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ECLAC SUBREGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FOR THE CARIBBEAN

FOCUS

Newsletter of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)

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The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is one of five regional commissions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It was established in 1948 to support Latin American governments in the economic and social development of that region. Subsequently, in 1966, the Commission (ECLA, at that time) established the subregional headquarters for the Caribbean in Port of Spain to serve all countries of the insular Caribbean, as well as Belize, Guyana and Suriname, making it the largest United Nations body in the subregion.

At its sixteenth session in 1975, the Commission agreed to create the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) as a permanent subsidiary body, which would function within the ECLA structure to promote development cooperation among Caribbean countries. Secretariat services to the CDCC would be provided by the subregional headquarters for the Caribbean. Nine years later, the Commission's widened role was officially acknowledged when the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) modified its title to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Key Areas of Activity

The ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean (ECLAC/CDCC secretariat) functions as a subregional think-tank and facilitates increased contact and cooperation among its membership. Complementing the ECLAC/CDCC work programme framework, are the broader directives issued by the United Nations General Assembly when in session, which constitute the Organization's mandate. At present, the overarching articulation of this mandate is the Millennium Declaration, which outlines the Millennium Development Goals.

Towards meeting these objectives, the Secretariat conducts research; provides technical advice to governments, upon request; organizes intergovernmental and expert group meetings; helps to formulate and articulate a regional perspective within global forums; and introduces global concerns at the regional and subregional levels.

Areas of specialisation include trade, statistics, social development, science and technology, and sustainable development; while actual operational activities extend to economic and development planning, demography, economic surveys, assessment of the socio-economic impacts of natural disasters, climate change, data collection and analysis, training, and assistance with the management of national economies.

The ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean also functions as the Secretariat for coordinating the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The scope of ECLAC/CDCC activities is documented in the wide range of publications produced by the subregional headquarters in Port of Spain.

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Director's Desk

PREPARATIONS FOR THE 20 YEAR REVIEW OF THE BARBADOS PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (BPOA) AND THE 10 YEAR REVIEW OF THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (MSI)



The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) called for “the convening of a third international conference on small island developing states, recognising the importance of co-ordinated, balanced and integrated actions to address the sustainable development challenges facing small island developing states”.

This Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) is being organised in keeping with the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 67/207 and will be held in Apia, Samoa, in 2014. It will focus the world’s attention on a group of countries that remain a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities. The Conference will be organised according to United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/207 which calls for “a concise, focused, forward-looking and action-oriented political document.” SIDS have also expressed their desire to highlight successful partnerships and areas of innovation that support their development goals.

The General Assembly at the same session also adopted a decision to declare 2014, the International Year of SIDS.



Ms. Diane Quarless, Director, ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean

The decision on the preparatory process for the Conference was taken in the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on 21 December 2012, following consultations

in the Second Committee, which approved Resolution A/C.2/67/L.40. Preparations for this important Conference started with a robust, SIDS-directed national preparatory process that focused on the following:

- Progress made in implementation of the Mauritius Strategy
- Challenges in implementing the MSI;
- Priorities for the sustainable development of SIDS to be considered in the elaboration of the post-2015 UN development agenda; and
- New and emerging issues of relevance to SIDS.

National preparatory processes were led by Caribbean SIDS¹ and focused on building on previous reviews of the implementation of the BPoA and the MSI, national consultations for the UNCSD/Rio+20, ongoing post-2015 national consultations

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Paragraph 5 of the modality resolution adopted during the 67th session of the General Assembly, decided that the Conference should:

a. assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the BPoA and the MSI building on, inter alia, existing reports and relevant processes;

b. seek a renewed political commitment by all countries to effectively address the special needs and vulnerabilities of SIDS

by focusing on practical and pragmatic actions for the further implementation of the BPoA and MSI, inter alia, through mobilisation of resources and assistance for small island developing states;

c. identify new and emerging challenges and opportunities for the sustainable development of SIDS and means to address them including through

strengthening of collaborative partnerships between small island developing states and the international community; and

d. identify priorities for the sustainable development of SIDS for consideration, as appropriate, in the elaboration of the post-2015 UN development agenda.

