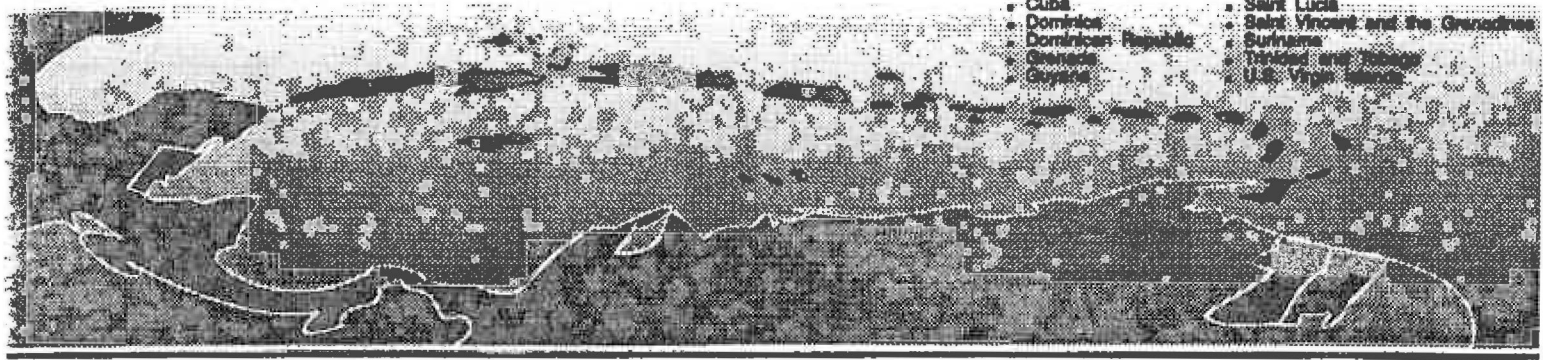


- Antigua and Barbuda
- Aruba
- Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Br. Virgin Islands
- Cuba
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Jamaica
- Montserrat
- Netherlands Antilles
- Puerto Rico
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Suriname
- Trinidad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



CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Sixteenth Executive Committee Meeting
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
20-21 October 1994



GENERAL
LC/CAR/G.437
CCST/94/3/6
2 December 1994
ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

**REPORT OF THE SIXTEENTH
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (CCST)**



LC/CAR/G.437

**REPORT OF THE SIXTEENTH
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (CCST)**

The Sixteenth Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST) was held on 20-21 October 1994 at the Conference Room of the Subregional Headquarters for the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

Members of the Executive Committee present were : Dr. Gladstone Taylor (Chairman, Jamaica); Dr. Tirso Saenz (Cuba); Mr. Bishnuarine Tulsie (Saint Lucia); Mrs. Maureen Manchouck and Mr. Hollis Charles (Trinidad and Tobago) and Dr. LaVerne Ragster (United States Virgin Islands).

Also present were Mr. Daniel Blanchard, Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean and Mr. Donatus St. Aimée, Secretary of the CCST.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda, as adopted by consensus, was as follows :

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Status of implementation of the CCST five-year work programme
3. Report on meetings attended by the secretariat on behalf of the CCST and action needed thereof
4. Consideration of the resolution adopted at the Fifteenth Session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) - Resolution 42(XV) Enhancement of the Capability of the CCST
5. Ideas presented by the Chairman for consideration by the Executive
 - (a) Identification of possible new areas of thrust for the CCST;
 - (b) CCST and strategic linkages with other organizations;
 - (c) A cohesive strategy and implementation plan for regional science and technology popularization;
 - (d) Setting up of a regional technical consultancy group within the CCST structure;

- (e) A regional technology transfer plan/strategy;
- (f) Regional information networks;
- (g) Regional institutional linkages;
- (h) A tri-yearly regional conference on science and technology; and
- (i) Eminent scientists' lectures.

6. Other matters

Summary of decisions

1. The CCST secretariat will :

- (a) Consider the following issues in the formulation of projects: the application of the TCDC concept, where possible; the need to dovetail activities with donor agency requirements; and concepts of sustainability of project activities.
- (b) Identifying programmes and projects which show potential for linking the producers and users of science and technology information, and for making information networks more accessible to science and technology personnel.
- (c) Examine options for operationalizing or modifying the CCST programme for science popularization, including formulation of a separate regional project and the integration of popularization into other project proposals. The findings will be presented to the next Plenary Session.
- (d) Present a detailed proposal to the Plenary for implementing the Regional Database of Technology Services. This will include an examination of existing information services and networks in the region.
- (e) Consider the need to integrate the work of the CCST with activities at the national level, so as to encourage the integration of the CCST and its national components.
- (f) Prepare and present a proposal for CCST's contribution to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States for the consideration of the Plenary.
- (g) Increase the awareness of CCST via the CCST Newsletter and national and regional publications of CCST member countries.

