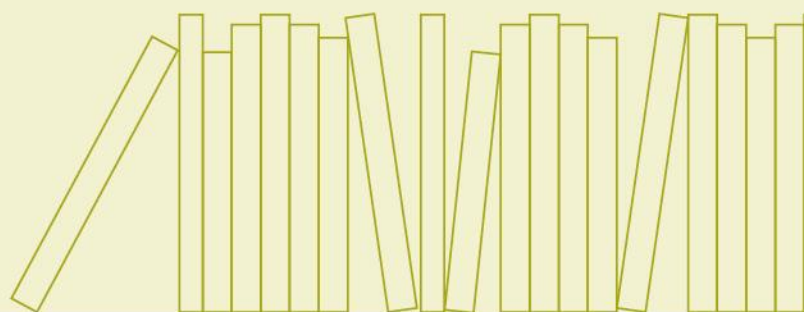


Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

# ECLAC SUBREGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FOR THE CARIBBEAN



## Report of the regional workshop on repositioning of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee Regional Coordinating Mechanism as the Caribbean Small Island Developing States mechanism for sustainable development



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Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean  
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

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Regional workshop on repositioning of the Caribbean Development  
and Cooperation Committee Regional Coordinating Mechanism  
as the Caribbean Small Island Developing States mechanism  
for sustainable development  
Port of Spain, 17–18 September 2019

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**REPORT OF REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON REPOSITIONING OF THE  
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE  
REGIONAL COORDINATING MECHANISM AS THE CARIBBEAN  
SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES MECHANISM  
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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## **A. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

1. Key recommendations and conclusions on the repositioning of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee Regional Coordinating Mechanism (CDCC-RCM) as the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) mechanism for sustainable development are as follows:

- The CDCC- RCM objectives were recognized as relevant in providing a regional platform to prioritize and accelerate the implementation of the Caribbean SIDS sustainable development agendas.
- The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the CDCC-RCM should continue to provide guidance to decision makers on the identification and development of appropriate policy instruments to advance sustainable development in the Caribbean as well as the promotions of the development of accelerators such as fostering public-private sector partnerships.
- That the CDCC-RCM should serve as a forum to advocate SIDS priorities for sustainable development.
- The CDCC-RCM should also serve as the Caribbean SIDS sustainable development think-tank
- To fulfill its functions in effectively addressing the national and regional priorities for sustainable development, the meeting agreed that the scope of function and operations of the CDCC-RCM should be expanded. This would also require restructuring of its memberships to accommodate the range of issues to be addressed by the CDCC-RCM. The meeting reiterated that the CDCC-RCM should have a Secretariat that was adequately resources both institutionally and financially and that a proposal for a restructured and repositioned CDCC-RCM should be presented for the consideration and approval of the CDCC
- In keeping with functions of the CDCC-RCM national focal point (CDCC-RCM-NFP), it was understood that the priorities for sustainable development should be country owned and led. This bottom-up approach should also have coherences with other platforms addressing the SIDS sustainable development agendas and initiatives, in particular that of the 2030 Agenda. In this regard, the interfacing functions of the Office of High Representation of Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States-National Focal Point (OHRLLS-NFP) will have to be addressed and streamlined with that of the CDCC-RCM-NFP.
- The designated CDCC-RCM-NFP for each country should be an institution and not an individual. This approach should facilitate more structured consultation across sectors at the national level and ensure greater continuity. It can also support more effective collaboration with developmental partners
- A more coherent approach to the monitoring and management of all related sustainable development agenda should also reduce the implementation, monitoring, reporting burdens across the SIDS sustainable development agendas.

## **B. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK**

### **1. Place and date**

2. The Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean subregional headquarters for the Caribbean (ECLAC) convened a workshop on the Regional workshop on repositioning of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee – Regional Coordinating Mechanism as the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) mechanism for sustainable development to review a study titled “Proposal for a revitalized Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee – Regional

Coordinating Mechanism for Sustainable Development (CDCC-RCM). The workshop took place at its offices, in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, on 25 July 2019.

## **2. Attendance**

3. There were nineteen persons in attendance including representatives from the following countries and organizations: Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, Guyana, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), Caribbean Natural Resource Institute (CANARI), Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN), Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC), Organizations of American States (OAS), other United Nations agencies and one independent Caribbean SIDS resource person.

## **3. Concept of the workshop**

4. The Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee - Regional Coordination Mechanism (CDCC-RCM) was established to promote and accelerate the effective implementation of the SIDS programme of action for sustainable development through enhanced regional engagement by the sharing of information and experiences among member countries; and by shaping common positions and strategies on Caribbean SIDS sustainable development priorities. In light of the firm commitment of the Caribbean countries to the implementation of Agenda 2030, ECLAC made recommendations for a repositioned and revitalized CDCC-RCM. This proposed new mechanism would work to provide broad support for the implementation of both the Agenda 2030 and the SIDS sustainable development agenda. It was envisaged that the revised architecture and mandate of the CDCC-RCM will ensure that SIDS specific priorities are entrenched and consistently addressed within the national and regional sustainable development platforms of relevance to the Caribbean.

