



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

A large, solid blue map of Latin America and the Caribbean region, serving as a background for the central text.

Final Report of the Fourteenth Meeting

Panama City, Panama
20 to 25 November 2003

Distribution:

Limited

UNEP/LAC-IG.XIV/4

Wednesday 14 January 2004

Original: English - Spanish

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, México, 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
- XII Meeting** Bridgetown, Barbados, 2000
- XIII Meeting** Río de Janeiro, Brazil, 2001
- XIV Meeting** Panama City, Panama, 2003





United Nations Environment Programme
Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT
PROGRAMA DAS NAÇÕES UNIDAS PARA O MEIO AMBIENTE

**Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of
the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean**

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**Final Report of the Fourteenth
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Background

1. The catalyzing and coordinating role that the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean played in the regional preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, South Africa; September 2002) demonstrates the maturity and effectiveness that this regional consensus mechanism has achieved.
2. At both the regional and sub-regional levels, the Forum's substantive influence in furthering progress in environmental and other themes associated with sustainable development resulted in the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), which was included in the Johannesburg Plan of Action.
3. The challenge faced by the Forum in the post-Johannesburg period is to implement the ILAC and convert its Regional Action Plan (RAP) into a tool for focusing regional priorities. It also has the added challenge of helping to attain "environmental sustainability" as set forth in the Millennium Development Objective 7.

Objectives

4. The Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean was held from the 24th to the 25th of November 2003 in Panama City, Panama. The meeting was preceded by the Preparatory Meeting of Experts of the Forum of Ministers which took place from the 20th to 21st November 2003.
5. In the preparatory process, a meeting of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC) of the Forum of Ministers was held in Brasilia, Brazil, in July 2003. The Presidency of the Forum of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean (Brazil) subsequently conducted direct consultations with the countries of the region in the months of July and August 2003 on the selection of relevant items to be included on the regional environmental agenda for the next few years.
6. The objective of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean was to develop the strategy and priority lines of action based on the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) which will be reflected in the Regional Plan of Action of the Forum of Ministers for the period 2004-2005.

Participation

7. The Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean was attended by 27 government delegations from countries of the region, and 6 observer countries. In addition 29 international, regional and sub-regional organizations and non-governmental organisations attended the meeting.

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting

8. After the national anthem and a religious ceremony, Mr. Ricardo Anguizola, General Administrator of the National Environmental Authority of Panama made opening remarks, welcoming the participants to Panama in its Centenary year. He underlined the importance that Panama places on hosting regional events promoting cultural, ethnic, commercial and environmental debate. He also noted the importance of the environment in the daily lives and the role that education and divulgation can play in promoting the environment, the Millennium Development Goals and the ILAC.

9. Dr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) followed thanking the Republic of Panama and congratulating the host country for its Centenary. He said that the Forum of Ministers had played a key role in supporting regional preparations ahead of the WSSD and placed great emphasis on supporting the region and its sub regions in promoting their environmental, social and economic agendas, especially within the context of achieving the UN's Millennium Development Goals. He added that issues of great importance to the region, such as economic growth, trade, poverty reduction, vulnerability reduction, the development of renewable energy and environmental protection all go hand in hand.

10. His Excellency Dominador Kayser Bazan, Second Vice President of the Republic of Panama, officially opened the meeting at 10:00 am on the 24th of November 2003. He underlined the important role that the Forum of Ministers plays in the development of regional agendas and thanked the agencies of the United Nations for the support to the ILAC. He urged the participants to coordinate their environmental and information technology programmes and promote the education of their populations in environmental matters.

11. Ms. Elizabeth Fong, UN Coordinator in Panama, and Ms. Marina Silva, President of the 13th Forum were also present at the head table.

12. After a short break, Ms. Marina Silva, Minister of Environment of Brazil and President of the 13th Forum of Ministers of Environment welcomed the participants. She noted that the Forum was at a critical stage in its development as it had the responsibility to turn the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation into concrete actions. The ILAC was the first step, and should be disseminated widely. Implementation activities should be as concrete as possible given that the countries felt that there was a saturation of agreements, conventions and plans.

Agenda Item 2: Organization of the meeting

2.1. Election of Officers

13. In accordance with past practice, and by consensus the Chairman, seven Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur were elected to preside over the Fourteenth Forum of Ministers. These were as follows:

Chair:	Panama
Vice-Chairs:	Belize
	Brazil
	Cuba
	Mexico
	Peru
	Saint Lucia
	Venezuela
Rapporteur:	Argentina

2.2. Transfer of the Chair of the Forum

14. The new Chair, Vice-Chairs and Rapporteur assumed their positions to proceed with the meeting. The Chair, Mr. Ricardo Anguizola, General Administrator of the National Environmental Authority of Panama, emphasized that the ILAC would form the basis of the discussions of the meeting. These discussions should be oriented towards its implementation.

2.3. Adoption of the rules and procedures of the meeting

15. Also in accordance with past practice the participants adopted, *mutatis mutandi*, the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council of UNEP to govern the procedures of the meeting.

2.4. Approval of the meeting agenda and schedule of sessions

16. The Provisional Annotated Agenda and the Schedule of Sessions proposed by the Secretariat (UNEP/LAC-IG.XIV/2 and UNEP/LAC-IG.XIV/Ord.1) were adopted.

Agenda Item 3: Special Session to exchange experiences and information on emerging issues pertinent to the implementation of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC)

17. The Chairman presented this agenda item in which experts were invited to share their perspectives on two of the issues that have been given increasing prominence at the regional and global level: Water Resources Management, Sanitation and Human Settlements and Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising from their Utilization.

