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Environment
Programme**



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

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A. Preparatory Meeting of Experts
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Final Report of the Eleventh Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Lima, Peru. 13- March 1998 -

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

I Meeting	Mexico City, Mexico, 1982
II Meeting	Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1983
III Meeting	Lima, Peru, 1984
IV Meeting	Cancun, Mexico, 1985
V Meeting	Montevideo, Uruguay, 1987
VI Meeting	Brasilia, Brazil, 1989
VII Meeting	Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 1990
VIII Meeting	Santiago, Chile, 1993
IX Meeting	Havana, Cuba, 1995
X Meeting	Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1996
XI Meeting	Lima, Peru, 1998



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I. Background

1. The Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean have been progressively consolidating their Regional Forum in an effort to reach positions of common interest regarding major items on the global environmental agenda and to arrange co-operation among their countries to strengthen environmental management in the region.

2. At the meetings held in Havana, Cuba (21 to 26 September 1995), and Buenos Aires, Argentina (31 October to 2 November; and 11 and 12 November 1996), the Ministers underscored the need for a priority agenda to be established and for co-ordinated action by the international system to support that regional agenda.

3. The Third Meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Acapulco, Mexico (28 and 29 October 1997), welcomed with satisfaction the efforts made by UNEP, UNDP and IDB to establish concrete partnerships to support the Forum of Ministers.

4. The Tenth Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean accepted the offer made by the Government of Peru to host the Eleventh Meeting of Ministers in Lima, and asked UNEP to support the Government of Peru with the preparation of the meeting. The date and the substantive agenda of the Eleventh Meeting were established by the Third Meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee.

5. The Eleventh Meeting of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean was convened by the Government of the Republic of Peru. UNEP was designated by the Forum of Ministers to serve as the Secretariat of the Meeting, which consisted of two parts: a Preparatory Meeting of High-Level Government-Designated Experts, which was held on 10 and 11 March 1998, and a Ministerial Segment, which took place on 12 and 13 March 1998.

6. The Eleventh Meeting of Ministers was convened at a time crucial to the development of international co-operation in environmental matters:

- ♦ The United Nations system, including its environmental programmes in particular, is immersed in fundamental reforms.
- ♦ A new executive mandate closely linked to the above-mentioned reforms is commencing in the administration of UNEP.
- ♦ More dynamic approaches are being taken in relation to vital elements on the international environmental agenda, such as the negotiations within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- ♦ Within the framework of reforms and at the insistence of the Governments, international organisations are building concrete partnerships to support regional co-operation.

7. The objectives of the Eleventh Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean were:

- ♦ To provide UNEP and other international organisations, particularly UNDP and IDB, with guidance for developing co-ordinated activities that will respond to the priorities of the Forum of Ministers.

- ♦ To agree on a mechanism to identify a priority agenda focusing on three or four major subject areas for the next four years, and to facilitate their implementation and follow-up.
- ♦ To initiate an exchange of information and experience on management in specific subject areas for concrete co-operation activities that will have clear added value for environmental management in the region.
- ♦ To identify and select instrumental and funding mechanisms to implement the regional priorities.
- ♦ To achieve a position of common interest in relation to the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the next special session of the Governing Council of UNEP.
- ♦ To agree on a strategy regarding the emergence of parallel mechanisms that duplicate efforts aimed at regional consensus on environmental matters.

8. UNEP, with the support and close collaboration of UNDP and IDB and in a spirit of inter-agency co-ordination, started to conduct consultations since the Third Meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee to prepare the substantive agenda for the Eleventh Meeting of Ministers.

II. Participation

9. All the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean were invited to the meeting, as were regional and subregional intergovernmental organisations, agencies of the United Nations systems and non-governmental organisations. The Eleventh Meeting of Ministers was attended by 67 governmental representatives of 21 countries of the region and six representatives from four observer countries. Other participants included 62 representatives of 33 international, regional and subregional organisations, non-governmental organisations and other sectors. Dr. Arnoldo José Gabaldón, President of the 19th Governing Council of UNEP was present in the Meeting as a guest of honour. The list of participants is included as **Annex II** to this document.

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting

10. The opening ceremony took place on Thursday, 12 March 1998, at the Hotel Oro Verde in Lima, Peru. Introductory remarks were made by Mr. Mario Maini, on behalf of Ms. María Julia Alsogaray, Secretary of Natural Resources and Sustainable Development of Argentina; Mr. Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director; and Mr. Ludwig Mayer, Minister of State, on behalf of the President of the Republic of Peru, who declared this segment of the Eleventh Meeting of Ministers of the Environment officially open.

Agenda Item 2: Organisation of work

2.1. Adoption of the rules of procedure of the Meeting

11. In accordance with the procedures followed at previous meetings, the Meeting adopted, *mutatis mutandi*, the rules of procedure of the Governing Council of the UNEP for its proceedings.

2.2. Election of officers

12. The Meeting decided it would be presided by the following countries:

President:	Peru	(Mr. Gonzalo Gáldos)
Vice-presidents:	Argentina	(Ms. María Julia Alsogaray)
	Barbados	(Mr. John R. A. Wilson)
	Bolivia	(Mr. Eric Reyes Villa)
	Brazil	(Mr. Haroldo Mattos de Lemos)
	Costa Rica	(Mr. René Castro)
	Cuba	(Ms. Rosa Elena Simeón Negrín)
	Chile	(Mr. Sergio Galilea Ocon)
Rapporteur:	Mexico	(Mr. Dámaso Luna)

2.3. Approval of the agenda and programme of the Meeting

13. The Meeting approved the *Provisional Agenda* (UNEP/LAC-IG.XI/1/Rev.2) and the *Provisional Annotated Agenda* (UNEP/LAC-IG.XI/2/Rev.2) without any changes.

Agenda Item 3: Parallel Mechanisms of Regional Consensus on Environmental Matters

14. Mr. René Castro, Minister of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica, introduced this item and referred to document "*Proposal to Strengthen the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and to Prepare and Implement a Regional Environmental Action Plan*" (UNEP/LAC-IG.XI/4), submitted to the Meeting of High-Level Experts that preceded the Ministerial segment. The Minister underscored the difficulty in actual practice of achieving a balance in the development of the social and environmental aspects of sustainable development. In relation to that problem, the Minister indicated that the inter-agency mechanism was the most appropriate means of making progress in co-ordination and preventing the duplication of efforts among international and regional organisations.

15. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations noted that, in spite of the multilateral, hemispheric and regional bodies that had been established to deal with the three aspects of sustainable development, for the most part those forums had so far been limited to discussing environmental issues without achieving any true integration of the economic, social and environmental aspects of such development. It was recognised that through the success achieved in integrating those three aspects and in attaining due geographical and political representation, the forums would be able to increase their capacity to rally support and response on the part of the Governments.