5. In this regard, the workshop was designed to provide an opportunity for in-depth exchange of ideas on the best strategy for operationalization of this Mechanism so that it provided the most effective support to Member States facilitating an integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SIDS Sustainable Development Agenda. Issues of membership, structure, mandate, indicative work plan and financing were addressed including the exploration of opportunities for SIDS-South, and triangular cooperation as well as collaboration with developmental partners and the wider UN system.<sup>1</sup>

## **4. Agenda**

6. The meeting agenda was as follows:

1. On-site/ online registration
2. Security briefing for on-site participants
3. Agenda item 1: Welcome, instructions
4. Agenda item 2: Revisiting the structure and functioning of the CDCC-RCM
5. Agenda item 3: International development in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway in coherence with the 2030 Agenda – implication for the CDCC-RCM

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<sup>1</sup> The proposed new structure and functioning of the repositioned CDCC-RCM will also take into consideration the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) established SIDS National Focal Point (NFP)

6. Agenda item 4: Towards integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SIDS Sustainable Development agenda through a revitalized and repositioned CDCC-RCM – ideas and opportunities
7. Working groups sessions
8. Reports and discussions for working groups
9. Resourcing the CDCC-RCM
10. Next steps: indicative work plan of the Repositioned CDCC-RCM (2020–2021) including triangular cooperation as well as collaboration with development partners and the wider United Nations system.

## **C. REPORTING OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

### **1. Opening of the workshop**

7. The Sustainable Development Officer of the Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean welcomed all participants and delivered welcoming remarks on behalf of the Director of the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean. In her address, the functions and purpose the Regional Coordinating Mechanism - Caribbean Development Cooperation Committee (RCM-CDCC) as a platform that promotes and supports synergistic and integrated approaches to sustainable development nationally and regionally were reiterated. She underscored that the CDCC-RCM (and its organs) were designed to advance Caribbean SIDS sustainable development priorities and to serve as a Caribbean regional resource to assist in shaping common positions and strategies towards sustainable development implementation. She therefore highlighted the need for a coordination platform supporting a holistic approach to implementation of the SIDS sustainable development agenda.

8. The Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations and Chairperson of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) in her address to the workshop, highlighted the urgency of the climate change crisis and the stark impacts its effects have on all SIDS, especially those of the Caribbean. She reminded participants of the most recent, devastating impact of Hurrian Dorian on the Bahamas and lamented the fact that there was still no agreement to specifically address SIDS as a special case for sustainable development. She drew attention to the continuing concern that because most Caribbean SIDS were classified as middle-income countries, concessionary aid was near impossible to secure and resources for post disaster reconstruction were often borrowed at international market rates. Specific to the SAMOA Pathway, she recalled that its 2018 midterm highlighted the need for a more tailored approach when addressing the SIDS sustainable development priorities. In particular, she drew attention to the San Pedro Declaration which detailed the priorities for the Caribbean subregion for the ensuing 5-years. In supporting this Caribbean SIDS 5-year road map, she suggested that the CDCC-RCM could be suitably placed to identify strategic partnerships for the implementation of the subregion sustainable development priorities, in the monitoring and assessment of progress and as a knowledge management platform. In closing, the Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations, detailed the significance of having the SIDS sustainable development priorities addressed during the current 74<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly. She also urged that the subjects of the SIDS be raised in all relevant sessions of the UNGA 74 and including in debates on Climate Change, Financing for Development and the 2030 Agenda.

9. The Permanent Secretary (Ag.), Department of Sustainable Development, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology of Saint Lucia, shared greetings from her country as the incumbent chair of CDCC. Recognition was given to the workshop as essential in guiding and shaping the CDCC-RCM and in support for the implementation of both the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda. Further, she highlighted the importance that Caribbean nations not lose sight of the SIDS sustainable development agenda. She stressed that the SIDS agenda had to be etched onto the international stage. She also expressed the need to consider how the reporting burdens on member countries could be reduced. She also spoke to SIDS vulnerabilities, underscoring the need to continue the advocacy to ensure that designation the SIDS, as a special case for sustainable development was effectively acknowledged. In closing, the Permanent Secretary (Ag.) expressed on behalf of the CDCC Chair, sympathy to the people and Government of the Bahamas.

10. The Director of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean acknowledged colleagues present, both long-standing SIDS advocates for the region and welcomed the new generation to the “fight”. She framed the historical background in which the SIDS platform was negotiated and created. Across all sustainable developmental agendas, the SIDS objectives and purpose was unique in its nature and time. She highlighted the importance of the UNGA 74 including the Climate Change Summit, Agenda 2030, Financing for Development, and the SAMOA Pathway High-level midterm review and reiterated the call for keeping the SIDS agenda relevant and current. The Director recommended that SIDS messages be articulated in non-traditional SIDS forum. She acknowledged that the SIDS countries were expected to fulfil various mandates with limited capacity noting that the CDCC-RCM was created to provide support in the implementation of this unique SIDS Agenda. She also pointed to the CDCC-RCM’s potential to articulate regional positions at the global level, while simultaneously coordinating the issues on the ground at the local level. In this regard, she placed several questions to be addressed in the workshop including: How can the repositioned CDCC-RCM be framed in the context of the ECLAC’s-Forum of Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development and within the United Nations system? How can the OHRLLS-NFP be aligned to the CDCC-RCM? She emphasized that the United Nations country teams should be involved in this process, focused at the national level on implementation of the United Nations Multi-country Sustainable Development Framework (MSDF). In addressing some of the deficiencies in the current functioning of the CDCC-RCM, the Director referred to the passing of the late Mr. Navin Chandarpal, who had for many years served as CDCC-RCM chair. His passing revealed the absence of procedures for succession planning and the challenges this presented. This therefore highlighted the need to revisit the operational procedures of the CDCC-RCM for continuity and further functionality. Some other imperatives going forward included: fostering a stronger participatory approach, the infusion of strong leaders, involvement of all relevant agencies, institutions and civil society. She expressed her expectations that over the next two days these issues would be fully ventilated thereby giving direction for the CDCC-RCM that more effectively serves the broad sustainable development agenda of the Caribbean SIDS.

