



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

---

Meeting of the Regional Coordinating Mechanism  
to consider integrating the Samoa Pathway into  
the sustainable development goals and  
post-2015 development agenda  
29 April 2015  
Castries, Saint Lucia

LIMITED  
LC/CARL/L.464  
8 June 2015  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE REGIONAL COORDINATING  
MECHANISM TO CONSIDER INTEGRATING THE SAMOA PATHWAY  
INTO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND  
POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

---

This report was reproduced without formal editing.



## CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| A. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.....  | 1  |
| B. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK.....   | 1  |
| 1. Place and date .....   | 1  |
| 2. Attendance.....  | 1  |
| 3. Agenda .....   | 1  |
| C. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS .....   | 2  |
| 1. Opening of meeting .....   | 2  |
| 2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.....   | 3  |
| 3. Contextualizing previous meeting discussions .....   | 3  |
| 4. The Samoa Pathway in the context of the sustainable development goals and<br>the post-2015 development agenda..... | 3  |
| 5. A technological platform for monitoring progress towards<br>the Samoa Pathway outcomes.....                        | 5  |
| 6. RCM/TAC administrative matters .....   | 7  |
| 7. Other matters .....  | 7  |
| 8. Evaluation.....  | 7  |
| 9. Conclusion.....  | 7  |
| Annex I List of participants .....  | 8  |
| Annex II Agenda .....   | 10 |

## **A. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The meeting recommended the need for a stronger regime of coordination and governance at the national and regional level in order to ensure successful implementation of the Samoa Pathway outcomes in the Caribbean.
2. Member States should consider the preparation of a viable plan of action for regional development under the Samoa Pathway, with one option being to identify champions for the implementation of specific outcomes in the region.
3. The region should explore stronger public-private partnerships that could provide some innovative sources of financing.
4. The proposed technological platform should be widened to include the use by regional institutions, and civil society organizations who are working to support the implementation of the Samoa Pathway in the Caribbean.
5. The rules and procedures with respect to the functioning of the Regional Coordinating Mechanism of the Technical Advisory Committee (RCM/TAC) should be reviewed in order to provide clear procedural guidelines on the installation of a chairperson for the TAC.

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

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

6. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology of Saint Lucia convened a one-day meeting of the RCM/TAC for the implementation of the small island developing States (SIDS) development agenda in Castries, Saint Lucia, on 29 April 2015.

### **2. Attendance**

7. Representatives of six member States of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) attended the meeting: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago.
8. Representatives of the following organizations were also in attendance: the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC) and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).
9. Representatives of the United Nations funds and programmes, as well as specialized agencies attended the meeting.

### **3. Agenda**

10. The agenda adopted by the meeting is attached as annex II.

## C. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

### 1. Opening of meeting

11. Welcome and opening remarks were delivered by the Director of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, who extended a warm welcome to all participants. She explained that the purpose of the meeting was to continue a regional conversation with respect to the operationalization of the Samoa Pathway. She further noted that the Samoa Pathway discourse was part of a nexus that included the sustainable development goals (SDGs) as well as financing for development, and that given its structure; the RCM presented a unique forum that afforded a rich exchange of ideas considering its diversity and membership. She emphasized that in practical terms, the RCM had the potential to effectively inform the SIDS agenda.

12. The Director also led observance of a one minute silence to commemorate the passing of the late Navin Chandarpal, the last Chairman of the RCM/TAC. She remembered his stellar contribution to the region which translated into his loyal commitment to the RCM, and the insights he shared with the Commission on sustainable development issues.

13. The Honourable Minister of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology of Saint Lucia also offered greetings to the meeting on behalf of the Government. He acknowledged the work of ECLAC, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and CARICOM, and commended member States for their participation on behalf of the people of Saint Lucia.

14. He also revisited the Samoa Pathway Convention and the means of operationalizing the Samoa Pathway instrument noting his concern that it could be lost in the context of the SDGs and the post-2015 agenda discourse. He added that climate change was a significant discussion for SIDS and he hoped recent discussions would result in the finalization of the 2020 Protocol.

15. He thanked ECLAC for its cooperation in hosting such an important meeting, as he felt it was well positioned to guide future developments. He explained that the lack of governmental coordination for implementing the sustainable development agenda was a constraint both within the Saint Lucian context as well as throughout the region, and called for there to be a regional construct by which the Caribbean could speak as one voice on these matters. He further emphasized the importance of the region making a meaningful response to the proposed global dialogues on financing for development.