3.1. Water Resources Management, Sanitation and Human Settlements

18. At the invitation of the Chair, Mr. Fernando Tudela, Subsecretary of Planning and Environmental Policy of the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources of Mexico, made the first presentation. He underlined that the region contained enormous wealth in biodiversity and freshwater resources. The link between water and environmental management, as contained in the ILAC, was key, even though the two had yet to be integrated properly. The regulatory frameworks related to water were still insufficient. In this regard, a watershed approach and a common regional position on the issues were needed. The inefficient use of water, especially linked to agriculture, industrial and urban development was an important part of the challenge. Indicators were needed not only for water access, but also for quality and efficiency issues.

19. Subsequently Mr. Abel Mejia, Sector Manager Environment and Sustainable Development Unit of the World Bank, emphasized that despite the general abundance of water in the region as a whole, certain parts suffered water shortages and stress. In addition the region was highly vulnerable to floods such as those that took place in 2003 in Argentina. The region is also characterized by under use of hydroelectric power; rapid urban growth; lack of land use planning; inefficient disposal of solid and liquid waste, all of which affect the supply, quality and use of water. Traditional water policy models were inefficient.

The reform model, which centred on the participation of users and municipalities, had proven more successful but needed legislative and institutional reform, a process that was already underway in the region at different levels. Amongst the priority issues needed were the development of hydroelectric potential and the involvement of the private sector.

20. Dr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of UNEP, mentioned that integrated water resources management, linked to health and poverty, was a priority for UNEP. Water was also one of the priority issues at WSSD and part of the 2004-2005 cycle of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) which would be focussing on water, sanitation and human settlements. The Global Ministerial Environmental Forum (GMEF) will also focus on water related matters including integrated water resource management and coastal management, including protection from land-based pollution. He urged the Forum to identify clear regional priorities linked to water as an input to the next session of the CSD and to contribute substantively to the Global Ministerial Environment Forum discussions (Korea 2004).

21. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations discussed the strategic importance of water. They emphasised the need to address the impacts of water availability and quality on health and poverty. They mentioned that while water provides critical environmental services, it is highly vulnerable to environmental change, especially climate change and natural disasters. Water resources are also negatively affected by unplanned urban development; such urbanisation with insufficient considerations of water and sanitation creates problems which are difficult and costly to resolve afterwards.

22. Options for action mentioned included: strengthening of legal frameworks; linking environmental and water agendas and policies including the integration of watershed and land use management; quality standards; mainstreaming of water and sanitation; environmental education; decentralising implementation of water policies; and the use of micro enterprises in the provision of water services.

23. The economic aspects of water management were also discussed, including the need to better internalise externalities, highlighting the use of payments for environmental services. At the same time, the universal right to water and sanitation was underlined as was the role of the state in ensuring this right. It should be ensured that the pricing of water services does not act as a barrier to universal access to water and sanitation, especially for the poor. Incentives and other economic instruments could be important tools to help promote sustainable water management, as could public-private partnerships. Some success stories were also presented, where coverage of water supply had increased while populations grew. These experiences could be replicated in other countries of the region.

24. Despite the absence of a specific presentation from the Caribbean, water resources management and the provision of sanitation was a matter of pressing concern in Caribbean SIDS. These countries had limited underground reserves and critical environmental problems and faced enormous technical and financial obstacles in overcoming problems related with water. Any regional approach in LAC must recognise the special needs of the Caribbean.

3.2. Access to genetic resources and equitable sharing of benefits

25. Mr. Arthur Nogueira, Principal Implementation and Outreach Officer of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), made the first presentation. He explained that access to genetic resources was one of the central objectives of the CBD, including the concepts of Prior Informed Consent (PIC) and Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT) and these issues were developed in detail in the Bonn Guidelines on access to genetic resources. The Bonn

Guidelines, which are non-binding, set out clearly the roles and responsibilities of users and providers among other issues.

26. Ms. Rossana Silva Repetto, Legal Officer of the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, followed by presenting international commitments on the topic. These included the WSSD Plan of Implementation, the ILAC, World Trade Organisation trade related intellectual property rights agreement (TRIPS), World Intellectual Property Organisation agreements and the CBD. The main issues covered in these commitments include: access to biotechnology, genetic resources and benefits arising from their use, as well as intellectual property rights and recognising formal and informal innovation.

27. Lastly, Mr. Fernando Gast, Director of the Humboldt Institute of Colombia presented a project for the development of policies for management of genetic resources. The aim of the project is to promote economic growth based on knowledge and sustainable use of biodiversity. Major components include the costing of genetic resources, the development of legal frameworks, the building of capacities and knowledge and the definition of policies.

28. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations discussed the topic. Discussions centred on the need to understand and fully use the potential of genetic resources for their economic, social and medicinal use. The development of legal frameworks, national legislation, and the harmonisation of regional strategies on the theme are important initial steps. Other activities should include capacity building, the development of technology and knowledge within the region, public awareness, training and assistance in the development of policies and guidelines and a possible pilot project encompassing these elements within the framework of the Forum of Ministers developed by the Inter-Agency Technical Committee.

29. The participants added that these initiatives should help promote the development of indigenous and rural communities, reduce their poverty, promote their rights and help them export their goods. It was mentioned that conservation *in situ* is central to the management of genetic resources, including the effective administration of protected areas. Marine resources should receive equal attention, including in the Regional Action Plan, given that many countries of the region depend upon them.

30. The Chair underlined that the delegations should provide the *Rapporteur* and Secretariat with any specific comments for incorporating issues of relevance into the decisions, as well as provide any specific comments that they would like reflected in the Regional Action Plan.

