



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**



**Twelfth Forum of Ministers of the Environment
of Latin America and the Caribbean**

**Bridgetown, Barbados
2nd to 7th March 2000**

**A. Preparatory Meeting of Experts
2nd to 3rd March 2000**

Distribution:

Limited

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Provisional Annotated Agenda

Background

- 1.** The Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean is the longest-standing, most representative and most important political gathering for reaching consensus on environmental policies and responses at the regional level.
- 2.** The first meeting of the Forum of Ministers in the twenty-first century, hosted by the Government of Barbados, is taking place in an international political context in which multilateral agreements, and particularly environmental agreements, have attained a great deal of support and influence in both environment and sustainable development policies. Their implementation poses a challenge of major significance in actually bringing about more equitable relations in the use, enjoyment and sustainable conservation of the environment among the countries of the world, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 3.** The serious natural disasters that have occurred in the past two years in Latin America and the Caribbean, which have been accompanied by major human and economic losses, are another aspect that has marked the region. The Governments of all the sectors of society are consequently demanding greater capacity to provide for, prevent and face these phenomena. Thus, climate change, deforestation of the plant cover and chaotic growth in urban areas are topics of utmost interest that will be considered on the agenda of the Twelfth Forum of Ministers.
- 4.** At the meetings held in Havana, Cuba (21 to 26 September 1995), and in Buenos Aires, Argentina (31 October to 2 November and 11 and 12 November 1996), the ministers underscored the need to specify a priority agenda and for the international system to act in coordination to support that regional agenda.
- 5.** At the Eleventh Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, held in Lima, Peru (10 to 13 March 1998), the ministers approved that priority agenda, as well as an inter-agency coordinating mechanism to formulate and implement projects. Initially, this mechanism, known as the Inter-Agency Technical Committee, was formed by UNEP (which serves as coordinator), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); subsequently, it was joined by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the World Bank (WB).

6. The Inter-Sessional Committee of the Forum of Environment Ministers, as a mechanism for follow-up on the decisions, and the innovative Inter-Agency Technical Committee work as dynamic and fellow entities for follow-up on the decisions of the Forum. UNEP, with the close collaboration and support of UNDP, IDB, ECLAC and WB, and in a spirit of inter-agency consensus to support the Forum of Ministers, carried out consultations to prepare the substantive elements of the Barbados meeting. The fruit of their work is evident in the documents that will be used for the discussion at this Twelfth Meeting.

7. This Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean has been convened by the Government of Barbados. UNEP has been designated by the Forum of Ministers to serve as Secretariat. The Meeting will consist of two parts: a preparatory segment of High-Level Experts designated by the Governments, which will be held on 2 and 3 March 2000, and a second ministerial segment that will take place from 5 to 7 March 2000.

8. In the previous context, the Fourth Meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee, held in Lima, Peru, on 2 October 1999, established the date and the substantive elements on the agenda for the Barbados meeting, as well as the following objectives:

- a) *Policies*: to reflect environmental management experiences in the participating countries, including the incorporation of the environmental dimension in national development;
- b) *Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements*: particularly those that deal with priority regional matters such as climate change and biosafety;
- c) *Programming Matters*: aimed at the priorities established by the ministers in the framework of the Regional Action Plan, as well as the Provisional Agenda of the Twelfth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, including a set of priority projects and activities previously identified by the Forum.

9. The purpose of the following annotations is to facilitate consideration of the various items on the agenda proposed for the meeting.

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting

10. The meeting will begin with an opening ceremony on Thursday, 2 March 2000, at 9:00 a.m., with introductory remarks by the officers of the Forum of Ministers, the Government of Barbados and UNEP. The names of the speakers will appear in the related order of the day.

Agenda Item 2: Organization of the meeting

2.1. Adoption of the rules of procedure of the meeting

11. It is proposed, as is customary, that the meeting adopt, *mutatis mutandis*, the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council of UNEP for its proceedings.

2.2. Election of officers

12. It is proposed to the delegates that the officers consist of one President, seven Vice-Presidents and one Rapporteur, taking into account criteria of geographical representativeness and rotation established by the ministerial meetings.

2.3. Approval of the agenda and programme of the meeting

13. The meeting will consider the provisional agenda (**UNEP/ROLAC-IGWG.XII/1**) and the provisional annotated agenda (**UNEP/ROLAC-IGWG.XII/2**), including **Annex I** (programme of sessions) prepared by the Secretariat and will adopt them after incorporating any changes they deem pertinent.

Agenda Item 3: Programming issues

3.1. Report of the Secretariat

14. Under this agenda item, the Secretariat will present a brief report (**UNEP/ROLAC-IGWG.XII/3**) summarizing fulfillment of the decisions of the Eleventh Forum of Ministers (Lima, Peru, 10 to 13 March 1998) and of the twentieth session of the Governing Council of UNEP (Nairobi, Kenya, 1st to 5th of February 1999). The experts will make any observations and recommendations they deem pertinent. Opinions regarding the forthcoming session of the Governing Council of UNEP will also be discussed.

3.2. Report of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC)

3.2.1. Regional Action Plan

15. Under this item, the ITC, through UNEP, will present the ITC report (**UNEP/ROLAC-IGWG.XII/4**) on the progress made in implementing projects in the framework of the Regional Action Plan during its first stage (1998-1999) and the new lines of action suggested for the second stage (2000-2001). Here the representatives of the ITC agencies will be able to make any clarifications they deem pertinent and respond to any concerns the experts may have.