16. Furthermore, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations reiterated that the environmental agenda adopted by the Forum of Ministers should be presented to other bodies where agendas on sustainable development and environment are discussed, and to the OAS in particular. Concern was expressed regarding proposals that the topic of climate change be addressed at the Summit of the Americas, since that would open up opportunities for negotiation on issues that should be dealt with in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

17. After these considerations, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations adopted *Decision 8*, which appears in **Annex I** to this Report.

Agenda Item 4: Dialogue with representatives of the Workshop on Environmental Citizenship

18. The report of the Environmental Citizenship Workshop, organised by UNDP and UNEP on Wednesday, 11 March 1998, was presented to the Forum of Ministers. On behalf of the Workshop participants, Mr. Luis Rubeo, Secretary of Commissions-Latin American Parliament, presented their conclusions and recommendations.

19. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations supported the continuation and expansion of activities conducted in the field of citizen participation and acknowledged the backing provided by multilateral organisations and particularly by those that form the Inter-Agency Technical Committee. In that context, Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of UNEP, noted that citizen participation should be granted priority, and that the pioneering experience in the Latin American and Caribbean region should also be carried out in other regions. Mr. Töpfer also stated that he was in favour of GEF approving this project.

20. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations indicated that they were in favour of both Governments and citizen organisations seeking areas of common interest so that joint efforts can be made to strengthen the environmental priorities already identified by the Forum of Ministers.

21. Following this exchange of observations, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations approved *Decision 13* on this topic, which is included in **Annex I** to this report.

Agenda Item 5: Statement by the Executive Director of UNEP

22. Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of UNEP, commented on the tasks he had been entrusted with by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in relation to UNEP, Habitat and the United Nations Office in Nairobi. In that context, he indicated the importance of promoting synergy among the various international conventions on environmental matters and made particular reference to the establishment of a task force to appraise efforts linked to the environmental agenda of the United Nations, whose report should be presented to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in June 1998. He requested pertinent input for that task from the countries of the region.

23. Mr. Töpfer indicated that he was in favour of maintaining UNEP headquarters in Nairobi as testimony to the presence that the United Nations system should have in the developing countries. The Executive Director of UNEP encouraged the countries of the region to expand their participation at international forums and in debates on environment, to ensure that the international agenda represents the international community as a whole.

24. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations indicated that they were in favour of maintaining and strengthening the UNEP High-Level Committee of Ministers and Officials, since it was a means of working and generating proposals to advance the reorientation of activities of UNEP. Additionally, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations reiterated the need to advance towards effective regionalisation and they expressed their concern regarding the fact that this objective could continue to be postponed, due to the reduction in financial resources allocated to regional activities.

25. Mr. Töpfer expressed his gratitude to the Forum for the guidelines that discussions had contributed to the activities of the Programme, and he committed himself to seeking

support among the organisations of the United Nations system to implement the priority topics adopted by this Forum. One factor that could contribute to achieving this objective would be contributions from a growing number of countries of the region to the UNEP budget.

26. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations considered this recommendation from the Executive Director to be pertinent , and adopted *Decision 3*, which appears in **Annex I** to this Report

27. Finally, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations congratulated Mr. Töpfer on his recent designation as Executive Director of UNEP and expressed their confidence that his leadership would enable UNEP to serve as the principal environmental organisation of the United Nations system.

Agenda Item 6: Statements by the management of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

28. Mr Fernando Zumbado, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of UNDP recognised that the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean had no parallel in other regions, and therefore provided the countries of the region with a comparative advantage. Consequently, he ratified UNDP's commitment to support implementation of the Action Plan of the Forum of Ministers and called on other international co-operation organisations and agencies to join that common effort undertaken in conjunction with UNEP and IDB. He also expressed the willingness of UNDP to incorporate new environmental elements and proposals into its activities.

29. On behalf of Mr. Enrique Iglesias, President of IDB, Mr. Walter Arensberg expressed the Bank's commitment to supporting Latin American and Caribbean efforts being made to move towards sustainable development. Additionally, Mr. Arensberg conveyed the invitation of Mr. Enrique Iglesias to meet informally with the Ministers of Environment to determine concrete lines of action in environmental matters to be undertaken in the future, and he noted that those lines of action would be an initial demonstration of the IDB partnership with UNDP and UNEP.

30. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations welcomed the addressees of the representatives of UNDP and IDB, and expressed their recognition to those organisations for participating in the alliance with UNEP, to support technically the implementation of the priority action lines defined by the Forum.

Agenda Item 7: Consideration of the recommendations of the Preparatory Meeting of Experts

31. Under this agenda item the Ministers and Heads of Delegations reviewed the recommendations for decisions made by the High Level Experts Meeting, which were presented in document "*Final Report of the Preparatory Meeting of Experts of the Eleventh Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean*" (**UNEP/LAC/IG.XI/3**). During this exercise, the Ministers evaluated the progress made in the Forum and underscored that the strength that had been achieved by this body was of decisive importance to consensus on, and the implementation of, regional environmental policies and plans. In that regard, they reaffirmed their conviction that the Forum should become the regional environmental authority that defines the agenda and priorities of Latin America and the Caribbean.

32. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations focused their discussions on two issues of particular importance to the Forum: clean development mechanisms, within the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and co-operation for the management of protected natural areas. In that regard, the Ministers took note of the presentations of Mr. René Castro, Minister of the Environment and Energy of Costa Rica, and of Mr. Carlos Castaño, Director General, Special Administrative Unit of the Natural National Parks System, Ministry of the Environment of Colombia, respectively.

33. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations congratulated Minister Castro and Mr. Castaño for their presentations, and after deliberation adopted *Decisions 5 and 6*, included in **Annex I** to this report.

34. Some delegations also underscored the need to continue endorsing those on-going activities that were defined as priorities at the Ministerial Meetings in Havana and Buenos Aires. The Forum accepted the proposal and asked UNEP to continue with those priority activities, in accordance with previous decisions.

35. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations also accepted the proposition of the Mexican Delegation that a representative of the Youth Environmental Network, on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Youth Environmental Alliance, explain in detail during the next meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee of the Ministers of the Environment, its proposal to hold a youth environmental forum in the region.

36. The *Decisions 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12*, relevant to the discussions held under this agenda item, are included in **Annex I** to this report.

Agenda Item 8: Other matters

37. The Minister of Environment of Colombia addressed the Meeting of Ministers regarding the serious situation in Colombia resulting from attacks on the petroleum infrastructure in that country. The Forum expressed its concern about these acts and its support for the "*Leave Nature out of the Conflict*" campaign being promoted by the Colombian Ministry of Environment to put an end to such attacks.

38. Mr. Juan Francisco Asturias, Co-ordinator of the National Commission of the Environment of Guatemala, presented a proposition that environmental education and awareness-building campaigns could be conducted in the countries of the region, with the support of the International Olympic Committee and within the framework of the Environmental Citizenship Programme. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations decided to endorse this proposal and adopted *Decision 14*, which is included in **Annex I** to this report.