16. The Honourable Minister also reminded the meeting of the need for regional leaders to advocate and agitate in order to secure regional support to dispel the international belief that SIDS were not under threat. Within this context he proposed that each regional minister when making interventions in international discussions should present the SIDS case to push back on the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita criterion as the basis for the measurement of development. Instead, he urged leaders to give focus to the issue of vulnerability as the more useful measure of SIDS development. In this regard, the Minister also lamented the absence of strong empirical data required to reinforce the SIDS case stating that the present situation hindered the region's chances of maximizing the potential benefits from the financing for development discourse.

17. He then touched on the essential linkage required between science and technology to inform the region's decision making process and change the paradigm. To illustrate his point he referred to the importance of valuing traditional and indigenous knowledge and the importance of the region adopting a harmonized approach in driving the SIDS development agenda forward. He ended by wishing the participants a successful meeting.

## **2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

18. The meeting agenda was adopted without amendment.

## **3. Contextualizing previous meeting discussions**

19. The Director thanked the Minister for his contribution and endorsed his point of view. She reminded participants that the region began this discourse on 15 March at a regional seminar which was hosted in Saint Lucia. She requested assistance from participants in the identification of the linkages between the SDGs and Samoa Pathway to complete an implementation matrix noting that it was crucial to map critical Caribbean development priorities of the Samoa Pathway especially considering the short falls in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) process.

20. The Director further observed that one of the immediate concerns was the status of middle income countries, a situation that denied Caribbean access to development funding. She pointed out that this situation was created due to the data crisis, which limited the Caribbean's capacity to make a strong case to the multilateral community and suggested that there be urgent action to remedy this situation. She solicited suggestions on how the region could reposition itself to effectively strengthen its defence for a special case for SIDS, and reiterated the importance of featuring the science and technology interface to reinforce the means of implementation to facilitate trade.

## **4. The Samoa Pathway in the context of the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda**

21. This session of the meeting was moderated by the Director, Sustainable Development of CARICOM, who thanked ECLAC for its efforts in organizing the meeting. He noted that this juncture in respect of the Samoa Pathway was different from where the region stood when it embarked on implementing the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (MSI). He contended that the categorization of most SIDS as middle-income countries hampered the implementation of the BPoA.

22. In setting the context for the discussions, he made two presentations. The first illustrated development areas in which the Caribbean was lagging, and placed the implementation status of SIDS into perspective as a basis for guiding the strategic implementation of the Samoa Pathway. He shared studies conducted by UNDP (2010) and other institutions that tracked global social and economic performance which showed that the region was underperforming in the implementation of the MDGs. In most cases, the Caribbean was trailing the rest of the world for the decade 2000-2010. He also cited the Sir Arthur Lewis Centenary Lecture on the crisis of 2008-2009 which agreed that countries with service economies were more affected than resource-based economies, and that trade was the main driver of economies over the last two decades.

23. Affirming that SIDS were among the most vulnerable to disaster and climate variability, the CARICOM Director also referenced an ECLAC study (2010) which proposed that vulnerability increased the gap between the region's performance and other nations.

24. His second presentation highlighted the implementation status of the SIDS development agenda for the region. He proposed a strategy of creating small goal clusters for efficient implementation at the present junction moving past the MDGs and towards the SDGs.

25. Discussions on these presentations were moderated by the ECLAC Director. In opening the floor for discussions, she enquired whether the SDGs mandate was captured in the Samoa Pathway. The SIDS expert of the Caribbean Policy Development Centre made the first intervention noting that the BPoA and the MSI were still relevant in spite of the Samoa Pathway. He suggested however, that the constraints that hampered the implementation of these instruments need to be addressed in order to move forward.

26. He expanded his thought to observe that the gains enjoyed from the implementation of the previous instruments were wiped out by natural disasters and may keep many countries in a poverty loop. The region continued to struggle with vulnerability and volatility which was compounded by the reduction in Overseas Development Aid (ODA). Although the Caribbean may seem to be underperforming they made progress especially with addressing poverty reduction. However, he cautioned that the international community was fatigued with the numerous requests from the region for capacity development and a switch to technical assistance may be prudent. It was important to examine the United Nations strategy in addressing the Samoa Pathway and SDGs implementation.