¹Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.

PROGRESS OF CARIBBEAN STATES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BARBADOS PLAN OF ACTION AND THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY FOR THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BARBADOS PLAN OF ACTION



SIDS Inter-regional meeting Barbados

The world was first sensitised to the special case of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in June 1992 at the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) which coincided with the global introduction to the implementation of sustainable development policies.

The Rio Summit called for an international conference to address the sustainable development of SIDS. This Conference, the United Nations Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of SIDS (UNCSD) was convened in Barbados in 1994. The outcome of this meeting was the Barbados Plan of Action (BPoA) which outlined 14 priority areas for attention¹.

It was with the adoption of the JPOI on the global stage at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 Johannesburg, South Africa, that states that reaffirmed SIDS were a special case in the context of sustainable development because of their unique vulnerability.

The second SIDS conference was therefore convened in Mauritius in 2004 as mandated by the JPOI. This conference adopted The Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States (MSI) which introduced five additional thematic areas of attention for SIDS: graduation from least developed country status, trade, sustainable production and consumption, health, knowledge management and culture. The international community is now preparing to undertake its second comprehensive 10-year review of SIDS plan of action in Samoa in 2014.

Chapter 17.123 of Agenda 21 states:

Small island developing States, and islands supporting small communities are a special case both for environment and development. They are ecologically fragile and vulnerable. Their small size, limited resources, geographic dispersion and isolation from markets, place them at a disadvantage economically and prevent economies of scale.

Chapter VII in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI)

Small island developing States are a special case both for environment and development. Although they continue to take the lead in the path towards sustainable development in their countries, they are increasingly constrained by the interplay of adverse factors clearly underlined in Agenda 21, the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the decisions adopted at the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly.

a) Climate Change

Considering the history and tracking the progress made in the Caribbean region across the various thematic areas the following regional summary could be discerned. Firstly, in response to climate change related issues, many of the countries signed onto the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and submitted their first national communications, but few were able to follow through with their second national communication. Other developments included the establishment of the regional organization the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (5Cs) in 2001, with support from the Organization of American States (OAS).

b) Natural and Environmental Disasters

Countries created national disaster management agencies or committees charged with the responsibility of disaster response and preparedness. In some cases countries focused on specific disasters and developed Oil Spill Contingency Plans and Flood mitigation mechanisms. Others took a cross-sectoral or national approach such as Comprehensive Emergency Plan and National Hazardous Responses or strategies. Furthermore, states recognised the importance of strengthening the overall effect of their national efforts through the formulation of legislative infrastructure. On a regional level the Caribbean Disaster Emergency

¹ Climate change, natural and environmental disasters, management of wastes, coastal and marine resources, freshwater resources, land resources, energy resources, tourism resources, biodiversity resources, national institutions and administrative capacity, regional institutions and technical cooperation, transport and communication, science and technology and human resource development, capacity building, institutional development at the national, regional and international levels, cooperation in the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, trade and economic diversification and finance.



Response Agency (CDERA; now renamed the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency [CDEMA]) provided support to member states in defining their national strategies or policies.

c) The Management of Waste

There were areas that still experienced some level of fragmentation throughout the region. Although there was existing legislation governing waste management, this needed reinforcement or revision. Provisions were made to address hazardous waste in specific countries such as Barbados, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. With respect to legislation, in some cases health legislation governed waste management issues, whereas others formulated solid waste management legislation. The successful implementation of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States' (OECS) Solid and Liquid Generated Waste Management Project is worthy of note. This project was responsible for improving waste management practice at the sub-regional level and led to significant reform through the establishment of Solid Waste Management Authorities and landfill upgrades.

d) Water Sanitation/Freshwater Resources

With respect to the status of water sanitation/freshwater resources, in some cases, it was deemed necessary to protect freshwater resources through national programmes inclusive of public education programmes, assessment of freshwater resources, and developing a GIS database to assist in the management of these resources. On the other hand in water constrained countries desalination was an option explored. Generally, there were water policies that guided the management of this resource with special focus on addressing water shortages in specific cases. Even more specifically there was some interest in pursuing integrated water resources management as the region

attempted to address such issues more holistically.