11. The ECLAC Sustainable Development Officer, gave a synopsis of the agenda and, consistent with the objectives of the workshop, encouraged open and frank interventions. Inviting participants to make opening comments on the purposed objectives of the meeting, the following interventions were noted:

- a. The Technical Adviser, Caribbean Policy Development (CPDC) suggested that the CDCC-RCM mechanism should be linked to the global sustainable development discourse. He also emphasized that Caribbean Region leaders and advocates should ensure that the SIDS programme be strategically positioned at key international forums. He also noted that the
- b. SIDS agenda should be at the high level and global decision-making tables.
- c. The Director of ECLAC added that the institutionalization of the AOSIS was critical. She further informed the meeting that ECLAC’s programme was transitioning from a biannual to an annual programme. Therefore, the products and outputs for the CDCC-RCM to be



delivered in this period should be impactful, provide policy guidance and advocacy. She announced for 2020 the creation of a new ECLAC output: The Caribbean in Brief. The product would serve specifically as a strategic analysis of global issues of relevance to the Caribbean. This publication is intended to assist in articulated a Caribbean SIDS response to issues, using data and analysis to help make the case for the sub-region on key themes. She also advised that the Executive Secretary of ECLAC would be the keynote speaker at the SIDS summit to review the SAMOA Pathway during the UNGA 74, delivering remarks of the Challenges of SIDS.

- d. The Chair of the Board of Directors, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), called for the popularization of SIDS messaging to help Caribbean people link the concept of SIDS and the issue of size to their vulnerability. The Chair of CANARI, suggested that it was critical to go beyond informing decision makers and to fully engaging stakeholders at all levels of society in order to promote a truly participatory approach to the sustainable development process in the Caribbean.

12. The Sustainable Developmental Expert- added that the Caribbean region had the opportunity to advance the SIDS agenda and taking into consideration the potential opportunity with Belize as the present Chair of AOSIS (2019-2020) and Antigua and Barbuda assuming leadership in 2021-2022. She recommended the development of a map to track resources as they relate to sustainable development institutions and mechanisms. This activity should also include the role of the CDCC-RCM in supporting the national institutions engaged in the implementation and reporting of the 2030 Agenda.

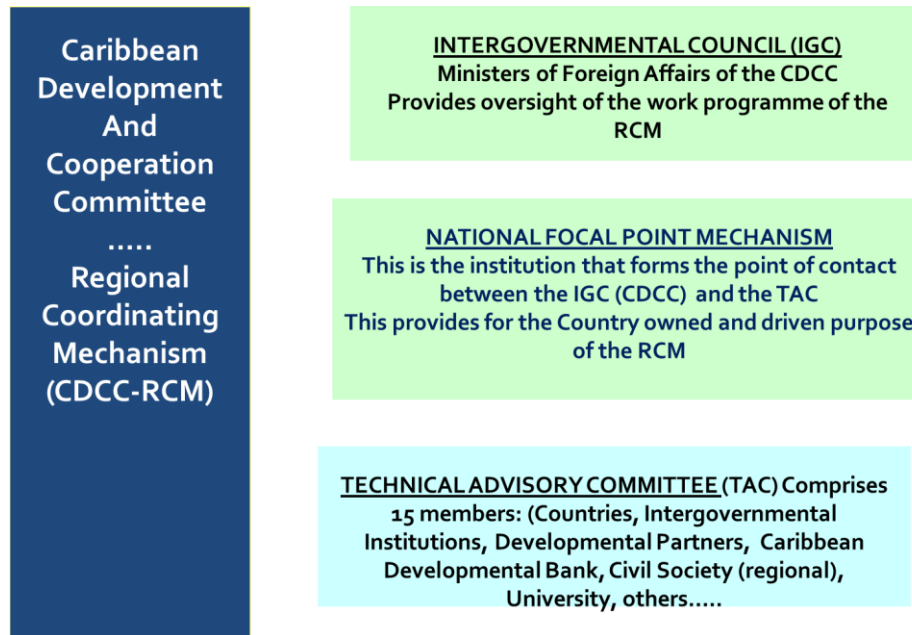
## **2. Revisiting the structure and functioning of the CDCC-RCM**

13. The ECLAC Sustainable Development Officer, provided a historical review of the RCM since its inception in 1995, leading to its current structure in 2019. The presentation highlighted the current structure of the CDCC-RCM (see figure 1) and the recent CDCC decisions that called for its revitalization. She then gave the floor to representatives of Barbados, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago to share their views and recommendations towards repositioning the CDCC-RCM.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> These three countries - Barbados, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago have been long serving members of the CDCC-RCM, Technical Advisory Committee.