27. The Chief Sustainable Development and Environment Officer of the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology of Saint Lucia explained that the Samoa Pathway did not exclude sustainable consumption and production, sustainable transportation and culture, but suggested the region chart its development path.

28. The ECLAC Director noticed that culture was referenced but not articulated and queried whether it was possible to reflect this deficiency for Caribbean SIDS in other areas that she found deficient in the Samoa Pathway which included poverty, growth and debt. In that case it is important that the region identify its growth priorities and indicative set of goals.

29. There was consensus that the Samoa Pathway mandate was aligned to the SDGs, but states have to consider how to actually harmonise these efforts. What was the key development was the fact that under the SDGs all agencies had a role to play in implementing the SDGs. The crux of the mandate of the Samoa Pathway was the means of implementation and how this should evolve. There was also agreement that South-South Cooperation and data enhancement should be immediately addressed.

30. In proposing a viable case for Caribbean SIDS a few of the participants were in support of advocacy at the regional and international level. There was a call for government institutional strengthening to ensure the implementation of the Samoa Pathway and SDGs which would also require proper coordination of all agencies at the national level.

31. The question as to how the countries could effectively report on all of the SDGs was discussed and it was determined that the best approach may be for counties to identify a core set of SDGs for them to implement effectively. This way their country's resources could be utilized more efficiently.

32. It was noted that the donor requirements were changing and the region had to keep abreast of such developments. For instance, one participant mentioned the changing scope of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) loan requirements which included debt sustainability.

33. The meeting agreed that there was a need for greater coordination at the national and regional level in order to make progress in implementing the SIDS agenda. Towards this end, there was need for a regional monitoring mechanism which reflected national initiatives that informed a regional strategy, but regional coordination also required streamlining of regional organizations, since each one had different mandates.

34. An expert expressed his fatigue with the incessant mention of the region's poor performance. He instead preferred the meeting to view the implementation of the Samoa Pathway as an opportunity to personalize our efforts, focusing on best practices. Furthermore, the past experiences and short falls from implementing the BPoA and MSI could guide the Caribbean countries as they move forward. Despite the region's lagging globally, he cited the islands' progress in climate change and energy. It was necessary for Caribbean SIDS to formulate a single ten-year position on development. Although historically, some thematic areas remained static others showed various level of collaboration. He believed these were accomplishments to be celebrated. He proposed the option for regional bodies to report on specific thematic areas for the region and countries. What was missing from the dynamic was the energy of advocacy and point that was raised by other participants during the discussions.

35. The Economic Affairs Officer, ECLAC referred to an earlier point on fixing existing issues before moving forward, in that, he believed governments must engage all parties in the implementation of the SDGs. But he lamented on the lack of robust data which required harmonization at the regional and international levels. He encouraged the gathering that the region had to do "better with what it had" which could be achieved through streamlining regional policies.

36. The Caribbean Youth Environment Network representative observed the absence of youth from the sustainable development discourse. She believed it was grave oversight that should be addressed especially considering their underutilized innovative talent that would better serve the region if engaged.

37. The representative from the International Labour Organization observed that GDP was an ineffective measure of development and referred to some relevant poverty studies in moving forward. One of the constraints to assessing development was the lack of data although dire, the situation was not insurmountable. He mentioned some institutions that housed solid data and pointed to regional leaders that could possibly provide technical oversight. He also highlighted the importance of the involvement of the private sector in development.

38. The representative from CPDC, in exploring the constraints to implementing instruments such as the Samoa Pathway and the SDGs, it was clear that ensuring resource efficiency was necessary. This required a revamping of the monitoring and evaluation aspects. He noted that in many cases the environmental and social statistics were missing.

## **5. A technological platform for monitoring progress towards the Samoa Pathway outcomes**

39. The Research Assistant in the Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit of ECLAC reviewed the overall structure of the RCM and the rationale for the platform. She explained that since ECLAC was the secretariat of the RCM, it had the responsibility for reporting on Caribbean SIDS progress in implementing the development agenda. The ICT platform was also deemed to have the potential to serve as a resource tool for member States.

40. In developing the platform, she reported that ECLAC had corresponded with sixteen member States, asking them to identify a national focal point who would assume responsibility of updating their country's implementation status on the platform. She reported that at that time, seven countries identified focal points (Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago) leaving nine countries still to confirm (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Haiti, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Suriname). ECLAC shared the preliminary version of the ICT platform with Grenada and Jamaica for their comments. Preliminary adjustments to the platform were made based on Grenada's comments.