Agenda Item 4: Discussion of the proposed strategy for the implementation of the ILAC

4.1. Presentation of the strategic guidelines for implementation of the ILAC

31. At the invitation of the Chair, the Minister of Environment of Brazil, as Chair of the Thirteenth Forum, gave a summary of progress in the development of the ILAC since it was approved in Johannesburg, including a meeting of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC) (Brazil, July 2003) and consultations with the countries of the region in mid 2003. She underlined the importance of using the ILAC to help incorporate the environment into economic and social policies. She also highlighted that while international trade negotiations tended to go forward regardless of difficulties, multilateral environmental agreements were often unable to produce concrete results. As such it was necessary to ensure that the Forum of Ministers showed concrete results with a special focus on the implementation of the goals of the ILAC and the fight against poverty. For this reason a group of themes had been identified which could form the starting point for the implementation of the ILAC in 2004 to 2005.

32. Subsequently, Mr. Ricardo Rivera, National Director of Natural Heritage of ANAM and chairman of the experts segment presented the results of the consultations carried out previous to the 14th Meeting of the Forum of Ministers. He said that eight themes, proposed as priorities for the work of the Forum of Ministers had been debated and agreed upon by the meeting of Experts including:

- a) Access to genetic resources and equitable sharing of benefits
- b) Water resources
- c) Vulnerability, human settlements and land use planning,
- d) Renewable energy
- e) Trade and environment
- f) Economic instruments and fiscal policy
- g) Climate change
- h) Environmental indicators

33. Mr. Rivera added that a meeting of the ITC is proposed to take place in early 2004 to incorporate the discussions and recommendations of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers into the Regional Action Plan (RAP). In addition the Panama Declaration had been developed indicating the political priorities of the Forum and its work for the next few years. Finally he reminded the meeting that ten draft decisions had been developed by the expert's segment for the approval of the Ministers and Heads of Delegations, including one on the Regional Action Plan as an instrument for the implementation of the ILAC.

34. Ministers and Heads of Delegations offered their support for the ILAC and the Regional Action Plan. A draft decision on the topic was endorsed by the meeting.

4.2. The role of the Regional Action Plan as a tool for the implementation of the ILAC

35. Mr. John Redwood, Director of Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development for the LAC region of the World Bank spoke about the different ways in which the Bank is supporting the work of the Forum of Ministers and the implementation of the Regional Action Plan. He added that the World Bank was keen to provide additional support in areas of mutual interest to the agencies of the ITC including economic instruments, fiscal policies and environmental indicators. For these issues the Bank could bring an added value. He also mentioned a new financial mechanism for environmental restructuring that could be linked to the work of the Forum.

36. Ms. Janine Ferreti Chief of the Environment Division of the Inter American Development Bank (IDB) added that the IDB is helping the implementation of the ILAC in areas such as financial and other instruments. The IDB was working within the context of their environmental strategy. She added that the work of the IDB in the area of trade and environment had been oriented towards providing support to the Forum of Ministers. In this regard they had set up a network for collaboration on trade and environment with partner agencies of the ITC as well as WHO, UNCTAD and OAS.

37. Mr. Roberto Guimaraes, Economic Affairs Officer, Division of Sustainable Development and Human Settlements, ECLAC followed by underlining the commitment of ECLAC for the implementation of the ILAC. He stressed that ECLAC was particularly interested in supporting the work of the Forum in the eight areas identified as priorities by the Forum of Ministers. He reiterated that ECLAC is preparing the documentation for the next session of

the CSD and will be delivering these documents to the Ministers and Heads of Delegations shortly through the Secretariat.

38. Mr. Mike Gucovsky, Special Advisor to the Administrator of UNDP on behalf of the Regional Director for LAC, followed talking about the support of UNDP to the implementation of the ILAC. He highlighted the new financing opportunities for biodiversity, renewable energy, water and sanitation within the framework of the MDGs as agreed at the World Summits in Monterrey, Mexico and Johannesburg, South Africa. He also highlighted UNDP's continued support for capacity building, especially in the areas of the CDM and vulnerability adaptation. Lastly he reiterated continued and intensified support to the Caribbean and the CCAD. He also mentioned UNDP's support for the work of the like minded Megadiverse countries.

39. There was general support for the work of the Government of Brazil in helping focus the regional environmental agenda through the development of the ILAC and subsequently the eight priority themes. It was agreed that the implementation of the ILAC and its eight priority themes should form the basis of the Regional Action Plan for 2004-2005.

Agenda Item 5: Initiatives and issues advocated by the Forum of Ministers and linked to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals

5.1. Health and Environment

40. The Secretary of Environment and Sustainable Development of Argentina, Mr. Atilio Savino, stressed that health and environment was of great importance to the region given the realities of the countries, and formed an important part of the ILAC and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The Government of Canada subsequently presented the outcomes of the Meeting of Health and Environment Ministers of the Americas (HEMA), held in Ottawa, Canada in March 2002 with the support of UNEP and the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO). A working group was formed that has met on three occasions to implement the HEMA priorities through the identification and promotion of projects such as GEO Health.

41. The importance of the topic was recognised by the delegations, especially with relation to urban health issues. The World Bank clean air initiative was one of the projects mentioned in this regard. A specific decision to follow up on this topic was adopted.

5.2. Perspectives and future actions for environmental education and training

42. Ms. Ana Elisa Osorio, Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela presented the main components of the environmental education decision developed during the expert's segment. She subsequently gave examples of successful environmental education programmes at the national and community levels in her country.

43. The Chair reiterated the working methodology of the meeting and underlined that comments during this segment should consider the draft decision. He invited delegations to review the draft text to ensure that their comments and concerns were adequately reflected and to present any revisions to the rapporteur.

44. Ministers and Heads of Delegations were in general agreement regarding the importance of environmental education and endorsed the decision on the matter. They mentioned that the work of the Environmental Training Network (ETN) of UNEP could

include programmes for community leaders, civil society and trainers. The need to strengthen education in general, as well as the importance of integrating environmental education into the standard curricula and promoting educational exchanges was also discussed.

