all information could be found. Neither was it easy to identify the priority areas for the Caribbean, as many country websites were created based on conventional reporting frameworks that did not necessary highlight their specific policy priorities. She added that information and project reports were available, but access may have been limited or inaccessible and many reports were not available in electronic format.

16.   Ms. Chandarpal informed the meeting that many organizations had developed data-sharing mechanisms. A key recommendation arising from her research would be to have one major data centre,

and to share information in a systematic manner. The Matrix could then be updated to monitor the process in a structured manner so that stakeholders could be apprised of progress made in the subregion. Some forums in the Caribbean have relied on external assistance and have achieved little. However, closer observation of the data has shown how much the Caribbean subregion has achieved.

17.   Following the presentation, Mr. David Smith enquired whether SIDSNet had been revitalized, as he felt that it was a useful source of information; he called for more effort in this area. In response, Ms. Diane Quarless noted that it was important to design the best methodologies to translate policies into practice at the national level to ensure that the national structure created the capacity for regional linkages. She informed the meeting that SIDSNet offered information and expertise on best practices and leveraged information for SIDS to benefit from a collaborative working space. However, SIDSNet did not go the distance that the RCM was expected to go. The RIM would help in the sharing of information from Pacific SIDS, on strategies for dealing with solid waste and on mechanisms for resource mobilization at different levels. A governance mechanism that supported the SIDS agenda and one that pulled all the pieces together would need to be implemented.

18.   Mr. Gordon Bispham noted that much work had been done, whether incidental or coincidental, on the BPoA/MSI. He suggested that information could be captured when reports had to be produced and that there was a lack of intensified integration of BPoA. There was dire need to find a strategy and adapt government administration to facilitate systematic integration.

19.   Mr. Cletus Springer suggested that the SIDSNet had a more geographical, interregional focus that, although relevant, would not meet the needs of the RCM, which required a data collection, management and presentation format. Mr. Springer noted that the Matrix would be contributing baseline data to projects funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). He suggested that the Matrix had many advantages and that the RCM needed to consider it more closely at the practical level. In addition, the most effective form of presentation of the Matrix would be to target specific actions mentioned in the BPoA and MSI.

20.   Ms. Leonie Barnaby suggested that, as a starting point, national level focal points needed to be involved in the review of the Matrix. She acknowledged the lack of accurate data from Jamaica: some data addressed Agenda 21 and Rio+20 instead of BPoA and MSI, although some reporting was incidental; she questioned whether or not it was systematic. Ms. Barnaby also questioned the purposes of the information and whether specific information needs were being filled. She observed that the Jamaica country portal offered countries information on projects, yet the opportunity had not been seized to add to the information.

21.   Mr. Travis Sinckler commented on information on reporting at the national level and to other United Nations processes. Ms. Barnaby noted that Jamaica had not arrived at a formula on relevant information for policy programming from a governmental standpoint and asked how this could fit into decision-making. She emphasized that the RIM was effective with appropriate governance and political leadership. She noted that political leadership was tied to governance and other issues common to development. Ms. Barnaby informed the meeting that the sustainable development dialogue needed to ensure an institutional mechanism to keep the Matrix alive and relevant and to continue to bring harmony in the information used. Ms. Barnaby also said that there was need to identify a platform for information and communications technology in this subregion before the next TAC meeting, and proposed that the Organisation of American States should put together a package to share information.

22.   Ms. Charmaine Gomes shared the point that many countries that report on multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) did not coordinate and harmonize information and that the same

information was prepared by different individuals. There was a need for succession planning in capacity-building, since capacity was often lost after training. She therefore proposed that training programmes be put in place that ensured that trained personnel returned to their countries and trained others. She also agreed that the reasons for reporting were relevant to the goals set out so clearly in the MSI and Millennium Development Goals.

23.   The representative of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) observed that the RIM was a good effort, and suggested that targets geared towards an accountability element should be included.

24.   Mr. Chandarpal noted that a number of points had been raised and the TAC needed to how to take these into consideration. He noted the need to focus on strengthening the RCM and the structure of the arrangements by interaction with the countries and the focal points. He also recognised the links between agencies, regarding the number of processes where countries had to report with conventions under RIO+20 and national updates being prepared. The Chair noted that SIDSNet was only helpful to the Caribbean on the basis of what was provided in the database.