41. She shared with the meeting that the success of the platform depended on the selection of an appropriate focal point, and noted that it was very important to select a person that had the authority to solicit all the necessary information from various national stakeholders that the actual qualifications. She welcomed any further suggestions from the floor for the success of the ICT platform.

42. After the presentation on the ICT platform several questions were asked. Some of the first questions on the floor dealt with the operations of the RCM: how is the chair elected, how often the chair of the RCM is rotated, what is the role of focal point, what level of representation is expected of the focal point, the development of terms of reference (TOR) for the focal point and what is the rotation schedule of the TAC. ECLAC's response pointed to the fact that currently there was no documentation that guided the selection of the chair. On the issue of the TOR for focal points, the Research Assistant explained that countries had to identify a suitable person that could effectively update the country's progress.

43. A participant shared with the meeting that the original concept of the RCM was the need to avoid duplication, encourage higher levels of planning and assist in the overall implementation of the BPoA. In this regard, participants enquired how the ICT platform in its content and function was different from other similar instruments such as the Small Island Developing States Network. ECLAC responded that its focus would be the Caribbean and focal points would be required to make status statements rather than furnish the instrument with elaborate details. The ECLAC Economic Affairs Officer expanded stating that the team could review national studies and still not correctly ascertain the definition of progress; as such a statement was best communicated by it nationals focal points.

44. Participants shared valuable suggestions for increasing the usage of the platform:

- A regional and international calendar of events that may impact on the effective functioning of RCM and regional meetings.
- Apart from reporting, possibly provide a space for a think tank to raise topical issues and thought provoking statements that could guide the SIDS development agenda.
- Provide a discussion forum for regional institutions.
- Develop an instrument that would analyze and map progress based on the data gathered in country.
- Define a measurement of the impact that development initiatives have on the region.
- A space to showcase best practices and bodies of success.
- Provide a forum and meeting point for civil society involved in supporting the sustainable development agenda of Caribbean SIDS.

45. Generally, the meeting participants expressed optimism in the evolution of the ICT platform. ECLAC believed that the platform provided a "win win" proposition for both ECLAC and member States. Regional institutions expressed their interest in populating a space on the platform to share their mandates. The OECS representative mentioned their interest in mainstreaming their oceans drive to stimulate research and present opportunities for collaboration. Another participant praised the effort as a central place to demonstrate progress under the BPoA, MSI, Samoa Pathway, SDGs and the post-2015 agenda, but suggested for it to achieve wide popularity and use among member States it would require a high level marketing strategy. ECLAC acknowledged the interest of the regional institutions in showcasing their profiles and initiatives on the technological platform, but emphasized that it would be their responsibility to provide and maintain the required information. It was agreed in the discussions that while this interface will be actively managed by ECLAC, it would not be moderated.

## **6. RCM/TAC administrative matters**

46. The Economic Affairs Officer of ECLAC noted that the matter of identifying a chair in light of the passing of the late Navin Chandarpal was to be addressed as a matter of urgency. He pointed out that given that the chair was held by Guyana, at the time of Mr. Chandarpal's passing, ECLAC had contacted Guyana regarding a replacement for him, and had been advised that such a person would be identified in due course. It was suggested that a conversation with past chair from Saint Lucia, Ms. Marcia Jules, might provide some guidance on the question of how to proceed. The representative of CPDC recalled that under the original construct of the RCM, the members of the TAC were rotated on a biannual basis. He stated that he was in possession of the Rules and Procedures of the RCM and would share the documentation with ECLAC.

47. It was noted that on the election of Mr. Navin Chandarpal, no alternate had been identified. The Head of Oceans Governance Unit of the OECS therefore suggested a review of the Rules and Procedures of the RCM to ensure continuity of leadership of the mechanism. ECLAC explained that such a decision would be the responsibility of the CDCC. By way of conclusion, the meeting agreed that it would await the advice of Guyana before proceeding to appoint a new chairperson for the RCM/TAC.

## **7. Other matters**

48. The Ambassador in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, and the First Secretary in the Permanent Mission of the Bahamas to the United Nations shared their experiences with the financing for development proceedings, which gave good context to the day's discussions.

## **8. Evaluation**

49. Meeting participants were informed of the meeting evaluation instrument that was disseminated online for their attention and completion.