39. Ms. Maritta Von Bieberstein Koch-Weser, Director of the Sector Management Unit-Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development-Latin America and the Caribbean, of the World Bank; Mr Hama Arba Diallo, Executive Secretary of the Convention to Combat Desertification; Mr. Isaac Maidana, Deputy Secretary General of the Latin-American Association for Integration (ALADI); Mr. Gustavo Gordillo de Anda, Deputy Director General and FAO Regional Representative; Mr. Kirk Rodgers, Director of the Environment and Sustainable Development Unit of the Organisation of American States (OAS); Ms. Claudia Martínez, Chief Sustainable Development Co-ordination Unit of the Andean Development Co-operation (CAF); Mr. K. Mustafa Touré, Programme Manager, CARICOM Secretariat; Mr. Fabián Valdivieso, Secretary General, South East Pacific Permanent Commission (CPPS); Eng. Alvaro Luiz G. Cantanhede, Advisor on Solid Residues, Panamerican Center for Sanitary Engineering' Panamerican Health Organisation (CEPIS/PAHO); Ms. Helga Hoffmann, Director Environment and Development Division (ECLAC); and Dr. Mario A. Ramos, GEF Specialist, informed the Forum of Ministers about the activities that their organisations are carrying out in the area of environment, within the frameworks of their

institutional mandates. The representatives of these organisations also expressed their willingness to cooperate with the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action defined by the Forum of Ministers, and to participate in the inter-agency alliance.

40. After all the issues discussed under this agenda item were exhausted the Ministers and Heads of Delegations expressed their recognition to the High Level Government Experts for the work done in preparing the decision proposals. They also underscored the efficient performance of UNEP's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the crucial support it provided to the consolidation of the Forum of Ministers. The delegates emphasised that the merit of this effort was more significant in view of the increasingly limited resources of UNEP.

41. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations unanimously accepted the offer made by the Government of Barbados to host the XII Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean. The dates for the XII Meeting will be determined at the occasion of the Fourth Meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee of the Forum of Ministers.

42. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations also took note of the proposition made by the Government of Brazil to host the Thirteenth Meeting of Ministers.

43. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations entrusted the Presidency of the Eleventh Forum, under Peru, to assume leadership in promoting and disseminating the agreements of the Eleventh Forum of Ministers and offered the President their full support in performing that task.

Agenda item 9: Approval of the Report of the Meeting

44. The rapporteur submitted a draft of the Final Report of the Eleventh Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to the Plenary. After incorporating the modifications deemed pertinent by various delegations, the report was approved by the Meeting, including the decisions listed in **Annex I** to this report.

Agenda Item 10: Closing of the Meeting

45. The Meeting concluded its work at 19:00 hrs, on 13 March 1998, expressing its gratitude to the people and Government of the Republic of Peru through Ms. Rosa Elena Simeón Negrín, Minister of Science, Technology and Environment of Cuba, on behalf of all the participating Ministers and Heads of Delegations. In that regard, *Decision 15*, which appears in **Annex I** to this report, was adopted by the Eleventh Meeting of Ministers.

46. Ms. María Julia Alsogaray, Secretary of Natural Resources and Sustainable Development of Argentina; Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of UNEP; and Mr. Gonzalo Gáldos, President of the Environment National Council of Peru, then addressed the meeting, followed by Mr. Roberto Muñante, Minister of State and Representative of the President of the Republic of Peru, who officially closed the Eleventh Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

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Annex I

Decisions

The Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Governments present at the Eleventh Meeting of the Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Lima, Peru, from 10 to 13 March 1998, taking into account the recommendations of the Preparatory Meeting of Experts and the deliberations of this Eleventh Meeting of Ministers,

A. STRENGTHENING OF THE FORUM OF MINISTERS

Decision 1 Institutional Entities

Considering Decision 1 of the Ninth Meeting in Havana and Decision 5(a) of the Tenth Meeting in Buenos Aires in reference to the consolidation and strengthening of the meetings of ministers of the region, as well as the statements made in that regard during the Eleventh Meeting of Ministers,

Recognising the growing importance of the Regional Forum in identifying major environmental problems and the search for common solutions,

Assigning great value to the role of UNEP as the principal world environmental authority that should establish world activities in favour of the environment and promote the coherent application of environmental aspects of sustainable development in the United Nations system,

Taking into account the conclusions of the second meeting of the High-Level Committee of Ministers and Officials regarding the reform and revitalisation of UNEP,

DECIDE

1. To ratify that the Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, formed by all the countries of the region, is the principal intergovernmental political forum in environmental matters.

2. To reaffirm that this political forum is the body responsible for identifying and guiding environmental activities, so as to make regional and international co-operation increasingly effective, coherent and harmonious, and the sound use of available financial resources.

3. To continue and strengthen the regionalisation and decentralisation of UNEP, which necessarily calls for greater participation of this Forum in the political, programming and budgetary decisions of the Governing Council of UNEP.

4. To assess, within the reforms of UNEP, the possibility of the Forum serving as the Governing Council for Latin America and the Caribbean, as one of its principal functions.

5. To build the capacity of the Forum of Ministers to prepare and implement the Regional Action Plan, adopting the institutional arrangements proposed in document **UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XI/4**, point III, numbers 14 to 22 (see **Annex III** to this document).

Decision 2
Proposals on priority topics

Considering the decisions of the Third Meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean on the selection and design of mechanisms to implement the regional environmental priorities,

Taking into account the proposals in the document "*Proposal to Strengthen the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and to Prepare and Implement a Regional Environmental Action Plan*" (**UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XI/4**) presented by the Secretariat and prepared jointly by UNEP, IDB and UNDP,

Convinced of the need to strengthen the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, so as to maintain a structured dialogue on common problems and set forth a concrete priority agenda for regional co-operation,

Considering that the strengthening of environmental management in the countries of the region and promotion of the environmental dimension in public policies is of high priority for this Forum,

DECIDE

1. To establish the following priority topics of interest to the Forum of Ministers over the next four years:

- **Institutional framework, policies and instruments for environmental management**, which include, among other topics, environmental education and training, citizen participation, promotion of the environmental dimension in public policies, the interrelationship between trade and environment, funding mechanisms and particularly estimates for environmental investments in the region, innovative legal and economic instruments, and the exchange of experiences in decentralising environmental management.
- **Integrated watershed management**, including the environmental management of coastal and ocean zones and water resources management.
- **Biological diversity and protected areas**, in the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the proposals presented as a result of the Consultation with Experts of National Parks and other Protected Areas of Latin America and the Caribbean and of other regional agreements.
- **Climate change** in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, with a view to establishing bases for reaching a consensus on regional positions regarding this topic.

2. To instruct the Inter-Agency Technical Committee to report to the special meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee, which will be held within 180 days, on the development of the priority topics that appear in **Appendix I** of **Annex I** to this

document, including funding sources, duration of implementation periods and expected outputs.

3. To welcome the invitation of the Inter-American Bank (IDB) to hold a meeting, together with the member countries of the Forum, UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank, at IDB headquarters on 17 and 18 September 1998.