- (h) Remind CCST focal points of their responsibilities to enhance the effectiveness of the CCST.
- (i) In conjunction with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), seek funding for Caribbean participation in an upcoming post-graduate course in Science and Technology Management being organized by the Centro de Gestión en Ciencia y Tecnología of Cuba.

2. The Core Group for the implementation of the History of Science and Technology project will continue to implement the project as planned.

3. Members, with the exception of the Cuban representative, disagreed with the intentions expressed in CDCC Resolution 42(XV), particularly preambular paragraphs 3, 4 and 5, and operative paragraphs 1 and 3. In that respect, it was agreed that the matter should be taken up in depth at the next Plenary, with a view to arriving at a definite decision to be communicated to the next Session of the CDCC. The secretariat is to provide the documentation necessary to facilitate the above discussion.

Agenda item 1 : Opening of the meeting

The Chairman welcomed the participants and thanked the ECLAC Directorate for facilitating the meeting. He made reference to initiatives at the international, regional and national levels which required a change in orientation and strategies for ensuring national and regional growth and development. The tendency towards a market economy observed in some Caribbean countries, increasing unification of markets and declining protection in trade relationships presented a challenge to competitive production for the region. He emphasized the role of science and technology in achieving these goals, and stated that the CCST needed to be in the forefront in initiating strategies and making relevant contributions to regional and national efforts. He proposed that the meeting should therefore focus on examining the appropriateness of CCST activities in this context. In addition, the meeting should consider a number of issues which would assist in enhancing the effectiveness of the CCST. These included the need to focus on upcoming activities to ensure that short-term strategies also contributed to the fulfilment of long-term plans and objectives, the need for greater awareness of CCST activities and the need for greater relevance to the Caribbean situation.

The Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, Mr. Daniel Blanchard, briefly addressed the meeting, making reference to the role of ECLAC/CDCC in supporting the work of the CCST. In this context, resolution 42(XV) - Enhancement of the Capability of the CCST would be considered during the meeting. In closing, he reaffirmed ECLAC/CDCC's support to the CCST.

**Agenda item 2 :
Status of implementation of the CCST five-year work programme**

The secretariat, represented by the CCST Secretary, Mr. Donatus St. Aimée, reviewed the document entitled "Draft Report to the Seventeenth Executive Committee Meeting of the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST)". The report, he stated, indicated the status of implementation of the five-year work-programme adopted by the CCST in 1992. During the review, the following issues were raised and discussed by the Committee :

Technology Extension Service

Some concern was expressed at the apparent difficulty encountered in sourcing funding for the Technology Extension project. The Secretary stated that the long period of the funding cycle, and donor perceptions that the Caribbean does not need special assistance, had contributed to the situation.

The representative of Saint Lucia extended the support of his Government to efforts of the secretariat in securing funding for the project, which was seen as very important. He noted that initiatives had already been taken at the national level in Saint Lucia to facilitate the implementation of the project. The Chairman noted the possibility of the CCST facilitating similar initiatives in other countries in anticipation of the implementation of the project.

Issues to be addressed by CCST project preparation

The need to coordinate CCST project design with the special requirements and preferences of donors was noted, especially with regard to concepts of sustainability, shifts in responsibility away from governments, revenue building and capacity building. The Committee recognized that the sustainability of a project depended on the perceived benefit to the Caribbean and the national capacity to sustain project activity. The Chairman highlighted the diversity of the Caribbean science and technology needs and problems, and the resulting opportunities for applying the TCDC concept to regional projects. This would entail fostering an "intra-regional flow" of activity which recognized regional strengths and weaknesses. The secretariat agreed to consider these issues in future project formulation. It also noted that there was need for the Caribbean to make a case for its special needs in the international forums, and that United Nations organizations do not have a history of implementing income-generating projects. The need to take political approaches to assist the secretariat in securing funding for CCST projects was noted.

Implementation of TCDC activity in science and technology in the Caribbean

The Committee discussed possible approaches to implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) activity in the Caribbean. Approaches identified included discussion at a political level and examination of the recommendation of the Global Conference

on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States of a regional technical assistance pool. The administrative and managerial complications involved in implementing the TCDC approach was identified as one reason for the lack of projects which operationalised the concept. In this respect, the need for a coordinating mechanism was noted. It was suggested that the TCDC Unit of the UNDP could be approached with specific requests for funding activity which facilitated the professional development of scientific personnel. Governments needed to be made aware of this avenue, since the Unit would not fund such activities unless they were of a short-term nature, specific in focus, and sought by governments themselves.