**Figure 1**  
**Structure of the CDCC RCM**



14. The Senior Environmental Officer, Barbados, offered his assessment of the current CDCC-RCM structure and its limitations to fulfil its founding purpose. He gave recognition to the noted successes of the mechanism including the purpose it served as a forum which encouraged an exchange of ideas of both State and non-State partners; it had served as an appropriate forum for the preparatory meetings of Rio +20 and SAMOA Pathway. He spoke to the many elements of the CDCC-RCM that had not been operationalized, which left the responsibility with ECLAC to pick up the slack. On reviewing the operations of the CDCC-RCM, he gave his assessment of its structure. He recalled that the CDCC-RCM Intergovernmental Group (ICG) met only once; that the work of the TAC was driven by the efforts of the late Mr. Navin Chandarpal. He pointed to the National Focal Point Mechanism (NFPM) as the most challenging aspect of the RCM to be operationalised; indeed, it never materialized and thus was unable to fulfil its purpose. The representative of Barbados therefore suggested a redefinition of the CDCC-RCM-NFPM and proposed that the CDCC-RCM-NFP be represented by an institution rather than an individual. He proposed other amendments including that the RCM should form part of the larger international mechanism on sustainable development with an emphasis on the uniqueness of the SIDS agenda. He noted that at the time of its creation the RCM had placed a heavy emphasis on its monitoring functions. Unfortunately, the region being data poor and capacity starved, this made realization of this purpose very difficult. Nonetheless, he did not believe this shortcoming should hamper the implementation of the various development agendas, and the subregion should forge ahead with the understanding that the successive SIDS instruments: the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA), the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS (MSI) and the SAMOA Pathway were a package and should be treated as a single mandate for implementation. He expressed the desire to see the CDCC-RCM TAC become more dynamic in nature with a capacity building feature that would allow member countries to keep abreast of developing global issues. The CDCC-RCM could be framed specifically to serve Caribbean SIDS, encouraging SIDS-SIDS cooperation. It should boast of a robust civil society platform, have an effective communication strategy

and connected to trade and finance. He concluded his intervention with proposed questions aimed at rectifying the deficiencies of the CDCC-RCM as follows:

- What was the fundamental mandate of the CDCC-RCM?
- Who were the targets? It should not only refer to Caribbean SIDS it must go beyond and into the international agenda.
- Which entity would be most appropriate to drive the process? For example, CARICOM?
- Should there be a joint secretariat?
- How will it be staffed and financed?
- Which priorities should the CDCC-RCM serve?
- How can the CDCC-RCM be enabled and how can it be monitored?

15. The Permanent Secretary (Ag.), Department of Sustainable Development, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology, Saint Lucia, in her presentation recognized the late Ms. Marcia Philbert Jules as a major advocate for the CDCC-RCM. Ms. Philbert was the impetus for Saint Lucia ascending to become the first chair of the CDCC-RCM. Her presentation was fashioned as a series of questions she perceived upon reviewing the current structure of the mechanism and suggested improvements:

1. Do we as a region, have existing systems to enable this mechanism?
2. How could we position ourselves nationally to embrace the CDCC-RCM?
3. How could we create an enabling environment given our limited resources?
4. How do we deal with the implementation “disconnect” in the countries, for example when the Foreign Affairs Ministers represented their countries on issues that the Sustainable Development Officers should lead?

16. The Permanent Secretary (Ag.) offered some responses and best practices based on the experience in her country regarding the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs, BPoA, MSI and the SAMOA Pathway. However, she explained they pursued the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs more vigorously as they were able to mobilize resources from the United Nations system and including financing from the United Nations Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) missions. Saint Lucia set up a committee which involved academics, civil society, government representatives allowing her country to accomplish much with limited resources. In this national approach, Saint Lucia was able to integrate the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. She reiterated the point of view put forward by the Barbados representative that the CDCC-RCM-NFP should be an institution rather than an individual. She believed that the data gaps experienced could be addressed through, for example, a Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project which helped Saint Lucia to create a national data storage centre. The Saint Lucia national data storage project received seventeen (17) signed Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) established with local stakeholders for supporting data sharing. This best practice on access and data sharing is being adopted by several other Caribbean countries. These national facilities could be scaled up/mirrored from national to the regional level, possibly in having a regional inter-agency mechanism addressing the SDGs implementation in country. With this country driven regional approach, representatives could give substantive focus and address different areas of interest at global meetings.

17. The Director, Project Planning and Reconstruction, Ministry of Planning and Development, Trinidad and Tobago, focused his discourse on the political, policy and institutional structure of the CDCC-RCM. He traced the origin of the CDCC-RCM, created in 1975 to oversee the work programme of ECLAC in the region and solidify its role. He referred to ECLAC’s convening responsibilities on developmental priorities. The CDCC-RCM was created as part of that dynamic. This regional body was also created to

address the slow implementation of BPoA and became the regional coordination point in this regard. He lamented however, that although the CDCC-RCM was plausible on paper it failed to “dovetail” with the re-emergence of CARICOM when the Heads of Governments expanded their mandate to include population, security and statistics. He suggested that the SIDS agendas appeared to be losing their significance especially in the wake of the increased activity Bretton Woods institutions in this area. These institutions he explained had a vested interest in sustainable development and were the driving force behind SDG implementation as they were major financiers of these efforts. He acknowledged the knowledge sharing aspect of the CDCC-RCM as being valuable. However, because it lacked strong political linkage much of the rich discussions and decisions did not have the desired impact. He demonstrated this lack of policy-political linkages with the observation that the CDCC-RCM meetings were serviced by the Foreign Ministers while the SIDS agenda was being implemented under other Ministries. In going forward, the Trinidad and Tobago representative offered that the relevance of the CDCC-RCM TAC could be secured through the institutionalization of the SIDS sustainable development agenda. He was of the firm view that the CDCC-RCM-NFP work could be better represented and profiled if a thematic policy political model was fashioned similar to those used by the Organisation of American States (OAS) and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS).

## **Discussion**

18. The ECLAC Sustainable Development Officer, invited the participating experts to share their views on revisiting the structure and functioning of the CDCC-RCM.