Decision 3
Support for Implementation of the Regional Action Plan

Mindful that the United Nations Environment Programme must have sufficient and foreseeable funds available in order to be effective,

Concerned by the significant reduction in the resources available to UNEP, as well as foreseeable funds,

Mindful of the need for UNEP to have stable and foreseeable financing, and of paragraph 38.23 of Agenda 21, in which UNEP is urged to strengthen its Regional Offices,

Considering the conclusions of the second meeting of the UNEP High-Level Committee of Ministers and Officials, and particularly the conclusion referring to sufficient, increasing and predictable financing of UNEP,

Convinced of the need to adapt the current structures of regional environmental co-operation to the new tasks arising from the process initiated at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

DECIDE

1. To urge the Governments, international and national organisations, and international financial institutions to contribute in a co-ordinated manner to the full implementation of the Regional Action Plan approved by the Forum of Ministers.

2. To express their appreciation for the contribution being made by UNEP, UNDP and IDB through the partnership established to support the Forum of Ministers.

3. To recognise the effort made by the Governments of the region that have contributed to the Environment Fund over and above the commitments assumed for the 1996-1997 biennium.

4. To maintain and, in so far as possible, increase the voluntary contributions of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to the UNEP Environment Fund, in accordance with the capacity of each country.

5. To urge the countries of the region to give consideration to making contributions to the UNEP Environment Fund.

6. To promote the necessary initiatives for the Governing Council of UNEP to substantially increase the financial resources for the regional implementation of co-operation activities.

7. To encourage the use of capacities and human and technical resources in Latin America and the Caribbean to implement both the Regional Action Plan adopted by the Forum of Ministers and UNEP activities.

B. SHARED POSITIONS

Decision 4 Biological Diversity

Considering the recommendations made during the Regional Meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Lima, Peru, from 4 to 6 March 1998, preparatory to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,

Taking into account the invitation of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity to present the results of the Eleventh Forum of Ministers of the Environment to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Bratislava, Slovakia, from 4 to 15 May 1998, regarding the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity,

Affirming the close relationship that exists between the conservation and sustainable use of the components of biological diversity and the importance of promoting the strengthening of environmental legislation, institutional capacities, including human resources, and the identification of regional action priorities and co-operation areas to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity,

Mindful that in the identification of regional priority activities, consideration should be given to the need to distinguish exclusively national activities from others which, owing to their regional characteristics, could be implemented through the development of regional and subregional strategies,

Considering, finally, the objectives of the Eleventh Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean,

DECIDE

1. To endorse the recommendations made by the Regional Meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean preparatory to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and request the Executive Secretariat of the Convention to see that the report of the Preparatory Meeting is officially distributed during the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

2. To accept the invitation of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity to present the results of the Eleventh Forum of Ministers of the Environment at the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Bratislava, Slovakia, from 4 to 15 May 1998, in order to present action proposals aimed at achieving effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the region.

3. To request the Executive Secretariat of the Convention to work in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme and other international agencies in preparing a regional programme of action for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity that includes, among other activities, the establishment of a regional information exchange network and the application and assessment of

common technologies for economic, social and cultural valuation of biological diversity.

4. To call on the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to promote the development and strengthening of national capacities, including their human and institutional resources, the enabling of technology transfer, in accordance with article 16 of the Convention, and the establishment of joint programmes for the development of technologies pertinent to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

5. To request the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, in accordance with decision III/13 of the Conference, to assign greater attention to mountain ecosystems in its future programme of work, in view of the critical importance of such ecosystems to the region.

6. To firmly support the recommendation of the Regional Workshop on the Enabling Mechanism, held in Cartagena, Colombia, and to request the Conference of the Parties to issue a clear mandate to the Global Environment Facility on criteria for financing to implement this Mechanism.

7. To request the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to make every possible effort to strengthen the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and instruct it to promote greater linkage with the scientific and technical community.

Decision 5

Strengthening of the Systems and Networks of National Parks and other Protected Areas in Latin America and the Caribbean

Taking into account that there is a new view of protected areas based on their being considered strategic spaces for the countries and tools that are essential to the growth and future development of our nations and to the search for satisfactory living conditions, in addition to their being one of the main options for protecting our biological diversity and natural heritage,

Considering that the First Latin American Congress on National Parks and Other Protected Areas, held in Santa Marta, Colombia, in May 1997, recommended decisive action on the part of the national governments as guarantors of the conservation of our countries' natural and cultural legacy, which, as a responsibility that cannot be delegated, should be strengthened to fulfil their functions and responsibilities in the regulation and management of such areas, redoubling efforts to meet demands for environmental goods and services,

Recognising the growing capacity of the local governments, civil communities, NGOs, the private sector and the academic community to support the national governments in the development and management of these spaces, following careful preparation and suitable definition of spheres, roles and powers,

Bearing in mind that the governments of the region should establish legal, political and collaboration instruments to put into operation the commitments of the

Convention on Biological Diversity and other international and hemispheric commitments, with emphasis on *in-situ* conservation and sustainable development,

DECIDE

1. To incorporate a chapter on protected areas in national development processes and policies, underscoring the value and role in the production of environmental goods and services and in the appropriate protection and use of biodiversity.

2. To update and improve the conceptual and legal framework of the national systems of protected areas, considering national parks and other strictly protection categories as core spaces of bioregional strategies in which other more flexible categories complement conservation and sustainable-use actions. The strictly protection categories should preferentially be managed by a single national environmental authority, while the more flexible categories should be defined on the basis of voluntary agreements with all the sectors involved, promoting the creation of biological corridors within and between bioregions so as to ensure linkage between the different components of the natural heritage of our nations.

3. To support submission and promotion of the project "*Strengthening the Institutions of National Parks and other Protected Areas and Bioregional Planning*" to international financial organisations, since it is considered to be of priority importance to achieving biodiversity conservation and sustainable development objectives of our region. In that regard, it is recommended that FAO, in collaboration with UNEP, UNDP, IUCN, the Caribbean Environment Programme, CAMPAM and other organisations and agencies take the necessary steps to support the countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region in the final formulation and presentation of the project to the GEF.

4. To encourage the development of economic instruments with elements that provide qualitative and quantitative repayment to the areas for the environmental goods and services that they produce, as well as incentives for governmental bodies and local communities directly involved in these areas, so as to promote a more positive attitude towards the existence of protected areas in their territories and enable such areas to be institutionally and financially sustainable.

5. To work for the development of conceptual and regulatory frameworks for the establishment of coastal marine protected areas, taking into account the pronounced imbalance now existing between land territories, on the one hand, and coastal and marine areas, on the other.

6. To encourage bilateral or multilateral agreements to achieve consensus on and joint planning of activities in transboundary protected areas, as well as the strengthening of regional or subregional co-operation networks or other mechanisms to share experiences and resources, preferentially supporting countries with the greatest need for co-operation in accordance with an *in-situ* co-operation strategy for biological diversity.