5.3. Environmental Indicators

45. The Minister of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica, Mr. Carlos Manuel Rodriguez Echandi, as the country designated by the Forum of Ministers to coordinate the topic of indicators, presented a proposal to develop indicators to monitor the progress towards achieving the goals of the ILAC. A detailed description of the proposal, including a core set of indicators, had been submitted to the experts segment of the Forum for consideration. The main elements of the proposal included: reaching agreement on a core set of indicators to measure progress towards the goals of the ILAC; reaching agreement on a common methodology to measure the indicators; initiating the development of a project to strengthen capacities and promote the collection and standardisation of data and indicators at the national level within the framework of the Forum of Ministers; and the development of a regional environmental information system that allows the Forum of Ministers to monitor progress towards achieving the goals of the ILAC.

46. A draft decision detailing the indicators proposal had already been prepared by the experts segment for the approval of the Ministers and Heads of Delegation. Suggestions for additions to the draft decision included: incorporation of the GEO integrated assessment process at the national, subregional and regional levels; building upon and linking up with other indicator initiatives (including vulnerability indices); and the inclusion of social indicators. The importance of developing not only indicators but also information systems to guide public policies was underlined.

5.4. Sustainable production and consumption

47. This agenda item was presented by the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Nicaragua, Mr. Arturo Harding. He underlined the importance of the regional process for following up the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the ILAC including a first meeting of the council of experts on sustainable consumption and production (Argentina April 2003) in which a regional position on the topic was developed and the second meeting of the same group (Nicaragua October 2003) in which a regional sustainable consumption and production strategy was developed.

48. There was general support for the proposal of Nicaragua and comments were made on the corresponding decision. The decision on production and consumption, with the incorporation of the discussions, was endorsed.

49. It was mentioned that issues related with production and consumption could be included in the Regional Action Plan. Other topics discussed included: participation of consumer associations and industry, with emphasis on micro, small and medium sized industries the importance of information exchange between countries, and the relevance of national cleaner production strategies as an important part of sustainable production.

5.5. Barbados+10 Programme (SIDS)

50. Mr. Anthony Bartholomew, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment of Trinidad and Tobago, stressed that the effective implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) was a matter of survival for Caribbean SIDS. Nevertheless, a review of the BPOA at the Caribbean Regional Meeting of SIDS held in Trinidad and Tobago in October 2003 had shown that the implementation of the BPOA had fallen short of expectations largely due to lack of resources and external shocks related to

trade liberalisation and globalisation, the slowdown of tourism, and the removal of preferential trade arrangements. In this regard the support and commitment offered by the Executive Director of UNEP to help facilitate effective implementation of the BPOA was welcomed. The BPOA will be reviewed at the Summit of Small Island Developing States in Mauritius in 2004.

51. Mr. Byron Blake, Assistant Secretary General of the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM) followed, underlining the problems caused by lack of financing and emphasising the special challenges and constraints faced by SIDS given their economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities. He welcomed the support from the LAC group at WSSD. In this regard he urged the countries of the Forum of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean to lend their support to the Caribbean, especially at international fora such as the CSD.

52. During interventions, the vulnerabilities of Caribbean SIDS, their dependency on their natural resources and their limited financial and human capacities to respond to external shocks was emphasised by the delegations. It was mentioned that the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the MDGs should not lose sight of these vulnerabilities.

53. Ministers and Heads of Delegations from Latin America expressed their wholehearted solidarity with the Caribbean SIDS and voiced their full support for the implementation of the BPOA not only through the Forum of Ministers, but also through bilateral (south-south) collaboration and that this should be clearly reflected in the meeting documentation. The draft decision and the presentations made by Trinidad and Tobago and the CARICOM Secretariat were also welcomed and supported.

5.6. Financing

54. The issue of financing was raised and discussed during this segment of the meeting. There was general agreement regarding the importance of detailing what the countries expect from the ITC in terms of financing and presenting a draft decision and plan of activities on the topic. Relevant meetings of the agencies of the ITC, such as the IDB meeting of the deputy ministers of planning, could be reoriented to help follow up on the decisions of the Forum of Ministers. The financing institutions spoke about the range of financing mechanisms and economic instruments available for environmental initiatives, both national and international. These institutions could help members of the Forum of Ministers better identify and access financing mechanisms (loans, donations etc.) within the context of the upcoming IDB meeting in Peru. In this context, the financing processes for helping to combat desertification and promote poverty reduction of the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD was also explained.

55. Other interventions included: the necessity to promote the exchange of successful experiences between the countries of the region so as to promote their replication in other countries; the priority of financing water, sanitation and watershed management issues; the need to integrate environmental activities into regular financing and budgeting processes so as to achieve sustainable development; the use of environmental taxation and other similar mechanisms.

Agenda Item 6: Follow-up and discussion on the agreements of the 22nd Session of the UNEP Governing Council (Nairobi 2002) and preparations for the Global Ministerial Environmental Forum and the 12th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

56. Mr. Ricardo Sanchez, Director of the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean presented the Agenda Item. He reminded the meeting of the strategy prepared to guide the regionalization of UNEP's global programme and support the implementation of the ILAC following the decision adopted by the twenty-second session of the Governing Council of UNEP (Nairobi, Kenya; 2003). He outlined that the key areas of the strategy include: promoting intergovernmental policy dialogue; implementing priority global, regional and national environmental programmes (including ecosystem management, policy development, urban management, assessment and indicators, and early warning); promoting the involvement of major civil society groups; strengthening targeted sub-regional implementation of activities; and putting in place a regionally distributed management system. These activities would be carried out with emphasis on sub-regional implementation of the programme based on subregional and national priorities. The draft decision on regionalisation with a number of additions and modifications was endorsed.

57. Ms. Cristina Boelcke, Director of the Division of Regional Cooperation of UNEP gave an overview of the preparations for the Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF) to be held in South Korea in 2004. She mentioned that the meeting would like to identify success stories on the main themes that will be covered including water, sanitation and human settlements. The Regional Annexes of the UNEP Programme of Work will also be presented for review at the meeting.