## **9. Conclusion**

50. The Economic Affairs Officer of ECLAC wrapped up the meeting thanking the participants for their lively and valuable contributions. He handed over the closing to the ECLAC Director who encouraged countries to participate in the ongoing discussions on the post-2015 development agenda as well as to prepare themselves for vigorous engagement in the financing for development meeting which would take place in July 2015.

51. The Chief Sustainable Development and Environmental Officer of the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology of Saint Lucia also thanked everyone for attending. He expressed the Government of Saint Lucia's pleasure in hosting this meeting to advance the region's development agenda. He thanked ECLAC for initiating the discussion and facilitating the meeting.

Annex I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

Crispin d'Auvergne, Chief Sustainable Development and Environment Officer, Sustainable Development and Environment Division, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology, Saint Lucia. E-mail: dauvergnec.sde@gmail.com

Garfield Barnwell, Director, Sustainable Development, Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM). E-mail: garfield.barnwell@caricom.org

Valerie Beach-Horne, PAHO Program Specialist, Pan American Health Organization /World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) Country Program Office, Saint Lucia. E-mail: horneval@paho.org

Gordon Bispham, SIDS Expert, Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC), Barbados. E-mail: gordonbispham@hotmail.com

Bentley Browne, Director of Social and Sustainable Development Division, Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). E-mail: babrowne@oecs.org

Alison Drayton, Senior Advisor, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Headquarters. E-mail: alison.drayton@undp.org

Caroline Eugene, Chief Technical Officer, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology, Saint Lucia. E-mail: ceugene@sde.gov.lc

Hon. James Fletcher, Minister Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology, Saint Lucia. E-mail: minister.susdev@govt.lc

Erica Fortune, Senior Planning Officer (Ag.), Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development, Trinidad and Tobago. E-mail: Erica.Fortune@planning.gov.tt

Tishka Francis, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of The Bahamas to the United Nations. E-mail: tfraser@bahamasny.com

Rianna Gonzales, Regional Chair, Caribbean Youth Environment Network, Trinidad and Tobago. E-mail: riannagonzales@gmail.com

Valerie Isaac, Operations Officer, Environment Sustainability Unit, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Barbados. E-mail: isaacv@caribank.org

Cedric Lazarus, Livestock Development Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) subregional Office for the Caribbean, Barbados. E-mail: cedric.lazarus@fao.org

George Nicholson, Director of Transport and Disaster Risk Reduction, Association of Caribbean States (ACS), Trinidad and Tobago. E-mail: gnicholson@acs-aec.org

Lia Nicholson, Technical Officer, Ministry of Health and the Environment, Environment Division, Antigua and Barbuda. E-mail: nicholson lia@gmail.com

Stephen O'Malley, United Nations Coordinator and Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). E-mail: [stephen.omalley@one.un.org](mailto:stephen.omalley@one.un.org)

Amb. Sheila Sealy Monteith, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Jamaica. E-mail: [Sheila.monteith@mfaft.gov.jm](mailto:Sheila.monteith@mfaft.gov.jm)

Kelvin Sergeant, Specialist, Sustainable Enterprise Development and Job Creation, International Labour Organization (ILO) Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago. E-mail: [sergeant@ilocarib.org.tt](mailto:sergeant@ilocarib.org.tt)

Asha Singh, Head, Oceans Governance Unit, Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). E-mail: [asingh@oecs.org](mailto:asingh@oecs.org)

Ernie Stapleton, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Renewable Energy and the Environment, Nevis Island Administration, Saint Kitts and Nevis. E-mail: [ernie.stapleton@niagov.com](mailto:ernie.stapleton@niagov.com)

**Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean  
Subregional headquarters for the Caribbean**

Diane Quarless, Director. E-mail: [diane.quarless@eclac.org](mailto:diane.quarless@eclac.org)

Willard Phillips, Economic Affairs Officer, Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit. E-mail: [willard.phillips@eclac.org](mailto:willard.phillips@eclac.org)

Elizabeth Thorne, Research Assistant, Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit. E-mail: [elizabeth.thorne@eclac.org](mailto:elizabeth.thorne@eclac.org)

Annex II

**AGENDA**

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Contextualizing previous meeting discussions
4. The Samoa Pathway in the context of the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda
5. A technological platform for monitoring progress towards Samoa Pathway outcomes
6. RCM/TAC administrative matters
7. Meeting evaluation
8. Conclusions and recommendations
9. Closure of meeting