25.   Ms. Gita Chanderpal added that the Regional Implementation Matrix depended on resources and the provision of thematic information. She mentioned other information sources available in the Caribbean and suggested that an organization needed to work with countries and share newsletters and annual reports and provide a good synopsis of information that could then be used to update the RIM.

26.   Ms. Barnaby reminded the countries and institutions of their responsibility to provide accurate information as, without this, errors were perpetuated. She noted that many national project reports on energy and climate change were not comprehensive and that, therefore, accessing the information in them was difficult. She added that the GEF focal points were being offered the opportunity to invest more time in this database for policy use.

27.   Dr. Smith enquired into the mechanism for updating the RIM, to which Ms. Gomes indicated that data could be sent to ECLAC. Ms. Gomes pointed out the importance of timelines on the RIM in order to facilitate tracking progress, and suggested that the RIM could be redesigned to accommodate this factor.

28.   The CIDA representative noted that having access to data was a problem in the subregion and that there was an urgent need to move forward with the RIM. He added that there was a need for Governments to focus on national statistics offices. He emphasized that the national statistics offices were the custodians of data verification and monitoring. He saw this as an opportunity for collaboration and mentioned the ECLAC proposal to CIDA that would address this hurdle.

29.   Mr. Cletus Springer informed the meeting that it was more important to have the right information and to add an element of monitoring and evaluation. He proposed the engagement of a consultant to put together an implementation plan.

3.   Creating a regional monitoring mechanism to enhance BPoA/MSI implementation

30.   A spreadsheet of indicators was presented to the meeting. Two indicators for each thematic area had been developed by ECLAC and, using 1994 as a baseline, attempts were made to collect relevant data for that year, 2000 and 2010.

31.   The Committee was advised that data were easily available and accessible on biodiversity resources and, more specifically, on the proportion of terrestrial- and marine- protected areas, graduation from low-income developing country status (World Bank classification) and the external environment.

32.   Data were generally available for all countries on climate change and sea-level rise, natural and environmental disasters, coastal and marine resources, freshwater resources, land use (with the exception of mineral resources),   biodiversity resources (section on proportion of species threatened), mobile cellular subscriptions, Internet users per 100 inhabitants, tuberculosis rates, HIV prevalence among the 15 - 29 age group, institutional environment, ease of doing business, protection of cultural heritage, and customs duties.

33.   However, very little data were available on tourism resources, energy resources, minerals, waste management, coral reef coverage, protected forest area, knowledge management, enabling environments, intensity of water use, capacity development and education for sustainable development, and applied tariffs, including preferences (tariff data were generally available for most countries, in specific detail for various items; however, limited aggregate data capturing mean values were to be found).

34.   No data were available for modal split of passenger transport and freight transport, nor on gross domestic expenditure on research and development as a percentage of GDP. In the section on health, no data were available for percentage of population with access to primary health care and change in expenditure by Governments on the implementation of targeted environmental health programmes. In the thematic area of culture, data were only available on cultural heritage.   In the area of knowledge management, data on statistics and intensity of energy use were unavailable.

35.   During the discussion period, Mr. Phillips advanced options for enhancing the functionality and effectiveness of the Regional Implementation Matrix, through the identification and refining of the proposed set of monitoring indicators.

36.   Following the presentation, the Chairman questioned the appropriateness of incorporating economic surveys within MSI monitoring and reporting. In response, Dr. Smith contended that it would be more efficient to incorporate the indicators of other institutions already possessing the appropriate measurement frameworks rather than developing a new measurement strategy. He emphasized that indicators should only be incorporated into the RCM monitoring framework if deemed compatible.

37.   Ms. Thomas suggested that, given the reporting burden that countries had noted, the nineteen thematic areas should be reviewed to ensure their continued relevance and consistency with the development agendas of Member States. Furthermore, information and communications technology should take more prominence within the thematic areas.

38.   In this regard, Mr. Springer, in commending Mr. Phillips on his presentation, called for clarity and specificity in the indicators that were to be used, and noted that the monitoring framework should focus on tracking progress from vulnerability to resilience. He advanced several examples of established indicators for consideration, including those on economic and environmental vulnerability and resilience developed by the University of Malta. He also suggested that the RCM should take cognizance of indicators used by regional groupings such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.   The Human Development Index indicators were also put forward.   Ultimately, he contended that, as far as possible, the RCM should utilize existing indicator frameworks.