19. The Director, ECLAC thanked the officials for their contributions on the CDCC-RCM noting that ECLAC struggled with gaining the similar political attention as that afforded to other regional bodies as the OAS, ACS and CARICOM. This was well demonstrated for example in the assignment of governments resources enabling their representatives to attend and participate in the meetings of these bodies. Conversely, ECLAC’s meetings do not enjoy the same priority in the assignment of State resources. The Commission’s role in supporting sustainable development as a broader extension of the United Nations was essential, however the Director questioned how this mechanism could be financially resourced. To date there were no financial resources assigned to the CDCC-RCM, therefore there was need for rationalisation; for an understanding of the magnitude of the Caribbean sustainable development mandates and the capacity challenges required to address these. The Director of ECLAC, also tabled the following points for discussion:

- How could the revisited CDCC-RCM structure be resourced and become financially stable?
- How could the CDCC-RCM operations be integrated into supporting the sustainable development priorities of the member countries?
- How could the CDCC-RCM foster political support and influence?

20. The CPDC representative noted the function of the CDCC-RCM must fit requirements. These functions and requirements must be clearly articulated, and the SIDS priorities linked to both the SIDS agenda and the 2030 Agenda. The CDCC-RCM enabling roles should facilitate the implementation of SIDS sustainable development priorities which could be translated into the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs. The CDCC-RCM has to create an enabling environment, to be clear on its term of reference and how it is to achieve its objectives and purpose. After years of pursuing sustainable development and crafting the BPoA the region, should at this stage, be reaping the benefits. The BPoA framework was intended to transfer lessons learned to the world. In this context, the region has achieved small wins but nothing transformative. The CPDC representative hoped that the ECLAC’s Caribbean in Brief, as mentioned by the ECLAC, Director, could deliver pertinent messages in the language that could be understood by all stakeholders including everyday person on the street.

21. The Programme Manager, Sustainable Development-CARICOM Secretariat began her intervention by reflecting that the Caribbean region needed to understand its reality. She cited by way of example the fact that the image conveyed to the people of the subregion on climate change as a polar bear on a melting ice cap needed to be changed to reflect the region's reality. More practical images from the Caribbean-SIDS would be for example farmers dealing with floods, loss of crops and the implications of these damage. Another point raised was the importance of linking Caribbean efforts with the wider Latin American region where established best practices of interconnected approaches when pursuing sustainable development existed. Ultimately, the subregion needed to address sustainable development from a multiple-dimensional perspective including at the political levels.

22. The Permanent Secretary (Ag.) Department of Sustainable Development, Saint Lucia, noted that the Pacific region had gained full political buy-in on the SIDS agenda. This necessary political buy-in however had been diluted in the Caribbean region. She suggested that more information sharing, and communication might assist the subregion in regaining the required high-level political attention on and support for SIDS.

23. The Political Advisor of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) noted that within the Caribbean context sustainable development should be addressed as themes, such as climate change, and gender. She acknowledged ECLAC's strength as a critical mechanism in data and information management.

24. The Programme Officer at the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) endorsed that the BPoA as a forward-thinking instrument, comparable to the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs. The OECS representative was confident that the Caribbean subregion had made progress advancing the sustainable development agenda. She recommended that information on SIDS should go beyond progress reports to policy makers. These progress in implementation should also be extended to wider and varying communities using visual media to support for impactful communication and outreach.

25. The Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Jamaica, noted that various instruments under the SIDS agenda built on each other. However, there were no defined or specific funding opportunities on the SIDS agenda. The Jamaica representative suggested that in the absence of funding, it was necessary to create a mechanism that monitored and evaluated sustainable development implementation with a focus on the national development plan. In this regard, the CDCC-RCM could support national priorities for sustainable development including providing capacity building, assist in (national) implementation, monitor, evaluate and serve as a knowledge retention platform thereby ensuring continuity. The CDCC-RCM should serve to guide the region beyond the 2030 agenda and into the future.

26. The Sustainable Developmental Expert informed the participants that development has always been political. The first globally agreed "sustainable development agenda" was that of the BPoA and with its origin in the Caribbean. In this regard, the Caribbean Region had not failed. The SIDS agenda was alive, as was the case in the Pacific Region. The Caribbean challenge was on how to fit the political economy for sustainable development into a SIDS agenda.

### **3. International developments in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway in coherence with the 2030 Agenda – implications for the CDCC-RCM**

27. The Monitoring and Reporting Officer, Ministry of Planning and Development, Trinidad and Tobago detailed aspects of the OHRLLS National Focal Point (NFP) established in 2018. She highlighted the main functions of the OHRLLS-NFP and briefly gave a description of Trinidad and Tobago's position during the discussions. In conclusion, she believed the SIDS focal point under the OHRLLS and the

CDCC-RCM national focal point could be complementary but there was the requirement to have clear definition on the roles and functions between the CDCC-RCM-NFP and the OHRLLS-NFP. The Trinidad and Tobago representative went further to explain that there was a discussion at the OHRLLS SIDS Focal Point meeting on the introduction of a new toolkit to monitor and report on the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda. However, Member States voiced their reservations as there were many well-functioning toolkits already in existence.

28. The Director of ECLAC observed that the OHRLLS-NFP was assigned to individuals rather than an institution and expressed concern as this approach did not work in the case of the CDCC-RCM. The Monitoring and Reporting Officer, Trinidad and Tobago, agreed, suggesting that on the ground a team effort would be a more plausible approach. However, at this stage of the OHRLLS-NFP mechanism this detail has not yet been addressed.

29. The Representative of Jamaica stated that having attended the first OHRLLS-NFP meeting in October 2018, its objective was to target the national implementation of the SIDS sustainable development agenda and the SDGs. The overall goal was pitched at improving communication between United Nations system and Member States. In the case of Jamaica, both a political and a technical focal point were selected as this was the better arrangement for the country. This approach served in maintaining the political responses to the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda. The CARICOM representative and ECLAC Director concurred that the NFP structures and functioning was a State decision.