Mid-term review 1998-1999

16. Under this item, the experts will take note of the projects in the Regional Action Plan concluded by the ITC during its first stage and, on that basis, they will review the lines of action that should be maintained and those that should be eliminated (see **UNEP/ROLAC-IGWG.XII/4, Annex I**).

Proposals for 2000-2001

17. Here the experts will discuss the general orientation of the new proposals on lines of action for the period 2000-2001 in the Regional Action Plan, based on the suggested lines of action that stem from and are explained in the working documents indicated in the following item ((see **UNEP/ROLAC-IGWG.XII/4, Annex I**).

3.2.2. ITC documents (working documents) and suggested lines of action

18. Under this item, the experts will discuss the working documents prepared by ITC at the request of the Forum of Ministers with projects or activities from which proposals have been formulated for new lines of action for the period 2000-2001 of the Regional Action Plan and for concrete projects to be executed (see **UNEP/ROLAC-IGWG.XII/4, Annex I**).

3.2.3. Operational mechanisms for the implementation of the Regional Action Plan (including the incorporation of other agencies in the ITC)

19. Here the experts will discuss the new ITC operational mechanisms for the implementation of the Regional Action Plan, which are described in document **UNEP/ROLAC-IGWG.XII/4, Annex III**. and include guidelines for the design and execution of joint projects and new means of financing. The experts will make any observations and recommendations they deem pertinent. The experts will also discuss the respective requests by the Organization of American States (OAS) and by the Andean Development Corporation (CAF, by its abbreviation in Spanish) to become members of the ITC.

Agenda Item 4: Report of the Environmental Training Network (Consultative Council)

20. Under this item, the experts will discuss the report on the activities of the Environmental Training Network since the Eleventh Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, in accordance with decision 4 of the Ninth Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Havana, Cuba, from 21 to 26 September 1995 (see **UNEP/ROLAC-IGWG.XII/3, Annex I**).

Agenda Item 5: Implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs)

21. Pursuant to the request of the Fourth Meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee (Lima, Peru, 2 October 1999) regarding international agreements the experts will discuss issues related to MEAs synergies among mandates and actions and the mechanisms to facilitate these synergies, they will also make recommendations they deem pertinent.

22. Here the experts will also take note of the document on the implementation of MEAs in the Caribbean and the guidelines for making their implementation more effective (see **UNEP/ROLAC-IGWG.XII/3, Annex II**), and they will also make any observations and recommendations they deem pertinent on the concrete projects for follow-up and expansion to other subregions.

Agenda Item 6: Policies

6.1. Proposal for the Barbados Declaration

23. Under this item, the Government of Mexico will present a draft of the Barbados Declaration, which will be a political message that serves as a basis for reflection on the part of the ministers regarding management experiences in their respective countries, including aspects linked to budgets and intersectoral relations, such as the incorporation of the environmental dimension in national management, all in accordance with the agreements reached at the Fourth Meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee (Lima, Peru, 2 October 1999).

6.2. Special topic: the Caribbean Sea as a special area

24. Under this item, the Government of Barbados will make a presentation to the experts on the topic of the Caribbean as a special area, which was introduced at the Twelfth special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the Small Island Developing States, held from 27 to 29 September 1999 in New York. The Forum is an opportunity to reconsider the topic basically from an environmental approach.

Agenda Item 7: Other matters

25. Under this agenda item, the experts will be able to consider any other matters that are pertinent to the objectives of the meeting and have not been noted previously under the specific items. The observers from international organizations and non-governmental organizations will be welcome to present topics of interest to the meeting. There will also be an opportunity to discuss the dates and places of the next meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee and of the Forum of Ministers. There can also be an exchange of ideas to present at the Eight Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (New York, U.S.A., 24 April to 5 May 2000).

Agenda Item 8: Approval of the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of Experts

26. Under this item, the experts will organize themselves as they consider advisable to draft the final report of the meeting, and the rapporteur will present a draft final report for revision and approval, following any changes, by the experts. This final report will include draft decisions for the ministerial segment on the essential matters on the agenda and will constitute the main working document for the deliberations of the ministers.

Agenda Item 9: Closure of the meeting

27. The meeting is expected to conclude its activities on Friday, 3 March 2000, at 6:30 p.m., with remarks by the President of the meeting and a representative of the Executive Director of UNEP.

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Annex I

Schedule of Sessions

Thursday 2nd of March 2000

Morning

Registration
Opening of the meeting
Organisation of the meeting

Afternoon

I. Programming Issues

1. Report of the Secretariat:

- Fulfilment of the decisions of the Eleventh Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Twentieth Governing Council of UNEP

2. Report of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee:

- Regional Environmental Action Plan
 - Mid-term review 1998-1999
 - Proposal for 2000-2001
- ITC documents (summary) and suggested action items
- Operational mechanisms for the implementation of the Action Plan (including incorporation of other agencies in the IATC)

Report of the Environmental Training Network (Consultative Council)

Friday 3rd of March 2000

Morning

II. Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements

III. Policies

- Proposal for the Barbados Declaration
- Special Topic: the Caribbean Sea as a special area

Afternoon

Other issues (follow up meetings, *ad hoc* groups, appointment of the Forum's Inter-sessional Committee)

Approval of the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of Experts

Closure of the Meeting