39.   Mr. Springer also noted that, given the difficulties in measurement, other indicators might have to be used, for which proxies may be required. Examples included land degradation and land recovery. He further supported the call for the inclusion of ICT for Development within the measurement framework.

40.   Mr. Bispham cautioned that indicators should emphasize priority areas of national development. To that end, he called for policy impact analysis, and the development of indicators that tracked the impact and effectiveness of policy formation on national development. These could be used to verify the soundness of the enabling framework.

41.   Ms. Barnaby was concerned that indicators did not always achieve the desired outcome because the basis for providing indicators was not always made clear. As an example, she advised that in Jamaica, while there was a carbon impact monitor that would have specific means of measuring reductions in carbon emissions, there was not always a standardized way of measurement, thus reinforcing the need to know the way it was done in other countries. Nonetheless, she supported the call for policy impact analysis, and for Member States to share policies and environmental standards implemented in response to the challenges they faced.

42.   Mr. Harrilall questioned whether or not there were indicators that addressed issues related to disaster reduction, and suggested that these should be made a priority. In this regard, the Chairman noted that a fundamental issue which differentiated SIDS from other countries was that of vulnerability, and expressed the need to ensure that this issue was appropriately incorporated.

43.   Ms. Gita Chandrapal noted that inconsistencies existed despite the considerable amount of data available from various regional organizations and national statistical offices; she suggested that the primary data source should be at the national level.

44.   Mr. Springer suggested that consideration should be given to pinpointing the data that were critical to the presentation of a comprehensive picture, and then identifying what was manageable. He further contended that the policy framework of the region was weak and, by way of example, noted that only 4 out of 14 countries had water policies, and only 3 had biodiversity policies. In the absence of a stronger policy framework implied a limited basis for monitoring progress. To this end, he suggested that the RCM needed to focus on capacity-building processes.

45.   In support of this, Ms. Thomas noted that, while a number of policies existed in Member States, many of these remained in draft form. Further, the majority did not incorporate costing and strategies for implementation and, as such, were not implementable.   Additionally, the supporting legislative framework was lacking. Such systemic challenges should be addressed as a matter of priority.

46.   Mr. Springer queried the position of the BPoA within the larger development space of the Caribbean subregion. That issue was critical because policy discussion did not occur within a vacuum. He noted that metrics and indicators were designed in the context a decision-making framework and did not materialize without policies. This reinforced the question raised by Ms. Barnaby regarding the purpose of the indicators. In this regard, he called for the elevation and prioritization of the BPoA, and proposed that every indicator should incorporate social, economic and environmental aspects.

47.   Related to the issue of the use of indicators, Mr. Phillips questioned the target audience and relevance of the nineteen thematic areas for Caribbean reporting. There was need to ensure that measures contributed directly to the long-run development vision of Member States. Thus, while he supported the use of existing indicators, he noted that there were issues that were peculiar to the Caribbean and might have required the crafting of specific indicators. To that end, he questioned whether or not the work of

the RCM would require only the development of indicators and reporting on them, or incorporates deeper analysis that required the involvement of all stakeholders. That, he noted, had implications for informing policy positions.

48.   In response, Ms. Gomes noted that global indicators, in the main, were not always pertinent to Caribbean realities, and suggested that there was need to tailor them to Caribbean subregional needs. Further, while she was in favour of prioritizing the thematic areas of the MSI, appropriate mechanisms would have to be developed for reporting on the other areas. She also noted that, despite the worthwhile call for policy impact analysis, it was important to identify how this would be measured.

49.   In closing the agenda item, the Director of ECLAC maintained that sustainable development, rather than BPoA/MSI, should be advanced as an agenda. She questioned whether or not data were being collected merely to support better management of operations, or were being used for advocacy and the defence of positions within a global context.

4.   Making linkages between implementation of the BPoA/MSI and preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)

50.   This agenda item received presentations on the Green Economy within the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, delivered by Travis Sinckler, of Barbados; institutional strengthening for sustainable development: national and regional implications for the Caribbean, delivered by Leonie Barnaby of Jamaica; and a note on Financing for Development, forwarded by Elizabeth Thompson, and read to the meeting by Diane Quarless.