58. A video was shown containing a message from the Minister of Environment of Norway, Mr. Børge Brende, and the Chair of the Eleventh session of the CSD. He emphasized the importance of regional preparation meetings to help the CSD identify key regional priorities as well as obstacles for the achievement of the ambitious objectives of the MDGs. He gave an overview of the global situation regarding water and sanitation. He also underlined the importance of moving from words to action. He hoped that the 12th session of the CSD would be one important step in this regard. The Chair requested that the Secretariat send a message to the Minister of Norway thanking him for his message and conveying to him the results of the 14th Meeting of the Forum of Ministers.

59. Mr. Dirk Pilari from UNDESA emphasised the close linkages between the discussions at the Forum of Ministers and the agenda of the CSD. He informed the meeting that the review of the CSD-12 will be undertaken from the perspective of integrated considerations of social, economic and environmental aspects. Regional implementation is key for the work of the CSD as is the role of the economic commissions of the UN. In preparation for CSD-12, which will take place in April 2004, regional implementation meetings are taking place.

60. Mr. Roberto Guimaraes, of UN ECLAC outlined the role of the Regional Commissions of the UN with regard to follow up of the Inter-governmental meetings on sustainable development, including the CSD. With regard to the meeting of the CSD set for 2004, taking into account that the ECLAC Period of Sessions will take place after the meeting of the CSD, it will not perform the function of a regional preparatory meeting for the CSD for the 2004 revision period. Nevertheless, a Regional Implementation Forum is planned for the second semester of 2004 in preparation for the meeting related to the policy cycle corresponding to 2005. In this regard, other Fora (e.g. MINURVI) have been used to review the CSD areas of work and identify regional priorities. Similar inputs from the Forum of Ministers of the Environment would be welcome. As well as inputs from the current meeting of the Forum of Ministers, the documents that are being prepared by ECLAC for the CSD Review meeting,

which should be finalised by late January 2004, will be sent by ECLAC to the Secretariat of the Forum of Ministers for distribution to the countries and the agencies of the ITC.

Agenda Item 7: Report of the meeting of civil society

61. Mr. Mateo Castillo, civil society representative, presented the outcomes of the civil society forum held on the 22nd of November 2003 on the margins of the 14th Meeting of the Forum of Ministers. The final document of the civil society forum contains an analysis of the the main problems and identifies priorities for action. The civil society forum also made recommendations and proposals for the governments of LAC with the aim of strengthening the ILAC. Finally, they made commitments regarding the implementation and monitoring of the ILAC agreements.

62. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations offered their support for the work of civil society and their involvement and participation in the implementation of the ILAC. A draft decision on the topic was reviewed and endorsed.

Agenda Item 8: State of implementation and future perspectives of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements

63. Under this agenda item, presentations were made related to the following Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and associated bodies covering their work programmes and regional initiatives:

- a) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by Mr. Gonzalo Menendez, Sub Administrator of the National Environment Authority of Panama (ANAM) and member of the Bureau of the UNFCCC.
- b) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by Mr. Roberto Acosta Moreno, Manager of the Subprogramme on Green House Gases.
- c) United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNCCD) by Mr. Heitor Matallo, Chief of the Regional Coordinating Unit for LAC.
- d) Montreal Protocol and its implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean by Ms. Mirian Vega, Regional Coordinator of the Ozone Action Networks, UNEP ROLAC.

64. Following the Montreal Protocol presentation, the Ministers presented comments on the 15th Meeting of Parties of the Montreal Protocol held in Nairobi in November 2003. They recognised the importance of the Montreal Protocol as an example of global success for any Multilateral Environmental Agreement. However, the stalled negotiations on Methyl Bromide phase out are weakening the success achieved. A request was made for an increased regional commitment for the protection of the Ozone Layer. The Meeting accepted the offer made by Mexico to host a negotiation meeting before March 2004. The Delegation of Jamaica gave thanks for the kind words offered on Jamaica's achievement of the World Ozone Award for 2003. A special mention was made regarding the appointment of Argentina as Chair of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol.

65. Participants reviewed opportunities for strengthened regional participation in the forthcoming international meetings. The Chair reminded the plenary that a number of relevant draft decisions had been developed on the implementation of MEAs. Delegations also made interventions on national and global issues related with climate change, desertification and ozone and provided suggestions for revising the relevant decisions.

Agenda Item 9: Other matters

9.1. Revision and approval of the Panama Declaration

66. A draft of the Panama Declaration developed by the participants of the meeting was presented by the Chair. After discussions and a number of amendments which were noted by the rapporteur, the declaration was approved by the Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

9.2. Proposal for the venue of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

67. The Minister of Environment of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela offered to host the Fifteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean. The generous offer was warmly endorsed by the Ministers and Heads of Delegations.

Agenda Item 10: Approval of the final report of the meeting

68. The draft report containing the decisions of the Fourteenth Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean was presented. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations reviewed and approved the eighteen decisions (see annex 2 of this report). The Rapporteur and the Secretariat were given a few weeks to incorporate comments made to the draft report and to circulate the final version to the participants.

Agenda Item 11: Closure of the meeting

69. The UNEP Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean thanked the Government of Panama for their hospitality and support which he felt had contributed greatly to the success of the meeting. He also underlined the solidarity expressed by the countries at the meeting as a critical element for the successful implementation of the ILAC. Subsequently Mr. Ricardo Anguizola, the Chairman of the Forum, thanked participants for their hard work and officially closed the Fourteenth Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean at 8:50pm on Tuesday 25th of November 2003.