The significant development in the area of coastal and marine resources in the Caribbean is in the widespread development of national coastal zone management units. These oversee the implementation of the integrated coastal zone management strategies of Caribbean states. Many are also engaged in fishery management strategies.

e) Land Resources and Terrestrial Biodiversity

Land use conflict was once common in SIDS, because of limited land resources and high demand for development. Most countries initiated a response through comprehensive land/natural resources management plans. Furthermore, as part of the conservation and preservation thrust, some islands sought to strengthen their environmental impact assessment legislation and requirements, especially with respect to physical development. For example, Belize, Guyana and Suriname developed forestry policies.

f) Energy

In an attempt to reduce the high costs associated with imported energy Caribbean SIDS explored the viability of pursuing renewable energy, sustainable energy, energy efficiency and cleaner energy policies/strategies. Barbados and Jamaica set specific energy targets. Barbados proposes to increase the use of renewable energy from 15% to 30% and has successfully implemented solar water heaters in homes. Jamaica set a target to reduce its Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions by 6% below 1990 levels. This country diversified its energy mix through its commitment to the development and use of renewable energy sources. Guyana focused on hydro power, wind and biofuels, while Suriname sought to utilise mineral oil, hydro power, biomass and solar energy. Jamaica also explored wind, biofuels and solar water heating

(government buildings), Dominica harnessed hydro power and Saint Lucia is pursuing strategies to increase energy efficiency.

g) Tourism

It was also clear that member states had given significant attention to the development of more specialized tourism products, taking advantage of their natural, historical and cultural attractions and available resources. For example Barbados has proclaimed itself the "Green Leader" of the region; Guyana is focusing on heritage, nature and community-based tourism; Jamaica's Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism embraces heritage and community tourism, Saint Lucia has embarked on carnival, sports, heritage and cultural tourism and St Kitts and Nevis have opted to actively protect and preserve their natural resources. Trinidad and Tobago reviewed its Tourism Policy and engaged communities to refine the historical and cultural components of their tourism product.

h) Governance

In implementation of the BPOA/MSI, some common gaps emerged, such as the need for more effective institutional systems, the need to address fragmented management systems for stronger enabling legislation, and for comprehensive attention to the regularization of standards. Constraints included data and statistical deficiencies and inadequate human, technical, physical and financial resources. The region also expressed the importance of sustainable energy, renewable energy initiatives, energy efficiency, integrated management systems, integrated policies, mainstreaming sustainable development issues into development plans, encouraging investment in Caribbean SIDS, and promoting education and capacity enhancement in successfully moving towards sustainable development. ■

REGIONAL PREPARATIONS



Dillon Alleyne, ECLAC

Regional preparations followed national consultations and took the form of meetings in each of the SIDS regions. The regional preparatory meeting was structured to address some common objectives, as defined by Member States in General Assembly resolution A/RES/67/207. Each region produced a regional synthesis report which was presented at each of the regional preparatory meetings. The Caribbean meeting was convened in Kingston, Jamaica from 2 – 4 July 2013 and provided the opportunity for SIDS to gather and discuss regional priorities and concerns identified in the course of the national consultations. The challenge faced by Caribbean SIDS was to make the conference a relevant action-driven agenda which realises tangible benefits for Caribbean environments, societies and economies.

Approximately 100 participants, including representatives of Caribbean governments, United Nations and regional agencies and organizations, and Major Groups (representatives of youth, farmers and environmentalists) attended the three-day session. Government delegates met to identify priorities for continued action in respect of the SIDS agenda. These negotiations resulted in the adoption of the 44-paragraph “Kingston Outcome of the Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States”. The Kingston Outcome represented the Caribbean regional position at the Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting that was held in Barbados from 26-28 August 2013.