51.   Most of the discussion following these presentations focused on how TAC could best seize the opportunity of Rio+20 to advance a Caribbean sustainable development agenda.   The Chairman emphasized the need for Caribbean SIDS to take a balanced approach, under the three pillars of sustainable development, namely, economic, social and environmental development. He urged the meeting to protect and not negotiate away the gains already achieved by SIDS during the multilateral process since the 1992 UNCSD in Brazil.

52.   In ensuing discussions from the floor, Mr. Barnwell observed that one of the key deficiencies of Caribbean SIDS in preparing for Rio+20, had been the failure to take full advantage of resources and opportunities to promote the Caribbean case in the negotiations leading up to Rio+20. He urged TAC to ensure that this situation was remedied henceforth.

53.   Related to this, Mr. Sinkler reminded the meeting of the need to defend the provisions of the various multilateral agreements which had been signed since 1992. He observed that many of the issues in the subtext of the Rio+20 negotiations failed to recognize these provisions fully and, if Caribbean SIDS were not careful, they risked surrendering them in the Rio+20 process. This was especially important in defending the development of a green economy by SIDS.

54.   Ms. Barnaby asked the meeting to take cognizance of the difficulty which many Caribbean countries faced in participating in multilateral processes due to their limited human resources, and to consider the feasibility of a common Caribbean position on several issues going into the negotiations.

55.   Mr. Bispham expressed concern about the lack of coordination among Caribbean SIDS, going into Rio+20. He noted that over the past twenty years, the Caribbean subregion had discussed the same concerns innumerable times. He questioned the likelihood of the subregion finding solutions to these problems at Rio+20. He further observed that the development partners are becoming bolder in pursuing

unilateral decisions with respect to the development agenda for the Caribbean. For instance, under the Europe Union Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), reciprocity principles were returning, while special and differential treatment for SIDS was being sidelined. He also reminded the meeting that during the last two decades, macro-economic parameters for the subregion have worsened. He proposed that the Caribbean must go to the Rio+20 meeting with a clear picture of the meaning of the Green Economy to the Caribbean. He also pointed out the need for a clear perspective on institutional frameworks for development, as well as for a clear and resolute Caribbean position for the Rio+20 meeting.

56.   Mr. Springer, commenting in his personal capacity, lamented that the multilateral agenda had taken the Caribbean subregion down a development road that possibly it had not intended to go. He observed that bilateralism had served the subregion better in the past, and recommended strengthening bilateral positions as a basis for development. He suggested that the region's future did not lie in multilateral forums, but rather, in a return to reliance on Caribbean ingenuity and creativity to advance its own development. He suggested that the following imperatives should guide the Caribbean position on negotiations at Rio+20:

1. No rollback on the previous agenda negotiated by small island developing States.
2. Affirmation of the special but differentiated circumstances of SIDS.
3. Re-focusing of Caribbean regional priorities.
4. Enhanced role for research, science, and technology in the Caribbean development process.

57.   Further discussions ensued on the way Caribbean SIDS might forge a common position at Rio+20. Mr. Barnwell observed that CARICOM so far had received responses from only six countries with respect to the completion of their country programmes. He reminded the meeting of the economic challenge derived from the region being traditionally a producer of low-value-added primary commodities and an importer of large volumes of high-value-added secondary and tertiary goods and services.

58.   Other challenges included poor disaster mainstreaming into national policy and planning; smallness and openness of economies; consistently undervaluing environmental goods and services in economic planning; and absence of clear industrial strategy. There was need to revisit the Arthur Lewis model for development.

59.   Reflecting on the RCM/TAC relation to the Rio+20, Dr. Smith suggested that many of these meetings were effectively distractions from a country's focus on its own development. He asked the meeting to consider what the region's current development preoccupation might have been had it not been preparing for Rio+20 next month.

60.   Notwithstanding the doubts expressed about Rio+20, Mr Bispham pointed out that Rio+20 should serve as an opportunity for consolidation with respect to Caribbean development; it should provide a forum for advancing the idea of sustainable production and consumption, the opportunity to strengthen technical cooperation with respect to renewable energy, to promote intellectual property protection and natural heritage as a development paradigm, as well as the opportunity to explore the better use of the Exclusive Economic Zone of Caribbean SIDS.