Assisting CCST focal points

The need to evaluate and report on the outputs of the assistance provided to CCST national focal points was noted by one Committee member. The importance of project formulation skills at the national level in strengthening and increasing levels of assistance provided was highlighted by the Committee. Possible approaches to achieving this goal included the implementation of a system for assisting national science and technology personnel in project formulation within the CCST secretariat, and strengthening the role of the CCST secretariat in providing information to national focal points to support project formulation activities. The Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters clarified the situation regarding project preparation and funding at the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean. He informed the meeting of plans for strengthening the capacity for project formulation at that office. As an example of uncoordinated activity, the Secretary drew attention to the large number of information networks in the Caribbean subregion, and the limited linkages with the user community.

The secretariat was congratulated on its success in securing funding for a training workshop in project preparation and implementation to be held in early December. CCST member countries were reminded to submit names of participants. This activity constituted a partial fulfilment of the programme element relating to the professional development of scientific personnel.

History of scientific and technological development in the Caribbean

The Secretary reported on action taken regarding mobilization of funding and formulation of the project on the history of scientific and technological development in the Caribbean. The most recent action was the submission of a project proposal to the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities (NEH) through the University of the Virgin Islands. This course of action had been taken due to the requirement of the NEH that the requestor institution be from the United States. No funding was anticipated before June 1995. However, on the basis of work undertaken by Dr. Saenz of Cuba, project activity could be initiated before then, dependent on the status of CCST finances.

Members of the Executive then commented on the project document. While the secretariat was congratulated on its swift action in submitting the document, strong concerns were expressed

by the representative of Cuba regarding the perceived differences between the original project concepts and the project submitted to the NEH, lack of information provided to members of the Core Group on the plans to submit the project to the NEH, the changes to be made, and the future involvement of Cuba and the Core Group, which had been actively involved in the project preparation and conceptualization to date. The Executive agreed that the molding of the project to meet some of the emphases and requirements of the prospective donors was justified, and that while members of the Core Group could have been kept advised of the action taken on the project, the urgency to prepare and submit the application before the deadline made this impossible. In addition, it was agreed that the Core Group, headed by Cuba, would continue in its role of guiding the implementation of the project on receipt of funding. In the interim, it was suggested that one immediate area which could be addressed was the development of the terms of reference for the staff proposed for the project.

CCST programme for science popularization

The key role played by the national governments in science popularization was noted by the Committee. It was suggested that elements of popularization activity be incorporated in other projects, or that a regional project or projects be formulated to fulfil obligations under this programme element. The relative benefits and costs of such approaches were to be examined and the findings presented to the next Plenary for consideration.

Regional database of technology services

It was decided that the secretariat would present a detailed proposal to the Plenary for implementing this work programme element, which would include an examination of existing information services and networks in the region. The representative of Saint Lucia suggested that a workshop would be a useful forum for addressing the gap between the users and producers of such information services.

Energy

The Secretary reviewed the draft agenda for the upcoming High-Level Workshop on Renewable Energy Technologies, being organized by the secretariat with co-sponsorship from UNESCO and the University of the West Indies Centre for Environment and Development (UWICED).

The meeting was informed of Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE) initiatives at decentralization, which would include the posting of an OLADE officer at the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean. In response to questions regarding the status and relationship between the CCST and this officer, the Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean informed that discussions were still in the preliminary stages.

Environment

The main activity identified in this programme element was a project covering all aspects of water supply and use in the Caribbean. A draft project proposal was to be prepared by the secretariat in this respect. The Committee discussed possible issues to be addressed and approaches to be taken. These included the impact of water resources policy on water supply and distribution and promotion of multiple approaches to water management. It was agreed that one initiating activity would be the convening of a workshop on the topic, from which concrete action could be identified.

Other activities

The Secretary reported that a project proposal had been submitted to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for the establishment of focal points for the Programa Bolivar in IDB-member countries. The CCST would act as the ENLACE for the smaller Caribbean countries, while it is expected that national offices would be set up in the IDB Caribbean member countries.

The Caribbean Biotechnology Network was identified by the Secretary as being a pioneering initiative of the CCST in the 1980s. He referred to the good work which had been done by the Network, and strongly recommended that continued support be extended by the CCST to the work of that organization.

The Secretary indicated that discussions had been held with the Inter-American Institute for Global Change (IAIGC) with a view to broadening the scope of cooperation in the Caribbean to include the CCST.

CCST activity, relevance and capability

Some concern was expressed by the representative of Cuba who felt that while all activities carried out by the CCST were important and while flexibility and initiative were required, there was need to ensure that all areas of the work programme were covered.

In this respect, the importance of the unique role of the CCST in facilitating activity in science and technology in the region was noted by the Chairman. In addition, he stated that the relevance of the organization needed to be ensured by responding to the needs and demands of the users of the CCST services. In order to meet these demands, it was felt that strengthening of the secretariat was required.