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regional position at the Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting that was held in Barbados from 26-28 August 2013.

OUTCOMES OF THE MEETING

Member states noted that while Caribbean SIDS have progressed in the areas of gender, health, education and the environment they still continue to face significant challenges in their efforts to achieve sustainable development. It was suggested that these challenges result in large part from unfulfilled commitments on the part of most developed countries in support of implementation of the BPoA through the provision of financial

resources, technology transfer and assistance for capacity building.

Climate change was adjudged one of the greatest challenges experienced in the region more so because of the vulnerability of island and coastal states to the adverse effects of sea level rise and to the impacts of natural disasters. The challenge posed by climate change to the tourism industry which in most Caribbean states is the principal contributor to employment, foreign exchange and economic growth, was of particular concern.

Much concern was expressed at the overall decline in Official Development Assistance to the Caribbean due mainly to

The outcome document highlighted the increased support required by Caribbean SIDS to enable effective implementation of Multilateral Environment Agreements and other agreements and programmes related to coastal and marine resources, freshwater resources, land resources, energy resources, tourism resources, biodiversity resources, climate change, natural disasters and waste management. In this regard, support for strengthening capacity building initiatives including through education at all levels and skills training in order to foster sustainable development and, where applicable, the establishment and strengthening of centres of excellence for training and applied research within existing national and regional institutions.

the classification of most countries in the region as middle, upper-middle, or high income countries. Such classification has rendered them ineligible for concessionary and development financing that could support implementation of the BPOA and MSI. Furthermore, the Caribbean has continued to lament the use of Gross Domestic Product as an effective measure of overall development since it fails to reflect comprehensively the development challenges faced by SIDS particularly those resulting from their economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities.

The continuing need for social integration policies to reduce inequalities and promote access to basic social services including education and health care was highlighted as an important gap in implementation of the BPOA and the MSI. The elimination of all forms of discrimination and the need for increased participation and integration into the development process, of vulnerable groups, particularly young people, older persons and persons with disabilities was also underscored.

Crime and violence were identified as negatively impacting the sustainable development of Caribbean SIDS. Associated with these are the high rates of unemployment, particularly for women and youth, as well as the migration of skilled labour and the resulting brain drain, that undermines the efforts of Caribbean SIDS to achieve sustainable development. Associated with this was the request for increased support for programmes geared towards security for citizens and to address crime and violence especially involving our youths.

Looking forward, Caribbean states addressed mechanisms and strategies to strengthen the implementation framework for the SIDS agenda. They called for one that takes into account the countries' national circumstances, as well as regional perspectives. The need for continued financing for sustainable development was highlighted as an important strategy. Much attention was given to capitalization of the Caribbean Sustainability Fund¹ and the Green Climate Fund. Of particular importance is the establishment of the

The increasing prevalence of noncommunicable diseases constitute a major challenge to sustainable development in the twenty first century. Caribbean SIDS recognised the importance of strengthened health systems for the provision of equitable, universal coverage as well as preventative treatment, care, and support in the treatment of non-communicable diseases.

Climate Technology Centre and Network to enhance technology cooperation and transfer to developing countries. There was also a strong call for equal attention to be given to all dimensions of sustainable development; the environmental, economic and social. Caribbean SIDS also expressed the need for greater support from the UN system in the implementation of the BPOA and MSI.

States recommended the establishment of a dedicated technology transfer facilitation mechanism and financing strategy to be implemented with the support of United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes to ensure that environmentally sound and appropriate technologies are developed in SIDS. This proposal was in keeping with ongoing Rio+20 follow-up processes in support of sustainable development project implementation. Caribbean SIDS also called for an integrated approach to the Rio+20 processes and activities within the framework of the post-2015 development agenda.

In the area of research and development, Caribbean SIDS agreed that investment in science, technology and innovation for sustainable development in the subregion, in accordance with national interests and priorities was needed.