30. The Director, Department of Sustainable Development, Organization of American States (OAS) made his intervention based on his observation of a long-standing contention between the United Nations Agenda and national agendas. He believed the term “United Nations Agenda” should not exist as it was the national agenda that the United Nations should serve. In going forward, it was critical for the SIDS to reform themselves to attain their own priorities and tabled how these were reflected in its national plans. He expressed concern that SIDS were drifting with an international agenda in which that they themselves had no vested interest. He suggested that the CDCC-RCM TAC, once reformulated, should assess administrative burden sharing and explore how this could be better managed.

31. The Chair of the CANARI Board of Directors reflected that the subregion was at a juncture where it should by now have solved some of these issues. She also suggested that the United Nations agencies needed to work more harmoniously with its Member States. She referenced CARICOM and highlighted her concerns regarding its role in advancing the sustainable development in the subregion. She questioned how the Caribbean agenda was formulated and what was its position on SIDS and SIDS issues. She suggested that there was the need to broker a common position which could be articulated in all international forums by Caribbean SIDS.

32. The Deputy Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations, expressed the view that the region needs to have a common and integrated position of the Caribbean-SIDS as a special case for sustainable development. She expressed her optimism on the potential of the CDCC-RCM to forge alignment from the national level up to the global arena through sensitization, capacity building and knowledge sharing at a SIDS to SIDS level through regional and global platforms including: Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF), SAMOA Pathway Partnership Framework and that of ECLAC.

33. The CPDC representative brought to the attention of the meeting the fact that the multi-stakeholder approach was mentioned in the first chapter of the SAMOA Pathway and it was necessary to revisit this element in devising the way forward for the CDCC-RCM-NFP. Furthermore, countries should ensure follow through with a customization of these development agendas, as was done for Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), when the Caribbean registered a high level of success under that

instrument. He was concerned with the effectiveness of the proposed structure of the OHRLLS-NFP and hoped that adjustments can be made going forward.

34. The Barbados representative urged countries to own these sustainable development agendas as it was the member States that negotiated these instruments. He encouraged his colleagues to seize the opportunity to examine their respective NFP model so it could be structured in a manner that served the national objectives and purpose and inform the OHRLLS accordingly.

35. The CARICOM representative reminded that disasters were not always climate-change related. She also identified other social development priorities including gender, high levels of non-communicable diseases and citizen insecurity. Additionally, there was the need to support member countries in better accessing such resources as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF). The CARICOM representative suggested the CDCC-RCM should be people centred and country driven, the results of its actions should be demonstrated on how these were benefiting the people. It should be built on the element of sustainability and continuity. Taking the opportunity that the subregion is now working on repositioning the CDCC-RCM, CARICOM representative suggested that a 5-year plan for the work of the CDCC-RCM should be developed in parallel.

#### **4. Towards integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SIDS sustainable development agenda through a revitalized and repositioning of the CDCC-RCM – ideas and opportunities**

36. The Director, ECLAC Caribbean invited the meeting participants to proceed to their respective groups to develop a well-articulated proposal on a repositioned CDCC-RCM that could be presented at the next CDCC meeting to be held in 2020. She encouraged participants to consider ways the region could customize and synergize its response. She emphasized that the mechanism should be designed to allow vertical and horizontal communication for an effective socialization of this structure. It was necessary to secure the SIDS structure and messaging so it could resonate at the regional and international levels.

Additional points tabled were:

- How could this revised structure work towards achieving the required political messaging?
- How could the CDCC members create an institution to deliver on what the region wanted and what would be the national institutional interface?
- What could be the role of the CDCC-RCM-TAC; did it have to be defined in order to deliver on this assigned role and function?
- How would the proposed structure interface at the regional and global level?
- In supporting the implementation of the SIDS agenda, how could this revised CDCC-RCM become aligned to have a face and voice at the level of the AOSIS?
- How would SIDS priorities be articulated and addressed through the CDCC-RCM?
- What would be the reporting structure and responsibilities of the CDCC-RCM and its organs?
- How could the CDCC-RCM ensure a Caribbean SIDS Narrative.

#### **5. Working sessions: working group presentations and discussion**

37. The meeting participants the pursued group discussion on specific aspects of the RCM and the way forward. Group A's discussions focused on the structure of a revised CDCC-RCM, while Group B debated the revised operations and functions of a revised CDCC-RCM aligned with development agendas and relevant stakeholders.

38. **Group A** identified as the purpose of the CDCC-RCM the following: Facilitation of coordination integration/ engagement of relevant regional institutions and policies regarding the SIDS agenda. This was structure was presented as detailed in figure 2. Assist in the development goals of the region through the prism of the SIDS agenda. The principal objectives of the repositioned mechanism were proposed as follows:

Roles and functions:

Group A presenting on the following items and with a proposed revised structure as illustrated in figure 2.

- Build high level political engagement and influence and in support for the SIDS sustainable development;
- Provision of technical support/capacity for the implementation of SIDS sustainable development agendas;
- Build capacity for management of public/private sectors partnerships and as appropriate for Caribbean SIDS sustainable development;
- Determine targets, indicators for monitoring and evaluation;
- Function as a SIDS think-tank;
- Support member countries in improving access to development finance;
- Encourage high level of political engagement and buy-in in the SIDS Agendas;
- Be a service provider for regional on reporting on sustainable development and relevant research
- To function in Caribbean SIDS Advocacy;
- And development and implementation of 5-year regional sustainable development programme and based on the priorities for this region.