After some discussion, it was agreed that in order to maximize the benefits of CCST activity, the work of the CCST should be integrated with activities at the national level.

The Committee decided that the secretariat would prepare a proposal for the CCST's contribution to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States for the consideration of the Plenary.

Publicizing the work of the CCST

The representative of the United States Virgin Islands commented that no specific activity had been identified for increasing awareness of the work of the CCST. It was suggested that the CCST Newsletter address this situation by including more information on CCST activities and by improving its circulation. The Secretary noted that plans for CCST promotion included increasing contacts with CARICOM and other agencies. Discussions will be held with CARICOM for a possible joint meeting of CCST and CARICOM Ministers responsible for Science and Technology sometime in 1996. The possibility of having CCST material published at the national level via newspapers and institutional publications was noted. In this respect, the Committee agreed that there was need for the CCST to publicize science and technology activity at the national level, and requested the secretariat to prepare correspondence reminding focal points of their responsibilities in publicizing the work of the CCST, and in providing material to the CCST Newsletter.

Science and technology activity in CCST member countries

Jamaica

The Chairman informed the meeting of the history, administration and activities of the IAIGC. Seven large projects had been identified, which included Caribbean issues. This organization was currently seeking to create working relationships with other agencies. He stated that this presented an opportunity for the CCST to access funding for activities compatible with the wider programme goals.

A conference on water had been convened by the Scientific Research Council (SRC) in Jamaica as part of its annual series of science and technology conferences. The issues surrounding agro-industry and its contribution to national development would be the topic of the next conference to be held on 22-24 November 1994.

USVI

An energy conference and a workshop on non-point sources of pollution had been held in the USVI.

Cuba

The Center for Science and Technology in Cuba had formulated a post graduate course in Science and Technology Management for English-speaking participants to be held from 12-17 June 1995. The Committee agreed that the CCST should work with that organization UNESCO, UNIDO and UNDP, to seek funding for Caribbean participation in this course.

Agenda item 3 :
Report on meetings attended by the secretariat
on behalf of the CCST and action needed thereof

It was agreed that this had been dealt with under Agenda item 2.

Agenda item 4:
Consideration of the resolution adopted at the fifteenth session of the
Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)

Members of the Committee, with the exception of the representative of Cuba expressed displeasure with the ideas presented in some areas of CDCC resolution 42(XV), particularly preambular paragraphs 3, 4 and 5, and operative paragraphs 1 and 3. Some were of the opinion that the resolution constituted a regression in terms of the development of the CCST. The Chairman informed the meeting of discussions held between himself and the Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, at which matters of the CCST secretariat had been discussed, and stated that a resolution along the lines of a draft reflecting those discussions had been expected to be tabled.

The representative of Cuba emphasized that the spirit of the resolution was to strengthen the work of the CCST via a thorough examination of its work, administration, objectives and statutes. In this context, the Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean clarified the role of the ECLAC office in supporting the CCST. A statement of the financial support provided to the CCST by ECLAC showed that in addition to staff costs, ECLAC contributions, including technical support, meeting and mission costs, totalled over US\$30,000 for the period 1993 and 1994.

Issues raised in relation to this resolution included arrangements for the CCST secretariat, perceived lack of CCST autonomy, and the extent to the present situation represented the intentions expressed by the CCST Statutes. It was emphasized that a clear mandate had to be given to the CCST secretariat to take action with regard to the secretariat arrangements, and that any initiatives would require strong political support.

In response to the resolution, it was decided that the matter should be discussed in depth at the next Plenary Session of the CCST, with a view to arriving at a definite decision to be communicated to the next Session of the CDCC.

**Agenda item 5:
Ideas presented by the Chairman for consideration by the Executive**

Ideas presented by the Chairman as indicated on the Agenda were briefly reviewed. Agreeing that most had been addressed in previous discussions, members of the Committee suggested issues for consideration at the next Plenary. These included:

- (a) Mechanisms for sharing information on technology;
- (b) Mechanisms for promoting the work of the CCST;
- (c) Approaches to removing the basic constraints to development posed by the small-island status of most CCST member countries, which included physical separation from each other and separation of communities. This would require examining ways of applying technology, in particular computer-based communication and information technology to create and strengthen linkages. This could possibly start with the CCST focal points. Also, special problems of management of the environment of SIDS such as the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) should be addressed through the exploration of new areas for applying science and technology options in development of the EEZ;
- (d) Improvement of documentation and evaluation of project activities and their impacts; and
- (e) Approaches to increasing Caribbean involvement in the Iwokrama Biodiversity project.

In closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked the CCST secretariat and the Directorate of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean for facilitating the meeting. He also made a direct plea to the Director that more staff be assigned to work directly with the CCST.