The importance of strengthened national statistical and information systems, including data collection and management and analytical capabilities for decision-making, monitoring and evaluation was highlighted. The call for the support of the international community in this regard was therefore renewed.

There was consensus on the need to build resilience to reduce risks associated with natural disasters and for special consideration to be given to financing

for early warning systems in order to reduce economic and social losses, inclusive of human life, and for recovery, reconstruction, and rehabilitation. Associated with this was the need to strengthen insurance mechanisms and to support national efforts in improving community empowerment by assisting vulnerable groups to prepare for, to adapt to and mitigate their own susceptibilities.

With respect to the debt burden, Caribbean SIDS requested increased flexibility with respect to the Debt Sustainability Framework and the eligibility for debt relief. In this regard, they called for expansion of concessionary financing to small, indebted, middle income countries to mitigate the significant sustainable development challenges that have been exacerbated by the ongoing crisis and which have been measured using GDP.

Caribbean SIDS are cognisant of the abolishment of the Commission for Sustainable Development and its replacement, the High Level Political Forum. They expressed the desire that SIDS issues be highlighted on that agenda so that they will be effectively addressed.

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¹ http://www.pnuma.org/sids_ing/documents/National%20Reports/Regional%20Sustainability%20Fund%20_last%20version_.pdf

INTERREGIONAL PREPARATIONS



Representatives of the SIDS inter-regional Barbados 2013

The interregional meeting was convened in Barbados from 26 – 28 August 2013. Preceding this, ECLAC convened a Caribbean Regional Strategic Consultation on 25 August 2013, the objective of which was to provide a forum whereby Caribbean experts could discuss the Caribbean Regional Synthesis Report with a view to addressing the means and ways of implementation of the BPoA and MSI.

a. Caribbean Regional Strategic Consultation

This meeting highlighted the need for developing a long term vision for implementation of the BPoA and MSI, which will require strengthening of regional coordination among Caribbean countries. As such implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and the Economy is necessary to pursue the sustainable development agenda and the forging of new relationships with new development partners rather than pursuing the historical relationships was important in the quest for new avenues for implementation of the BPoA and the MSI. In this regard, the SIDS Technical Assistance Programme (SIDSTAP) needs to be promoted and SIDSNet needs to be fully operationalised. Also development of a platform to promote information and communication technology was needed.

Mainstreaming sustainable development across ministries at the national level and grafting of the SIDS agenda to the post-2015 agenda were also seen as important. In this regard, it was deemed necessary that Caribbean SIDS define their needs and focus on realistic achievements in the post-2015 agenda and to determine what space they can occupy in the new reform structure. It was thought that the institutional aspect of sustainable development required attention and that is should be pursued in its three dimensions, namely social, economic and environmental while granting special consideration to the special vulnerabilities

of Caribbean SIDS within the context of building resilience. Attention to development of a strategy to address the blue and green economy was seen as an important area.

The meeting recommended the forming of a small group comprising representatives and some member States be established to address actions to be taken by Caribbean SIDS between this meeting and the Third International Conference on SIDS in 2014.

b. The interregional meeting

This meeting brought together representatives of the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Seas, Caribbean and Pacific SIDS. It was expected that a political declaration as well as an outcome document would be produced. The political declaration reaffirmed the validity of the BPoA and MSI and the special case of SIDS in terms of their vulnerabilities to economic, social and environmental shocks among which climate change was deemed the greatest challenge. Focus on the health of ocean resources was seen to be important as well as the need for strengthened cooperation and partnership as the national, regional and international levels.

The declaration stated the commitment of SIDS to ensuring a successful outcome from the Third International Conference on SIDS that will be held in Samoa in 2014 and articulated the need for a renewed political commitment by all countries to effectively address the special needs and vulnerabilities of SIDS through mobilisation of resources and assistance for SIDS. It also focused on the new and emerging challenges, strengthening of collaborative partnerships and the

identification of priorities for SIDS in the post-2015 agenda.