39. Following on the presentation of Group A, the following issues were raised:

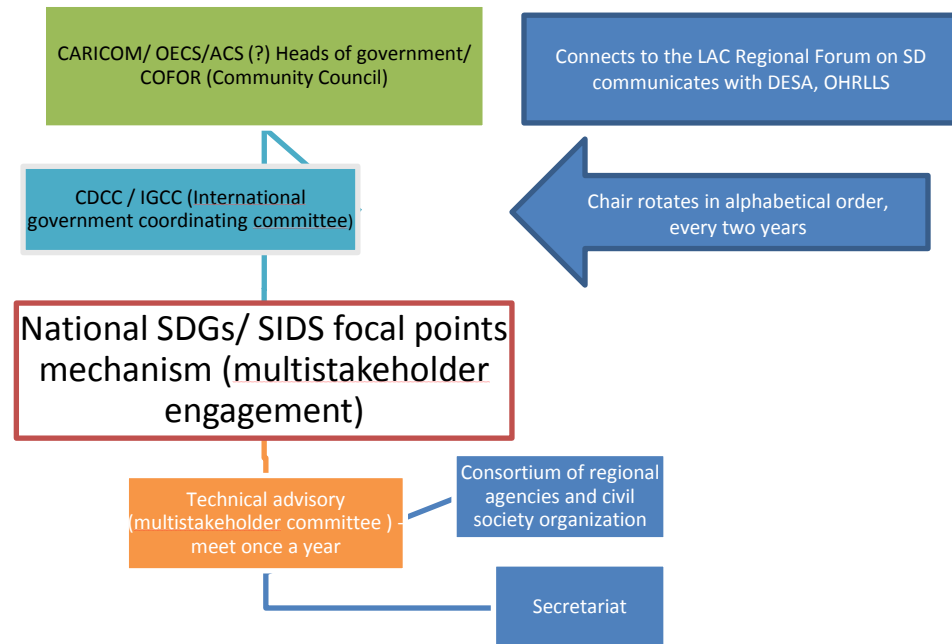
- Where will be the CDCC-RCM secretariat be housed?
- Were to be ECLAC, how will ECLAC secure the financial support and other resources to carry out its expected functions?
- What would be the role of CARICOM? In this regard, the Director mentioned article 4 of the CDCC Constitution that identified a role for CARICOM in its (CDCC) operations.
- Regarding resources, based on the current resource flow, there was no current fund for the CDCC-RCM Secretariat, but there was a possibility of soliciting resources from the UN Development Account Fund<sup>3</sup> and in which case it would have to be developed as a project.

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<sup>3</sup> United Nations Development Account – see further details at: <https://www.unece.org/operact/opera/unda.html>



**Figure 2**  
**Proposed revised structure**



40. Working **Group B** made the following presentation with the key points listed as:

- The CDCC-RCM could be structured as the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) mechanism for sustainable development, subjected to functional and institutional linkages with the national development frameworks and connected to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.
- National coordinating mechanisms should be included in the CDCC-RCM such as the Saint Lucia Interagency Group on Coordination, the Grenada National Sustainable Development Committee, with the ability to co-op technical assistance.
- The body should be linked to other regional structures such as Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organization of Caribbean States (OECS), Organization of American States (OAS), the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCCs), CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ), The University of the West Indies (UWI). It should also be linked to regional natives such as the Caribbean Common Environment and Natural Resources Policy Framework (sustainable management of natural resources and other common challenges),<sup>4</sup> the Caribbean Resilience Foundation Strategy, the Castries Call for Sustainable Development etc.
- State Ministries to be involved for example: Planning, Finance, Environment, Foreign Affairs, Sustainable Development, Youth Affairs etc.
- The CDCC- RCM should work through its national focal point mechanisms.

<sup>4</sup> Caribbean Community Environmental and Natural Resources Framework – see reference at: [https://caricom.org/documents/15676/att.\\_i\\_-\\_draft\\_final\\_caricom\\_env\\_\\_nat\\_resource\\_policy.pdf](https://caricom.org/documents/15676/att._i_-_draft_final_caricom_env__nat_resource_policy.pdf)

- The role of the CDCC-RCM in working with governing bodies should include: policy coherence/coordination; education and sensitization; provide a space to convene; coordinate and advocate; analyze issues and inform regional and global negotiations.
- The role of CDCC-RCM should also focus on the 5 years of implementation of SAMOA Pathway. There should be policy coherence and to have mechanism on building operational synergies and working as a consortium among these major stakeholders
- The CDCC-RCM could engage/foster public-private partnerships through the National Focal Points Framework and the Caribbean Chamber of commerce.
- There should be a clear communication strategy for participation. The communication/outreach strategy should promote the brand of the Caribbean SIDS agenda. Promote youth engagement and maximize the use of social media and different technologies and involvement of the public.
- Expected results:
  - In the short term, the CDCC-RCM should be the implementation of the Caribbean SIDS Agenda and the creation of measurable expected outcomes.
  - At medium term, it should be the creation of an enabling environment for data and information sharing.
  - At the long term the promotion of sustainable economic growth, eliminate poverty and inequality, social and environmental sustainability (promotion of a regional agenda for inclusive sustainable development).

41. Following on the presentations of the working groups in plenary the following were tabled: The CPDC representative called for the development and articulation of a clear and succinct purpose for the CDCC-RCM before finalizing the structure. It should be manageable, concise and with a clear mandate. He preferred the region begin with a small scope which could be later expanded. He reminded the meeting that the Mauritius Strategy identified gaps at the national and regional level and that any outstanding gaps should be addressed at this time. He proposed that the CDCC-RCM identify this exercise as a priority task. He also recommended the verification of institutions and their mandates as another source for identifying gaps.