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Annex I

**Panama
Declaration**

Annex I. Panama Declaration

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

**Panama City, Republic of Panama
20 to 25 of November of 2003**

We, the Ministers of Environment and Heads of Delegation of Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered in Panama City, Panama:

Considering that in spite of the efforts made to attain sustainable development, a serious situation of poverty, inequity, and environmental degradation persists in the region;

Considering that the immense amount of natural and cultural resources in the region is of global importance and offer opportunities of which we have to take advantage in order to attain equitable, inclusive and sustainable development;

Considering that environmental policies require priority attention to decisions related to the future of our peoples;

Considering that the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), as an instrument to help attain the priority goals of the Region, was included in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

Considering that this Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, which is the first meeting held after the World Summit on Sustainable Development, has identified eight themes of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development for implementation in the biennium 2004-2005: i.e. access to genetic resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of their utilization; water resources; human settlements, vulnerability and land use planning; trade and environment; economic instruments and fiscal policy; renewable energy; climate change; and environmental indicators;

Considering that transformation of production and consumption patterns, environmental education and the relationship between health and the environment are cross-cutting issues that are strategic to the implementation of the ILAC;

Considering that it is indispensable to encourage social participation, as well as strategic partnerships for implementation and financing of sustainable development;

THEREFORE:

1. Reaffirm our political commitment to make our best efforts to implement the principles, commitments and goals of Agenda 21, the Millennium Declaration, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development;

2. Reiterate that in order to turn this political commitment of the States into a reality it is necessary to have access to the resources and new financing mechanisms agreed upon at the Johannesburg Summit. Because of this we urge the members of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee of this Forum of Ministers, as well as the multilateral financing and cooperation organisms to – in keeping with their mandates and the decisions of this Forum of Ministers – direct their resources in the manner required to allow the effective implementation of the Regional Action Plan (2004-2005) and the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development.

- 3. Will concentrate** efforts to get the other authorities of our countries to make a commitment to work in a joint and coordinated manner in order to mitigate environmental degradation and the poverty of our peoples.
- 4. Reaffirm** the application of the Rio principles, and in particular those regarding the common but differentiated responsibilities of States and the sovereign right of each country over its natural resources, especially genetic resources, as well as to establish their own levels of environmental protection.
- 5. Urge** the United Nations system to promptly implement the decisions adopted at the Johannesburg Summit with regard to strengthening the regionalization processes, as well as UNEP as far as decisions 22/21 and 22/13 of the 22nd session of its Governing Council are concerned, in order to make progress in the regionalization of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the UNEP work programme.
- 6. Call** the attention of the international community so that it will urgently adopt the measures required to strengthen the Small Island Developing States in order for them to handle acknowledged vulnerability problems and ensure a more effective implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action.
- 7. Recognize** that the Kyoto Protocol established a worldwide consensus to mitigate the effects of global warming and its negative socioeconomic and environmental consequences. We therefore make an appeal for a prompt entering into force of the protocol and encourage the continuation of efforts to implement the Clean Development Mechanism including afforestation and reforestation activities in line with the COP decisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- 8. Reiterate** the need to create a fair, just, and equitable multilateral open-market system that is compatible with sustainable development, and that the environmental theme should not be used as a covert restriction to trade, as well as the need to prevent the enforcement of unilateral trade measures in order to tackle environmental problems.
- 9. Recognize** the strategic nature of environmental education for the building of sustainable societies and the need to incorporate into this education the concept of ethics for sustainable development and to intensify the development of national plans for environmental education and heightened awareness in the countries of the region.
- 10. Urge** all stakeholders of civil society, in particular the youth and the productive sectors, as well as the governmental sector to work together in establishing mechanisms to resolve or mitigate environmental problems at the local and national levels, through the widespread participation of civil society in environmental management. This will legitimize environmental decisions and allow improvements in public management governance.
- 11. Make** a commitment to realize efforts to achieve greater synergy and a complementary nature between the agendas of the various ministerial environmental forums in the region.
- 12. We welcome** the offer by the Republic of Argentina to serve as the seat of the COP 10 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and offer our support for that purpose. In addition, we thank Mexico for agreeing to represent our region as Co-Chair of the Round Table No. 3 to be held during COP 9.
- 13. We welcome** the offer of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to host the 15th Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to be held in 2005, during which the support group of the Island States of the Caribbean will report on the progress reached in their task of contributing to the implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action.

Signed in Panama City, Panama, on 21st of November of 2003 by the Ministers and Heads of Delegation present at the Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

Sr. Atilio Savino
Secretario
Ministerio de Salud
Secretaría de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sustentable

ARGENTINA

The Honourable Elizabeth Thompson
Minister
Ministry of Housing, Lands and Environment

BARBADOS

Sr. Guillermo Gutiérrez de las Heras
Consejero
Embajada de Bolivia en Panamá

BOLIVIA

Sr. Rodrigo Egaña Baraona,
Subsecretario General de la Presidencia
Ministerio Secretaría General de la Presidencia

CHILE

Sr. Carlos Manuel Rodríguez Echandi
Ministro
Ministerio del Ambiente y Energía (MINAE)

COSTA RICA

Mr. Vince Henderson
Minister
Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment

DOMINICA

Sr. John Armando Alarcon
Embajador
Embajada de Ecuador en Panamá

ECUADOR

Sr. Alfredo Vladimir Bonilla Betancourt
Ministro
Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales

GUATEMALA

The Honourable Marcus C. Bethel
Minister
Ministry of Health and Environment

THE BAHAMAS

Sr. John Briceño
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister
Ministry of Natural Resources and the
Environment, Commerce and Industry

BELIZE

Sra. Marina Silva
Ministra
Ministerio del Medio Ambiente (MMA)

BRAZIL

Sr. Juan Pablo Bonilla Arboleda,
Viceministro de Ambiente
Ministerio de Ambiente, Vivienda
y Desarrollo Territorial

COLOMBIA

Sr. Fabio Fajardo Moros
Viceministro
Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología
y Medio Ambiente (MICTMA)