SIDS also expressed their appreciation to international and regional partners for their contribution to the preparatory process. They regarded the Barbados outcome document as providing a clear and focused roadmap that is practical, achievable and readily implementable and emphasised the urgent need for new additional and predictable financial resources to respond effectively to sustainable development challenges. The declaration also articulated the value of increased inter- and intra- regional cooperation among SIDS and welcomed 2014 as the International Year of SIDS.

The Barbados outcome document focuses on the following:

- Reaffirmation of their commitment to all previous declarations and agreements with respect to SIDS, their special circumstances and called for support from their partners in pursuit of their sustainable development goals;
- Their common shared vision and commitment to collective action and a post-2015 development agenda that includes an institutional framework that takes into account the particular concerns and priorities of SIDS. This vision was summarised in short as 'nothing about us without us';
- Acknowledgement of the progress made by SIDS in implementation of the BPoA and MSI but noting that this progress has been uneven and requires continued effort and support by development partners;

(continued on page 10) ►

VULNERABILITY OF SIDS



The vulnerability of small states first received attention in global discourse during the mid 1970's as the Commonwealth met to consider the precarious circumstances of newly emerging independent nations in the post war era. Such vulnerability was seen to be closely linked to their smallness in terms of physical size or population, limited natural and human resource base, high level of dependence on trade, and lack of capacity to influence a range of external factors which affected small countries. These issues were subsequently articulated in the BPoA.

Over the past two decades, the issue of vulnerability and small island States has received even further attention, as the world has come to accept the broader challenges of climate change and sea-level rise, and their particular threat to SIDS.

1. Economic vulnerability

Briguglio (1995) in examining vulnerability in SIDS identified five special disadvantages which limited their development. Among these, small size and insularity and remoteness were seen to be the main factors which rendered economic vulnerability to SIDS countries. Small size posed a critical economic limitation for SIDS since it imposed constraints both in terms of natural and human resources; options for intersectoral development; limited domestic markets; and a high dependence on a narrow range of exports. Small size also renders SIDS economies with high dependence on trade in order to sustain both production and consumption activities. More importantly, from the standpoint of external influence, high trade dependence also puts SIDS economies in the position of international price takers, since with extremely small global market shares, they are unable to influence price.

2. Environmental vulnerability

The environmental vulnerability of SIDS manifests itself through natural vulnerability which derives from the fact that many small islands are prone to natural disasters which severely impact the natural environment. Many small islands are located in geographic regions with high frequency of hurricanes and

cyclones, volcanoes, earthquakes, and extreme rainfall which leads to flooding and landslides. Over the past decade for instance, there has been an increased frequency of hurricanes and tropical storms within the Caribbean which has resulted in increased material damage and loss of life. The case of Hurricane Ivan in 2004 is instructive, as it brought severe physical and economic impacts to several Caribbean countries. Further, the 2010 earthquake in Haiti resulted in the largest single catastrophic loss of life in the sub-region in memory, with more than 200,000 deaths.

3. Social vulnerability

As noted in Briguglio (2003), Springer and others (2002) define social vulnerability as "the extent to which the social structure of a community or society is exposed to shock or stress brought about by economic strife, environmental changes, government policies or internal events and forces resulting from a number of factors". Researchers such as St. Bernard (2002) affirm social vulnerability to be related to social conditions such as the state of education and health care, and the existing mechanisms for fostering communications and consensus building in the society. In the specific case of SIDS, limited resources may be seen to be a driver of increased social vulnerability, particularly since this can lead to enhanced competition among social groups. Moreover, the openness of SIDS to the dynamics of the global economy can also add to social vulnerability where global changes result in increased domestic unemployment or the transfer of wealth, power and/or influence from one group in the society to another.