Decision 6
Clean Development Mechanism

Considering the need to continue strengthening the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

Bearing in mind that the Kyoto Protocol was approved in December 1997 in compliance with the Berlin Mandate agreed to in the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties,

Mindful that, as of 16 March 1998, the aforementioned instrument is open for signing and subject to ratification, acceptance or approval by the States,

Considering that the Kyoto Protocol, in its Article 10, reinforces the obligation of all the Parties,

Taking into account the principle of common, but differentiated responsibilities, without introducing any new commitment for the Parties beyond those included in Article 2,

Considering it significant that Article 11 of the Kyoto Protocol refers to the transfer of new and additional financial resources and the transfer of technology; and,

Bearing in mind that Article 12 of the Kyoto Protocol defines a clean development mechanism to help the Parties not included in Annex I to achieve sustainable development and contribute to the ultimate objective of the Convention, as well as to help the Parties included in Annex I to comply with the commitments established in Article 3,

DECIDE

1. To exhort the Parties to the Convention to sign and ratify the Kyoto Protocol in order to ensure that the Protocol enters into effect as soon as possible.

2. To support the operation of the clean development mechanism in which the countries can participate on a voluntary basis, indicating that the modalities and procedures defined should guarantee transparency, fairness and efficiency in its operation.

3. To establish a Working Group with the financial support of IDB, UNDP and UNEP to continue with the analysis, improvement and design of proposals regarding implementation of the clean development mechanism, and to identify and enrich the experience gained in the countries. The final objective will be to identify an initiative that will contribute to enhancing the position of the region and its negotiation capacity; and the proposals will be communicated to all the countries of the region. The first meeting of the Working Group is planned for April in the city of Lima.

4. To urge the Parties listed in Annex II of the Convention to facilitate the means necessary for the transfer of technology to the developing countries which are not Parties to Annex I, and that those countries present their national communications as established in Article 12 of the Convention as soon as possible.

5. To ratify the need for part of the funds for this mechanism to be allocated to the developing nation Parties that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, so they can afford the costs of adaptation.

6. To reaffirm that the mechanism for clean development may not replace the obligations to which the countries listed in Annex II of the Convention have bound themselves under Article 4, Paragraphs 3, 4 and 5, of the Convention, and the provisions of Article 11 of the Kyoto Protocol.

Decision 7
International Convention to
Combat Desertification and Drought

Recalling the decisions adopted on the subject of desertification and drought in the Ministerial Meetings of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Havana and Buenos Aires, respectively,

Recalling that the First Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, held in Rome, Italy, in September 1997, approved Decision 12/CP 1, in which it was decided to *"Welcome with satisfaction the adoption of the Regional Action Programme by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean"*,

Emphasising that the aforementioned First Conference of the Parties chose the International Fund for Agricultural Development, IFAD, to house the Global Mechanism in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of existing financial mechanisms, aimed at promoting measures to mobilise and channel substantive financial resources, as well as *"analysing the sources of financial aid and the mechanisms for channelling resources locally, nationally and regionally"*,

Concerned about the continuous and profound processes of degradation of soils in our region and the resulting negative impact on economic and social conditions among our peoples, leading to the exacerbation of poverty and extreme poverty,

Reaffirming the agreements and recommendations resulting from the Regional Conferences of Latin America and the Caribbean to Combat Desertification and Drought,

DECIDE

1. To request that the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought implement, via the Global Mechanism, the channelling of funds to collaborate in preparing the Regional Action Programme and putting it into operation.

2. To request that the Secretary of the Convention open, as soon as possible, the Regional Coordinating Unit for Latin America and the Caribbean, headquartered in Mexico, and request UNEP, UNDP and FAO, as well as other agencies of the United Nations system to support this action.

3. To accelerate the implementation of the regional, subregional and binational projects in this Programme, such as the Subregional Programme for Sustainable Development of the American Gran Chaco (Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay).

4. To promote the preparation and implementation of country programmes to combat desertification and drought.

5. To support the holding of the Fourth Regional Conference, which will take place in Antigua and Barbuda, in April 1998.

Decision 8 **Parallel Mechanisms for Regional Consensus**

Considering that the intergovernmental consultations among the maximum environmental authorities of Latin America and the Caribbean, held within the framework of the United Nations, began in 1982 with the secretarial support of UNEP,

Mindful that the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean has come to be considered the maximum body of regional environmental consensus,

Taking into account that there are other regional forums that examine environmental topics in connection with their agendas and mandates, such as the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO); and that there are other subregional forums directly or indirectly linked to the environmental agenda, such as the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS), the Treaty for Amazonian Co-operation, the Andean Community of Nations, the River Plate Basin Treaty and the Caribbean Environment Programme, among others,

Affirming that it is necessary for the Forum of Ministers, as the regional platform at the highest level in environmental matters, to define criteria and co-ordination mechanisms with inter-American bodies to ensure that efforts are not duplicated and that the agendas are complementary and compatible,

DECIDE

1. To establish an Inter-Agency Technical Committee under the co-ordination of UNEP as recommended in the document "*Proposal to Strengthen the Forum of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean and to Prepare and Implement a Regional Environmental Action Plan*" (**UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XI/4**). Within this Technical Committee, UNEP will encourage the participation of both the agencies and programmes of the United Nations system and bodies of the Inter-American system, based on the partnerships formed with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), respectively.

2. To ensure that the composition of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee is flexible, so as to facilitate the technical co-ordination of the programmes that these organisations carry out in Latin America and the Caribbean and, thereby, to respond

more effectively to the priorities agreed on by the Forum of Ministers. Thus, on the basis of the partnerships already established with UNDP and IDB, other agencies of both the United Nations system and of the inter-American system will join the Committee, in accordance with the subject areas that form the regional environmental plan.

3. To request the Chair of the Inter-Sessional Committee of Ministers of the Environment to present agreements reached by the Forum of Ministers at other international forums on environment and sustainable development.

4. To provide international and hemispheric sectoral debates with guidance based on the regional environmental plan adopted by the Forum of Ministers.