CUBA

Sr. Frank Moya Pons
Secretario de Estado
Secretaría de Estado de Medio Ambiente
y Recursos Naturales

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Sr. Jorge Ernesto Quezada Díaz
Gerente de Recursos Biológicos
Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales

EL SALVADOR

Sra. Patricia Panting Galo
Ministra de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente
Secretaría de Estado en los Despachos de
Recursos Naturales y Ambiente (SERNA)

HONDURAS

Ms. Leonie Barnaby,
Senior Director
Ministry of Land and Environment

JAMAICA

Sr. Fernando Tudela Abad
Subsecretario de Planeación y Política Ambiental
Secretaría de Medio Ambiente
y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT)

MEXICO

Sr. Arturo Harding Lacayo
Ministro
Ministerio del Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (MARENA)

NICARAGUA

Sr. Ricardo Anguizola
Administrador General
Autoridad Nacional del Ambiente (ANAM)

PANAMA

Sr. Víctor Eduardo Agüero Zorrilla
Director de Planificación Estratégica
Secretaría del Ambiente
Presidencia de la República

PARAGUAY

Sr. Carlos Loret de Mola de Lavalle
Presidente
Consejo Nacional del Ambiente (CONAM)

PERU

Mr. Christopher Corbin
Senior Sustainable Development
and Environment Officer
Ministry of Physical Development,
Environment and Housing

SAINT LUCIA

Mr. Clifford Paul Marica
Minister
Ministry of Labour, Technological
Development and Environment

SURINAME

Mr. Anthony Bartholomew
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment

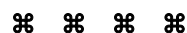
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Sr. Saúl Irureta
Ministro
Ministerio de Vivienda, Ordenamiento Territorial
y Medio Ambiente

URUGUAY

Sra. Ana Elisa Osorio Granado
Ministra
Ministerio del Ambiente y de los
Recursos Naturales Renovables (MARNR)

VENEZUELA



Annex II

Decisions

Annex II. Decisions

The Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Governments present at the Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Panama City, Panama, from 20 to 25 November 2003, taking into account the recommendations of the Preparatory Meeting of Experts and the deliberations of this Fourteenth Meeting of Ministers, adopted the following decisions:

DECISION 1

THE REGIONAL ACTION PLAN AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ILAC): 2004-2005 REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

Taking into account that the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean is the main regional intergovernmental political forum for environmental matters and that it offers the environmental authorities of the region a space for consensus-building and reflection on the main challenges of the regional and world environmental agenda in the context of sustainable development;

Considering that the Regional Action Plan is the principal instrument of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean for the implementation of the agreed regional strategies;

Also taking into consideration that the 2002-2005 Regional Action Plan was approved by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean at its Thirteenth Meeting, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in October 2001;

Underscoring the need to implement the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), developed by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and approved at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002;

Decide:

- 1. To recognize** that the Regional Action Plan is a fundamental tool for the gradual implementation of the ILAC.
- 2. To approve** the Regional Action Plan for the 2004-2005 biennium, aimed at implementing the ILAC with the eight priority lines proposed, i.e., access to genetic resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization; water resources; human settlements, vulnerability and land-use planning; renewable energies; trade and environment; economic instruments and fiscal policy; climate change; and environmental indicators.
- 3. To request** the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC) to hold a special meeting during the first quarter of 2004 with the participation of the corresponding member countries of the Inter-Sessional Committee to complete the final set of activities agreed upon in the 2004-2005 Regional Action Plan, taking into account the new actions proposed and the information packages prepared by the ITC on the aforementioned eight priority themes.
- 4. To request** the ITC to support and promote case studies and lessons learned that are related to sustainable development and will reflect all the sub-regions of Latin America and the Caribbean.

DECISION 2

MODALITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

Taking into account the action lines established in the 2004-2005 Regional Action Plan;

Considering the necessity to draw upon the positive results obtained through the implementation mechanisms of the Regional Action Plan adopted in Decision 2 of the Twelfth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, including the designation of countries as coordinators of thematic working groups;

Recognizing also that the lines of action included in the Regional Action Plan of the Forum of Ministers are linked to cross-cutting themes such as environmental education, health and environment, and sustainable production and consumption, which also require the designation of coordinator countries;

Recognizing also that, to varying degrees, the lines of action in the Regional Action Plan of the Forum of Ministers cut across the different themes contained in the Programme of Action of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS);

Decide:

1. To entrust the coordination of follow-up on the implementation of the decisions and agreements adopted at the Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean for the biennium 2004-2005, as follows:

Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits	Ecuador , Mexico
Water Resources	Mexico, Nicaragua , Colombia
Human Settlements, Vulnerability and Land-Use Planning	Cuba , Uruguay, Paraguay, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago
Renewable Energies	Brazil , Chile, Barbados and Honduras
Trade and Environment	Peru , Argentina, Jamaica, Chile and Mexico
Economic Instruments and Fiscal Policy	Chile , Mexico, Ecuador
Climate Change	Panama , Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay and Belize
Environmental Indicators	Costa Rica , Colombia, Saint Lucia, Mexico
Aspects of Sustainable Development for SIDS	Saint Lucia , Bahamas and Belize
Environmental Education	Venezuela , Uruguay, Chile and Jamaica
Health and Environment	Argentina , Peru, Chile and Panama
Sustainable Production and Consumption	Nicaragua , Argentina

(Note: The countries typed in bold face will assume the coordinating role)

2. To establish that the working groups will be open-ended and will preferably operate using electronic means of communication. The coordinators will convene efforts and carry out their roles through electronic and other pertinent means. The working groups will be formed by the countries of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of the Region, with support from the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC) and from other organizations interested in supporting these groups, which will be fundamentally aimed at setting in motion and implementing the aforementioned decisions and agreements. Every six months, the coordinators will report on the progress made to the Chair of the Forum of Ministers, who will keep the Environment Ministers informed. Each coordinator will be responsible for presenting an executive report to the Fifteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers. The Secretariat of the Forum of Ministers will provide operational support and will facilitate the process, in accordance with the needs of the coordinators and the directions of the Chair of the Forum of Ministers. The ITC will provide specific support to the coordinators, in accordance with the needs of the process. For other decisions, coordination will be undertaken by the Chair of the Forum of Ministers, with the support of the ITC.