Conclusion

In discussing vulnerability of SIDS, it is important to make a clear distinction between vulnerability and economic performance. Indeed, many Caribbean SIDS have performed creditably in terms of economic parameters over the past two decades, to the extent that most are now categorized as middle income economies. Such classification is based on relatively strong growth of the services economy, and strong performance in developing public infrastructure and social services. Vulnerability however relates more to the level of risk which SIDS countries face in sustaining such developments, as well as the capacity to mitigate external threats, and to recover from shocks whether these are economic, natural or social. In this regard, many Caribbean SIDS remain continually vulnerable, a factor that should be taken into account in assessing their economic and social progress over the medium to long term. ■

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INTERREGIONAL PREPARATIONS

- The challenges faced by SIDS in implementation of the BPoA and MSI and the gaps that still exist in meeting their commitments. These were in the thematic areas of energy, climate change and land degradation.
- The enabling environment in terms of availability of financial

resources, capacity, integration of the BPoA and MSI into national sustainable development plans, trade, middle income status, indicators of development, unemployment, citizen security and transboundary issues were also highlighted;

- New and emerging issues such as non-communicable diseases, pursuit of the green economy and information and communication technologies for development;
- Practical and pragmatic actions for addressing these new and emerging

issues include building of resilience and partnerships, and the important role of the international community in supporting their implementation efforts;

- Their priorities for the post-2015 agenda include special consideration of the uniqueness and vulnerabilities of SIDS, a people-centred approach and development of appropriate indicators to measure progress. Emphasis was placed on the importance of oceans and the need to address oceans governance in formulation of the sustainable development goals. ■

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Director's Desk

PREPARATIONS FOR THE 20 YEAR REVIEW OF THE BARBADOS PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (BPOA) AND THE 10 YEAR REVIEW OF THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (MSI)

and other relevant ongoing national and regional sustainable development processes of relevance to SIDS. The meeting sought to seek a renewed political commitment for implementation of the BPoA and the MSI.

These national preparations took the form of consultations that were arranged by respective governments in close collaboration with regional intergovernmental organizations and were supported by DESA and UNDP who mobilized UN Country Teams. Utilising this modality afforded the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders from the public and private sectors and civil society and allowed for open expression of a wide range of views on the country's performance in achieving the thematic areas of the BPoA and the MSI.

Background papers were prepared and circulated to participants so as to provide information that facilitated a discussion.

The outcomes of available national preparatory processes within the Caribbean were synthesized as a background discussion paper for the regional meeting. This regional synthesis report also considered a report of the Caribbean Forum that focused on shaping a development agenda for the Caribbean², existing reports that were prepared for the Rio+20 Conference as well as the BPoA +10 and the MSI+5.

These national preparations informed a regional meeting and were followed by an inter-regional preparatory meeting that took place from 26-28 August 2013 in Barbados.

With completion of the national, regional and inter-regional preparations the global process will begin in early 2014, bringing together the full range of stakeholders, namely Member States, civil society, private sector representatives as well as regional organisations. As these partners add their voices to those of the SIDS, the result will be a constructive and meaningful Conference advancing the cause of sustainable development in SIDS, strengthening partnerships, and contributing to the wider dialogue on a sustainable future for all. The global intergovernmental preparatory process will be launched in January 2014. The effectiveness of the 3rd International Conference on SIDS will depend first and foremost on national level preparations and then the regional and inter-regional processes. ■

Yours in Focus,
Diane

Substantive preparations for the regional meetings were organised as follows:

Symposium on Understanding Ecological and Social Resilience in Island Systems
9 Apr 2013 - 11 Apr 2013. New York

Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Oceans, Seas and Sustainable Development: Implementation and follow-up to Rio+20
18 Apr 2013 - 19 Apr 2013
UN Headquarters, New York

EGM on SIDS and Post-2015 Development Agenda 23 Apr 2013 - 24 Apr 2013
UN Headquarters, New York

EGM on Marine Science & Technology for SIDS
14 May 2013 - 15 May 2013
Geneva, Switzerland

EGM on Foresight and SIDS: Identifying emerging sustainable development issues from the perspective of SIDS
14 May 2013 - 16 May 2013
World Monitoring Institute, Cambridge, UK

Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction
21 May 2013 - 21 May 2013
Geneva, Switzerland

²Vasanth Chase, Norma Cherry-Fevrier, Winston Moore, Luvette Louisy, Maxine Harris, Elizabeth Thompson, Sheila Stuart, Candice Gonzales, Charmaine Gomes, Caribbean forum: shaping a sustainable development agenda to address the Caribbean reality in the twenty-first century, LC/CAR/L.400 Rev 1, 2013. Port of Spain.