Decision 9 **Caribbean Small Island Developing States**

Recalling that Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, adopted at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, recognised the special needs and vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in achieving sustainable development,

Recalling that the 1994 United Nations Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States produced the SIDS Programme of Action (POA) which identified seventeen priority areas, including Regional Co-operation, Coastal Marine Resources and Climate Change and Sea Level Rise,

Considering the decisions of the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on the Implementation of the POA for the Sustainable Development of SIDS, held in Bridgetown, Barbados from 10 to 14 November 1997,

Recognising the growing importance of the Regional Forum in identifying major environmental problems and the search for common solutions,

In view of the Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Global Climate Change (CPACC) project which focuses on enabling activities for island and low-lying States of the Region,

Taking into account that 1998 has been declared as the International Year of the Ocean and that Coastal Marine issues have been identified as one of the priority areas for action by the Regional Forum,

Mindful of the 1999 United Nations General Assembly Special Session to Review the Implementation of the SIDS POA,

DECIDE

1. To endorse the preparations for the 1999 United Nations General Assembly Special Session to Review the Implementation of the SIDS POA,

2. To support regional activities in recognition of the International Year of the Ocean including the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) initiative, which has been endorsed by the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) to have the Caribbean Sea internationally recognised as a special area in the context of sustainable development,

3. To recognise the CPACC project as a model of regional co-operation in addressing global environmental problems.

Decision 10
Shared positions related to the sixth session of the
Commission on Sustainable Development and the next session
of the UNEP Governing Council

Considering how important it is that the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean present common positions in the different forums of international negotiation convened by UNEP, other organisations within the United Nations system, Governments, regional and subregional organisations and other agencies on subjects relevant to the environmental agenda and sustainable development,

Taking into account the opportunity provided by the Eleventh Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to identify a set of shared positions on these subjects, and the strengthening of the Forum of Ministers; and

Bearing in mind that this action could contribute to consolidate positions and strengthen the negotiating capacity, all in an effort aimed at more effective environmental protection and the promotion of sustainable development,

DECIDE

1. To adopt shared positions to be presented to the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and to the special session of the Governing Council of UNEP:

2. To support, at the **sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development,** the following shared positions in the field of **freshwater management:**

- To formulate and implement policies and programmes for integrated watershed management, taking into account the specific needs and conditions of each country.
- To strengthen regional and international co-operation for the transfer of appropriate environmental technology and the financing of programmes and projects related to the management of water resources, including recycling, management and final disposal of wastewaters.
- To support the ongoing efforts of the Inter-American Network on Water Resources to facilitate co-operation and the exchange of experiences and technology for managing water resources in the region.
- To guarantee access to drinking water and sanitation services.
- To urge communities to participate in the activities related to the exploitation and use of water resources.
- To promote sound water consumption (industrial, agricultural and urban)
- To strengthen institutional capacity for integrated water resources management.

3. To promote the following common positions related to the topic of industry at the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development:

- To demand fulfilment of the commitments assumed in Rio regarding the transfer of resources and technologies to the developing countries in order to achieve eco-efficiency and environmentally sound industrial development.
- To promote the efficient use of energy from non-renewable sources and the use of environmentally sound renewable resources.
- To adopt economic policies, legislation and incentives that support incorporation of the concept of "cleaner production" in industries.

4. To draw the attention of the forthcoming special session of the Governing Council of UNEP to the following common positions:

- To back the decisions of the nineteenth session of the Governing Council of UNEP and, in particular, the Nairobi Declaration, as well as the agreements of the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations that ratifies UNEP as the maximum institutional authority in items on the international environmental agenda.
- To strengthen effective co-ordination and integration between UNEP and the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements in order to fulfil the mandates of the Nairobi Declaration and of the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (27 January to 7 February 1997).
- To strengthen the regionalisation and decentralisation of UNEP, in accordance with pertinent decisions, such as Decision 5 of the Tenth Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and Decision 31 of the nineteenth session of the Governing Council of UNEP.
- To grant specific powers to the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to enable it to play a greater role in the allocation of UNEP resources used to support activities in the region, so that such activities will coincide with the interest and priorities decided on at the meetings of the Forum.

C. OTHER DECISIONS

Decision 11

El Niño/Southern Oscillation Environmental Impacts

Considering that the El Niño/Southern Oscillation is a recurring climatic event that results in the warming of waters whose intensity and occurrence vary as a result of global climatic variables,

Considering that the 1997-1998 El Niño/Southern Oscillation is the climatic event of greatest social, economic and ecological impact of the past 50 years, and that its effects are resulting in the loss of human lives caused by flooding and overflowing, the proliferation of infectious-contagious diseases, and the isolation and lack of provisions in towns, owing to the breakdown of means of communication, the devastation of crop and livestock areas and the incapability of providing basic urban services, among other factors,

Bearing in mind that the principal countries affected in the region are making bold efforts to develop integrated prevention, emergency and reconstruction activities,

Aware that the environmental alterations caused by the climatic effects of the El Niño/Southern Oscillation not only produce ecological instability but also present temporary opportunities to further the management of natural resources.

Taking into account recommendation 23 of the Latin American and Caribbean Meeting Preparatory to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which refers to the relationship between El Niño/Southern Oscillation and biological diversity,

DECIDE

1. To express their solidarity with the victims and other persons affected by the climatic effects of the 1997-1998 El Niño/Southern Oscillation.

2. To recognise the progress made by the nations affected by the effects of the 1997-1998 El Niño/Southern Oscillation in integrated prevention, emergency and reconstruction activities, and to invite the United Nations system to co-ordinate remedial activities to improve their efforts to solve the problems and take advantage of accumulated experience gained in these cases.

3. To urge the nations affected by the 1997-1998 El Niño/Southern Oscillation to incorporate the principle of sustainable use of natural resources and the fundamental principles of land-use management into their national reconstruction strategies in order to prevent ecological alterations.

4. To recognise the importance of the agreements of the Latin American and Caribbean Meeting Preparatory to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity related to the study and management of biological diversity resulting from the effects of the 1997-1998 El Niño/Southern

Oscillation. **Decision 12**
Embargo against Cuba

Taking into account UN General Assembly Resolution 52/10 on the "*necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba*",

Reaffirming that both at the Ninth and Tenth Meetings of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean decisions were adopted in relation to the environmental effects caused by the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba,

DECIDE

1. To reiterate the rejection of all extraterritorial measures promulgated against Cuba, which place a constraint on the normal and essential development of relations of co-operation and exchange in environmental matters in the region.

2. To call for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba, so as to allow full implementation of the Cuban National

Environment and Development Programme and contribute to the fulfilment of Agenda 21.

3. To reiterate its deep concern about the effects afflicting Cuba in all spheres of economic, commercial and financial life, and particularly in environmental matters, as a consequence of the embargo.

Decision 13 **Citizen Participation**

Considering that among the priority areas of UNEP and in the subject areas in the Regional Action Plan for Latin America and the Caribbean, particular importance is given to the advisability of promoting and facilitating citizen participation in regional environmental management,

Mindful of the progress made in the experiences regarding citizen participation in environmental management in the countries of the region,

Taking note of the Environmental Citizenship Workshop convened by UNDP and UNEP at the request of this Eleventh Meeting of Ministers of the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean,

Recognising that the Environmental Citizenship Programme is an important participatory and co-operative work experience, which has received decisive support from a significant number of countries of the region for consideration by the Global Environment Facility (GEF),

DECIDE

1. To ratify the decision adopted at the Tenth Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to hold its periodic meetings in close interaction with citizen organisations.

2. To express its support for the UNDP and UNEP Environmental Citizenship Programme and to request the Council of the Global Environment Facility to approve this programme in its portfolio of projects.

3. To request UNDP and UNEP to submit proposals to the Governments for the development of pilot citizen participation experiences in the countries of the region and, through the Environmental Citizenship Programme, to conduct an inventory of successful experiences in citizen participation in regional environmental management.