42. The CANARI representative suggested that countries be assisted with integration and harmonization of sustainable development functions across sectors and which could facilitate better linkage with institutions at the regional level. She cited Jamaica as a best practice for case study demonstrating a logical and rational approach to national development. It was critical that the regional minds determine the reason/s why it was not able to translate decisions into action and harmonize the work of its institutions.

43. The Sustainable Development Expert shared that the three main goals the CDCC-RCM should aim to accomplish were: to define why such a regional mechanism was needed and what form it should take; how best the mechanism could be structured to meet the agenda and coordination; who would be responsible – politically, technically and strategically.

44. The CARICOM representative recognized many countries and agencies were competing for limited resources. That there was also the urgency to address science, technology and innovation, there was the need to develop statistical institutions. Therefore, a cohesive vision and paradigm shift was needed to make these changes.

45. The representative from Jamaica believed her country's cross sectoral and consultative process in the preparation for the 2030 Agenda was quite successful. They sensitized the general public, government

agencies to the pertinent issues, increased information sharing and collaboration among different agencies. She offered this was critical to ensure the society's commitment and buy-in to the agreed national plan.

46. The OAS representative highlighted the enormous challenge coordination posed but acknowledged that it was inevitable since the SDGs were based on an integrated framework. He underscored that beyond bringing parts together; it was about achieving outcomes that are measurable. He proposed that the future success of the CDCC-RCM should be based on whether the fundamental drawbacks identified were addressed. Pointedly, he noted that every agency had a coordination role linked to their mandate. Ideally this could be mapped to specific SDGs. Considering this, he suggested that the reformed CDCC-RCM work in clusters of knowledge.

47. The Barbados representative noted that parties had to be clear on the issues to be addressed. Strategic interaction was required to encourage inter-institutional communication. This coupled with a regional mapping of the SIDS agenda against all regional and national institutions. This should also include the role of ECLAC in the functioning of the CDCC-RCM.

48. The ACS representative indicated that ECLAC should facilitate the coordination of common priority areas that were aligned to the SIDS agenda. That this role of coordinating advocacy and public communication was important.

49. The Barbados representative recalled that the original proposal for the CDCC-RCM included the concept of a joint secretariat with UN-CARICOM. He went further to explain that the structure should accommodate an integration with Latin America and the Caribbean.

50. The CARICOM representative agreed that building a relationship with the LAC region was necessary; and it could be expanded to include the United States of America and Canada. There should also be a regional policy partnership for sustainable development and addressing sustainable consumption and production.

51. ECLAC's Director noted that there was the need for investment from wider international partnerships and towards supporting Caribbean SIDS sustainable development, with due care given to such partnerships were shaped in support for sustainable development. There was also the need to popularize public-private-partnerships with all stakeholders. The Director also reminded on the role of the civil society groups.

52. The Sustainable Development Expert recognized the Jamaica and Saint Lucia models as guides for the development of a NFP mechanism. Furthermore, communication and advocacy functions of the CDCC-RCM should engage all aspects of the society.

## **6. Resourcing the CDCC-RCM**

53. The discussions on the floor supported the development of partnerships. There were differing opinions regarding the type of partnerships considered best for the subregion. However, the CPDC representative stated the opportunity was right for the region to explore financing for development options, with a special inclination towards green projects and products. This new type of business was encouraged as it made business more responsible to the global community.

54. The OAS representative recommended engaging Caribbean youth and negotiating with international organizations to benefit Caribbean countries. He believed an assertive position in the global fora would work to the advantage of the region. He reminded the meeting that regional organizations like

Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCCs) began as OAS projects now effectively serving the Caribbean purpose.

55. The representative from Barbados noted at the regional level that the CDCC-RCM could facilitate a partnership and cooperation forum on a biennial basis.

56. The representative from CANARI informed the meeting that her organization had a policy for partnership and offered the development of such a policy for the region. It may be advantageous to encourage the private sector to include the green agenda in their business model as an important move in securing a competitive advantage.

57. The representative from Jamaica shared that there was a review on partnership prepared by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) which examined the partnership framework with a view to improving its efficiency.

58. The ACS representative pointed to the Jamaica scenario which involved their diaspora funding in advancing sustainable development.

59. The Director of ECLAC directed the meeting to consider the private sector as a viable possibility for partnership for development, however, she cautioned the engagement with donors as their motivations did not necessarily align with national priorities. As the region considered engaging in public-private partnership arrangements, she advised examination and definition of an appropriate partnership to best serve the region. The Pacific, in her opinion successfully benefited from the partnerships and suggested this as another task for the CDCC-RCM to define appropriate partnerships for the region.

## **7. Closing remarks**

60. The Director thanked all the participants for their valuable contributions and suggested that another meeting ought to be convened before the final proposal of the repositioned CDCC-RCM was taken to the next meeting of the CDCC. She acknowledged the requirements for meeting participants to consult with their various capitals to advise further on the way forward. She noted the CDCC-RCM should be a consultative process that worked to reinforce and reaffirm the community vision to propel Caribbean sustainable development. Noting that the resources required to solidify this commitment were quite considerable, furthermore the critical role of civil society and the importance of ensuring a participatory approach was paramount towards securing this common goal. In working to achieve this, there was the continued task of ensuring the buy-in of political leaders and the promotion of the SIDS development agenda at the national regional and international levels. Through these commitments the region could make the needed paradigm shift for sustainable development.

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