Regional SIDS prep meeting Jamaica 2013

► (continued from page 7)

REGIONAL PREPARATIONS

Caribbean SIDS welcomed the initiative of the UN Secretary General and the Barbados Declaration on Achieving Sustainable Energy for All. In so doing, they agreed on the need for assessment and identification of renewable energy technologies as well as fostering energy efficiency and conservation, and the provision of special funding, technical assistance and capacity building in the support of utilisation of such technologies.

They also emphasised the importance of revitalizing sustainable agriculture and rural development in SIDS within the context of efforts to eradicate poverty and promote food and nutrition security. In this regard, they agreed that dedicated financial resources and technological support for the development of a Caribbean SIDS platform on sustainable Consumption and Production to be

served by Caribbean SIDS, upon request should be provided, and this should take into account national and regional priorities, strategies, legislation and plans to enable the implementation of the 10 Year Framework Programme.

A people-centred and focused approach to poverty eradication was agreed to by Caribbean SIDS, acknowledging that challenges remain in this area. It was also recognised that policies should, inter alia, ensure that people living in poverty have access to the basic services required to ensure a healthy standard of living and are involved in the decision-making process.

In the area of health, they agreed that health systems need to be strengthened in addressing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and communicable diseases through increased financing, recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce, through improved distribution of, and access to, safe, affordable, effective and

quality medicines, vaccines and medical technology, and through improving health infrastructure. Special focus will be placed on the impact on the poor, the elderly and persons with disabilities in enhancing their capabilities to protect themselves. Caribbean SIDS also requested support for their efforts in implementing the UN Political Declaration for the Prevention and Control of NCDs at the regional and national levels. ■

LIST of Recent ECLAC Documents and Publications

Listed by Symbol Number, Date and Title

| | | | |
|--|--------------------|--|------------------|
| <p>No. L.413 Policy Brief: Knowledge management: informing decisions to realise good governance</p> | <p>August 2013</p> | <p>No. L.407 Implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action in the Caribbean: Evaluating progress and renewing commitment</p> | <p>July 2013</p> |
| <p>No. L.412 Report of the expert group meeting on yachting and marina services in the Caribbean</p> | <p>July 2013</p> | <p>No. L.405 Policy brief: An assessment of the economic and social impacts of climate change on the tourism sector in the Caribbean</p> | <p>June 2013</p> |
| <p>No. L.411 Caribbean Development Report: Macroeconomic policy for structural transformation and social protection in small states</p> | <p>July 2013</p> | <p>No. L.404r The carbon footprint of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean: Moving towards a climate neutral strategy</p> | <p>June 2013</p> |
| <p>No. L.410 Preliminary overview of the economies of the Caribbean 2012-2013</p> | <p>August 2013</p> | <p>No. L.408 Report of the Caribbean Forum: shaping a sustainable development agenda to address the Caribbean reality in the twenty-first century</p> | <p>May 2013</p> |

UPCOMING EVENTS

4th QUARTER 2013

14 - 16 October, 2013

Training programme on innovative fiscal and regulatory incentives for energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives. Georgetown, Guyana.

15 - 18 October, 2013

Twelfth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

14 November, 2013

Launch of the Social Panorama of Latin America. Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

26 - 28 November, 2013

Regional training course on the development of gender indicators and the collection of data on gender. Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

26 - 28 November, 2013

Training programme on innovative fiscal and regulatory incentives for energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives. Kingston, Jamaica.

5 December, 2013

Launch of the Social Panorama of Latin America. Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

11 December, 2013

Launch of the Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean. Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.



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ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

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