4. To urge the Governments to establish focal points to give continuity to the interaction between the networks of the Environmental Citizenship Programme and the Ministers of the Environment, supporting bodies such as national councils on sustainable development or other entities.

5. To call on the networks of civil society to report on the progress made in implementing the Action Plan of the Environmental Citizenship Project at the next meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee of the Forum of Ministers.

Decision 14
Sports and the Environment

Recognising the need to develop mechanisms that contribute to the success and dissemination of environmental education programmes,

Noting with preoccupation the insufficient resources and tools available to carry out regional and global environmental education projects,

Recognising the co-operation agreement signed in 1994 between the International Olympic Committee and UNEP, to undertake joint actions in this field,

DECIDE

1. To express their recognition of the IOC's contribution and interest in environmental activities.

2. To urge the countries of the region, based on the agreement between the IOC and UNEP, and within the framework of the Environmental Citizenship Programme, to initiate co-operation agreements with their own National Olympic Committees to support through sport and environmental education, the promotion and implementation of the environmental priorities identified by the Forum of Ministers.

Decision 15
Acknowledgement to the people and Government of Peru

The Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Governments present at the Eleventh Meeting of the Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Lima, Peru, from 10 to 13 March 1998, taking into account the deliberations of this Eleventh Meeting of Ministers,

DECIDE

To express their deep gratitude to the people and Government of Peru for the generous hospitality extended during this Eleventh Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Annex I - Appendix I

Summary of priority topics for the Regional Environmental Action Plan in Latin America and the Caribbean for the next four years

I. Institutional framework, policies and instruments for environmental management

Justification	Suggested lines of actions
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A. Environmental management

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to modernise environmental management institutions and mechanisms, in accordance with new market liberalisation policies, privatisation, decentralisation and participation of the private sector and civil society. • Continuation of environmental deterioration in spite of new constitutional and legislative frameworks and institutional arrangements in the field of environment. • Need to update information on environmental management and increase opportunities for the systematic exchange of experience. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A ministerial conference on topics of critical importance to environmental management , including the development of innovative funding mechanisms and the exchange of information on existing successful practices (at the end of 1998). 2. The preparation of case studies and good practices on: environmental legislation and institutional matters, decentralisation, urban environmental management, environmental policy instruments and mobilisation of financial resources (1998-1999). 3. The operation and maintenance of databases, organisation of workshops for government officials and civil society, visits of officials to other countries (1998-1999).
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B. Citizen participation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to promote and facilitate citizen participation in regional and local environmental management. • Lack of clarity and recognition regarding their differentiated environmental management rights and responsibilities on the part of diverse sectors of civil society. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The designation of one focal point per country for the exchange of experiences on citizen participation among the countries, incorporating lessons and improved practices. 2. The preparation of a document including subregional and country experiences (for the XII Meeting of the Forum). 3. Support the implementation of the project through the partnership established between UNEP and UNDP to carry out the Project on Global Environmental Citizenship. 4. Exchange experience through the regional networks of press, radio and electronics with the support of Tierramérica, PULSAR and the UNDP Hemispheric Sustainable Development Network, respectively. 5. Encourage the holding of an interactive session with representatives of civil society on regional environmental priorities whenever a meeting of the Forum of Ministers is held. The ministers should decide on the type of session to be held.
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C. Trade and environment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to assess the impact of international trade liberalisation on environment and sustainable development in the region. • Need to have mechanisms to assist in identifying possible opportunities of trade and environment, promotional aspects and positive synergy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examination of the most important experiences regarding the impacts of trade regulations on environment and of environmental requirements on trade in the region. 2. Support for the work of Governments on relation to the topic of trade and the environment. 3. Analysis of trade and environment opportunities and synergy.
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D. Environmental Education and Training

Justification	Suggested lines of action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporation of the environmental dimension at all education levels and different sectors of society. • Conversion of the education and training process into a basic tool for environmental management. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promotion, advisory services and support for new curricular designs that incorporate the environmental dimension at the different levels of the education system. 2. Strengthening of the postgraduate system in environment and sustainable development. 3. Support for training teachers in the education system. 4. Support for environmental training at the community level. 5. Strengthening of a publishing programme and the production of basic textbooks for environmental training in topics of priority to the region.

II. Integrated management of water resources

Justification	Suggested lines of action
A. Environmental management of coastal zones and oceans	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for integrated management of coastal and marine ecosystems. • Need to assess and harmonise regional and subregional institutional mechanisms for the management of coastal and marine areas (if an initiative is adopted, it should be based on other existing initiatives so as to make full use of resources and prevent duplication). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare a five-year agenda for the management of coastal zones and oceans, including mechanisms for the dissemination of successful experiences in country and subregional programmes. 2. Examine and assess the regional and subregional mechanisms and existing institutional frameworks for the management of coastal zones and oceans in Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to improve their effectiveness. 3. Prepare handbooks on the use of tools for the integrated management of coastal zones and land-use planning techniques in critical areas of the region.

B. Integrated watershed management

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing deterioration of water quality. • Reductions in water availability. • Need for development of sustainable water management practices. • Need for actions to support integrated management of shared water resources. • Need to develop institutional capacity to confront national and regional needs for integrated management of water resources. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Human resource capacity building for IWRM in LAC, to build institutional capacity in the countries of the region to address integrated environmental management needs, with emphasis on water resources. 2. Programme on legislative framework for shared drainage basins in Latin America in order to promote legislative mechanisms in the field of water resources, to stimulate the preparation of framework law that will ensure the sustainable use of inland, coastal and marine water resources, including the wetlands in the region. 3. Exchange of experience on integrated and participatory environmental management of hydrological water basins through a comparative analysis of successful experiences in the integrated and participatory management of hydrologic basins; a report that will facilitate the exchange of successful practices and of the organisation of a seminar to consolidate an experience exchange system that will enable contributions to be made to the design of effective public policies.
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III. Biological diversity and protected areas

Justification	Suggested lines of actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weakness of national parks and other protected areas institutions. • Complexity of the administration of national parks and other protected areas due to the increasing involvement of interested and affected actors. • Need to share experiences at the regional level and to act in co-ordination to meet common needs. • Need to establish linkages amongst protected areas which allow migration of flora and fauna. • Need to attend critical ecoregions of regional and global importance. • Need to establish linkages between national parks and other protected areas with buffer zones and across country boundaries. • Need to establish new partnerships and alliances with neighbouring agencies, communities and individuals that can develop broad bioregional programmes. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Institutional Strengthening of the Services of National Parks and Other Protected Areas in Latin America and the Caribbean, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a system of protected areas for Latin America and the Caribbean based on common methodological criteria to be used in the countries, including the most important biomass and ecosystems in the region and supported by suitable management of national and regional information and rapid communication systems. • Improvement of the management and administration of protected areas in Latin America and the Caribbean through the training of personnel who work in them. • Contribution to co-ordinated efforts in the countries of the region in shared land and marine environments, particularly in selected critical ecoregions. • Strengthening of mechanisms for technical exchange and the transfer of information and experiences among the countries of the region, so as to make possible the unification of policies, criteria and tools for the establishment and management of protected areas. •