61.   Mr. Harrilal observed the need for greater political will in the Caribbean to advance the SIDS development agenda.

62.   Mr. Springer pointed out that the RCM/TAC was ideally placed to be a bridge between Caribbean Member States and the donor community. He suggested that a Partnership for Development Conference be held in the Caribbean in the near future to explore possible topics such as sustainable energy, disaster

risk management, and land degradation, and that TAC should evolve into a monitoring and resource mobilization mechanism for promoting the development of Caribbean SIDS.

63.   The Director of ECLAC endorsed the idea of a Partnership for Development conference, and noted that Caribbean negotiators were exhausted. She reminded the meeting that, in spite of the concerns raised with respect to Rio+20, there would be practically no opportunity to alter the state of the negotiations' outcomes at this stage. She suggested that the Caribbean would now need to take the lessons learnt from the Rio+20 negotiation process and apply them to the MSI -2014 process. Finally, she reiterated the commitment of ECLAC to Caribbean development, and cited the Regional Statistics Project currently being formalized between ECLAC, CARICOM and CIDA as an example.

5.   Strengthening regional coordination to enhance BPoA/MSI implementation

64.   This presentation reaffirmed the structure of the RCM and outlined the achievements of TAC between 2007 and 2011. The discussion focused on the vision of the RCM towards 2013 and the selection of critical thematic areas to be supported. Finally, the meeting considered the coordinating role of the RCM for Caribbean SIDS in terms of the proposed establishment of a Sustainable Development Council and the upgrading of UNEP to a full agency of the United Nations, and queried its implications for the Committee on Sustainable Development (CSD) and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

65.   Discussions focused on the functions of national sustainable development councils. Ms. Barnaby opined that, in the absence of such councils, a mechanism for creating and sustaining linkages at the national and local levels needed to be developed, and that a forum, in the form of a newsletter, for disseminating information on SIDS was needed. She further indicated that Caribbean SIDS felt that the SIDS Unit in UNDESA and The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States was not representing Caribbean SIDS properly. In response,

66.   Mr. Springer suggested that this matter should be taken up with the Secretary General of the United Nations. Mr. Sinckler inquired whether ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, provided budgetary support to ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean.   Furthermore, he argued that strengthening the United Nations Environment Programme was not beneficial to the majority of Caribbean SIDS, since Cuba was the only country that had representation at its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.

67.   Mr. Sinckler also questioned the relationship between the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the small island developing States Technical Assistance Programme (SIDS/TAP), and the RCM. He felt that SIDS should have proper representation at the Rio+20 meeting and that the NFP mechanism was critical to the functioning of the RCM Secretariat.

68.   Ms. Eugene suggested that capacity-building should be treated as a core priority as well as a cross-cutting issue. Mr. Sinckler added that partnerships needed to be added to the list.

69.   Mr. Bispham indicated that a relationship should be maintained with countries that do not attend TAC meetings. He added that the RCM was not well funded and this was impacting coordination at the regional level.

70.   Mr. Phillips suggested that the ICT platform should be developed as a project proposal for funding by the donor community.

71.   Mr. Springer sought clarification on the duties of the RCM and its relationship with those of ECLAC. The meeting responded that indeed there was some overlap but that the coordinating role was separate. He suggested that the matter of institutional strengthening of the RCM needed to be addressed by ECLAC.

Annex I

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Annex II

List of documents

1. Report of the Meeting on Climate Change and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development: A Focus on the Caribbean. LC/CAR.L.342.

2. Copy of the draft interagency report for Rio+20- http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/content/documents/eclac.pdf.

3. Regional Implementation Matrix for the Monitoring of Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS. Preliminary review and update, May 2012.

4. RCM/TAC monitoring template. 11 May 2012.

5. The Regional Coordinating Mechanism for the implementation for the Mauritius Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. ECLAC, 2012.

6. Report of the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Meeting Preparatory to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Santiago, Chile, 7-9 September 2011.

7. Caribbean Community Submission to the UNCSD.

8. United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) Rio+20 Subregional Preparatory Meeting for the Caribbean, Georgetown, Guyana, 20 June 2011.

9. Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for Rio+20, 20 June 2011, Georgetown, Guyana.

10. Draft Summary of the Chair of the Rio+20 Small Island Development States Informal Ministerial Meeting, 9 May 2012, Barbados.