Justification	Suggested lines of actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to increase regional technical co-operation and the exchange of information and experience on the planning and management of national parks and other protected areas through existing bodies such as the Latin American Technical Co-operation Network on National Parks, other Protected Areas and Wildlife, under the FAO International Secretariat, the Programme on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) of the Caribbean Action Plan, the Subnetwork of Amazon Protected Areas (SURAPA), the three regions of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCAP) and the Central American Council on Protected Areas, the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS) Programme for the Conservation and Management of Marine and Coastal Areas of the South-east Pacific, among others. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Bioregional planning and management of protected areas in selected critical ecoregions of Latin America and the Caribbean through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution to the conservation of the biological diversity in shared critical ecoregions of regional and global importance through the identification and establishment of a group of protected areas, using bioregional management approaches through demonstration activities. Promotion of the participation of social actors in the planning and management of protected areas, using a bioregional approach. Contribution to biodiversity conservation through the execution of enabling activities in selected critical ecoregions in order to face common constraints of the Region in the planning and management of the protected areas and for the conservation of the Region's biological diversity. Systematisation and monitoring of the results obtained in bioregional management to allow it to be implemented at the region level.

IV. Climate change

Justification	Suggested lines of actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to strengthen regional positions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A regional meeting preparatory to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Exchange of experiences among the countries of the region, and co-operation in preparing and presenting national reports.

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Annex III

Institutional Mechanisms and a Regional Action Plan to strengthen the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

A. Institutional Mechanisms

1. The Forum of Ministers for Latin America and the Caribbean, in its capacity as the maximum authority, will have the following functions, taken from the Ninth and the Eleventh Meetings:

- a) To examine, seek concerted agreement, assess and follow up on matters of importance to sustainable development within its sphere of competence;
- b) To provide guidance for and assess regional cooperation in environmental matters within the context of sustainable development;
- c) To assess, discuss and reach concerted agreement on regional positions concerning items on the international environmental agenda;
- d) To consider international financing issues linked to the implementation of Agenda 21 commitments in the region;
- e) To evaluate the fulfilment of agreements and objectives of previous ministerial meetings;
- f) To approve the Action Plan for four years, based on the proposal submitted to it for consideration by the Inter-Sessional Committee;
- g) To formulate specific mandates for the Inter-Sessional Committee to implement the projects approved for the first biennium, and to prepare the project proposals that should be submitted to the Forum at its next meeting.
- h) To provide guidance for and assess UNEP activities in Latin America and the Caribbean in the terms established in decisions adopted by the Governing Council of UNEP.

2. The Inter-Sessional Committee being the body elected by the Forum of Ministers in charge of follow-up on the decisions of the Meeting of Ministers and of presenting and promoting the interests of the region at the various entities in the international system will have the following functions:

- a) To submit a regional action plan proposal for the following four-year period to the Forum of Ministers for consideration;
- b) To take all pertinent steps, in accordance with the mandates formulated by the Forum, to implement the projects approved for the first biennium, and provide for their follow-up;
- c) To conduct all the necessary consultations and activities to identify the topics and prepare project profiles identified as being of priority at the next meeting of the Forum of Ministers, so the Forum may decide which projects should be developed in greater depth, in the terms indicated in above paragraph.

- d) To take all the necessary measures to prepare the project proposals to be submitted at the following meeting of the Forum of Ministers, so the projects may be implemented in the subsequent biennium;
- e) To examine the fulfilment of agreements adopted by the Meetings of Ministers and review the participation in other pertinent meetings and forums;
- f) To propose the principal objectives of the forthcoming Meeting of Ministers and assess the activities conducted up to that time;
- g) To make recommendations concerning the need to take actions important to fulfilling the decisions of the Meeting of Ministers and the UNEP Programme in the region.

3. The Inter-Sessional Committee will identify and select priority topics and projects based on the following criteria:

- a) They should respond to common concerns or regional problems identified by the Forum of Ministers;
- b) They should fall within the spheres of competence of the environment ministers;
- c) They should be able to have a significant economic and social impact;
- d) They should not duplicate the efforts of other agencies;
- e) They should contribute added value to the related activities being carried out in the region;
- f) There should be possibilities of financing them.

4. The Secretariat, entrusted to the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean will have the following functions related to the Regional Action Plan:

- a) To coordinate and develop all the activities required to enable both the Forum and the Inter-Sessional Committee to fulfil the functions previously listed;
- b) To coordinate the activities of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee referred to below.

5. The Inter-Agency Technical Committee, coordinated by UNEP, will initially be formed by UNDP and IDB, as well as any other international agencies that wish to form part of it and are considered pertinent to its work by the Forum. The Committee will have the following functions:

- a) To present options for implementing the programming decisions adopted by the Forum in relation to the Regional Action Plan;
- b) To conduct activities aimed at obtaining technical assistance for designing and developing projects;
- c) To conduct activities aimed at identifying potential funding sources for the projects;
- d) To coordinate the activities of the participating agencies in relation to items on the priority agenda of the Forum;
- e) To form the **Ad hoc Working Groups** referred below, if necessary.

6. National focal points. The national focal points designated by the Environment Ministries or equivalent entities will have the following functions to enable them to interact with the UNEP Regional Office and, when appropriate, with IDB and UNDP:

- a) To serve as a liaison with the Secretariat;
- b) To coordinate country-level processes required for project preparation and follow-up and, in general, all activities necessary for the operation of the Forum and the design and implementation of the Regional Action Plan.

7. The above-mentioned **Ad hoc Working Groups**, will be formed by experts of the Governments, the United Nations system, international agencies, the private sector, non-governmental organisations and the Secretariat. Their composition and size will be determined in accordance with the nature of the projects. These ad hoc groups may invite representatives of multilateral banks, regional and global environment funds and donor Governments to participate in them, as well as other international entities, in order to create favourable conditions for the funding and implementation of the projects. Each ad hoc group will have a coordinating entity, which ideally should be UNEP, IDB or UNDP, at least during the initial stage of the system. The **Ad hoc Working Groups** will have the following functions:

- a) To support the Inter-Sessional Committee in preparing project profiles or more detailed proposals for those projects;
- b) To support the Inter-Sessional Committee in the implementation and follow-up of projects incorporated into the Regional Action Plan.

B. Regional Action Plan

8. As a tool for implementing the above-mentioned functions, the Forum of Ministers will have a Regional Action Plan that includes the following elements:

- a) Priority environmental topics of regional interest;
- b) Project profiles for each of the priority topics, broken down into objectives, goals, activities to be conducted, financial and institutional arrangements to implement them, and follow-up mechanisms. In accordance with the functions of the Forum, the projects could be aimed at the exchange of experience on environmental problems common to the countries or at solving multinational problems at the regional or subregional level;
- c) Two working timeframes -of two years each- for the next four years.

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