3. To present the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development to the other multilateral agencies and donors in our countries, in order to harmonize international cooperation with regionally and nationally established environmental priorities.

4. To ensure that the activities related to fora and processes in which the countries of the region play an important role are included in processes influencing other international forums.



DECISION 3

REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Taking into account, *inter alia*, Governing Council decision 20/39 of 4 February 1999 on the functioning of the regional offices and proposed measures for strengthening, regionalization and decentralization;

Noting the provisions of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in particular Section XI (g), the mandates emanating from the Commission on Sustainable Development and the contents of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development;

Considering decision 22/21 of the twenty-second session of the UNEP Governing Council, of February 2003, regarding regional implementation of the UNEP programme of work;

Bearing in mind the regionalization of the programme of UNEP and considering that all Latin American and Caribbean countries are parties to the most important multilateral environmental agreements, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, the latter being in its compliance phase;

Decide:

1. To encourage the Secretariat of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to continue working on the implementation of the Regional

Strategy, in order to provide increasingly effective support for the decisions adopted by this Forum of Ministers.

2. To urge the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean to effectively fulfil the mandate issued by the UNEP Governing Council regarding regional implementation of its programme of work contained in Decision 22/21 and, at the same time, to highlight the important role being played by the regional offices of this United Nations Programme.

3. To request the agencies of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee to establish and strengthen partnerships at the regional and sub-regional levels with other United Nations bodies, development banks and other institutions, including civil society, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the development and delivery of the programme of work of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

4. To urge the Latin American and Caribbean countries to actively participate in the eighth special session of the Governing Council of UNEP/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, to be held in Jeju, Republic of Korea, from 29 to 31 March 2004, on which occasion there will be follow-up on the regional implementation of the UNEP programme of work.

5. To call upon the Inter-Agency Technical Committee, taking into consideration the particular characteristics of Latin American and the Caribbean, to work on the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and, in this framework, to request the Montreal Protocol Compliance Assistance Programme to support all the Parties of the Latin American and Caribbean region in achieving such compliance in a sustainable manner.



DECISION 4

SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

Taking into account that Agenda 21 highlights the special vulnerabilities and fragilities of Small Island Developing States in achieving sustainable development;

Recognizing that the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) underscores specific actions in this regard and the targets established in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals that will be implemented within the framework of the BPOA;

Mindful that SIDS continue to be recognized by the international community as highly vulnerable;

Taking into account that the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) also urges granting priority to the SIDS in the region, especially in financing the implementation of the BPOA;

Mindful of the outputs of the Caribbean Preparatory Meeting for the 10-Year Review of the Implementation of the BPOA, especially with regard to building resilience to vulnerabilities;

Recalling UNEP Governing Council decision 22/13 of February 2003, which calls for strengthening of institutional capacity of SIDS, namely:

- a) To strengthen the institutional capacity of small island developing States to effectively achieve the sustainable development goals described in the Programme of Action through the provision of appropriate technical and financial support;
- b) To increase funding for those activities during the biennium 2004-2005, particularly in connection with the preparation for and the implementation of the outcomes of the international meeting to be held in Mauritius in 2004;

- c) To provide support focused on the development and execution of partnership initiatives presented within the context of carrying out the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Decide:

- 1. To call** for the establishment of a Caribbean SIDS Programme with the support of UNEP to work along with existing and planned Caribbean institutions and mechanisms.
- 2. To urge** that the critical elements highlighted by the Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 10-Year Review of the BPOA be used as a basis for the Caribbean SIDS Programme, including,
 - a) Support for the establishment of a Regional Sustainability Fund to facilitate further implementation of the BPOA;
 - b) Support for Caribbean member States in their efforts to establish the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME);
 - c) Support for capacity building at regional, sub-regional and national levels that includes institutional strengthening, technology transfer and training to strengthen resilience to vulnerabilities and ensuring that every effort be made to adopt a coordinated approach, particularly with respect to the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and initiatives coordinated by UNEP from other funding institutions such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF);
 - d) Support for the establishment of partnership initiatives between key agencies to catalyze BPOA implementation. Civil society, including the private sector, should also be included in these partnerships;
 - e) Support for a well-established, well-defined regional coordination mechanism for further implementation of the BPOA.
- 3. To urge** that a consultative process be undertaken with Caribbean SIDS involving governments, civil society, and appropriate regional and sub-regional organizations to prepare the elements of a Caribbean SIDS Programme and to conclude this process before the international meeting to be held in Mauritius in August/September, 2004.
- 4. To request** UNEP to support the development and implementation of the Caribbean SIDS Programme, within resources available for the biennium 2004-2005;
- 5. To urge** the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, and particularly non-SIDS countries of the Forum, to fully support the BPOA as the platform for attaining the sustainable development of the Caribbean SIDS.
- 6. To agree** to assign high priority to the issue of vulnerability.
- 7. To agree also** to develop, in consultation with SIDS, a specific plan for facilitating more effective cooperation on horizontal and other issues through a South-South mechanism.
- 8. To establish** a support group for the Caribbean SIDS in their efforts to promote the BPOA, increase recognition of their vulnerabilities in various fora and build resilience to the vulnerabilities they face. The open-ended support group will include Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Venezuela and will be coordinated by Chile.

DECISION 5

FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

Taking into account the action guidelines identified by the countries in the 2004-2005 Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Latin American and the Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC); the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millenium Development Goals;

Considering that the efforts and needs of our countries require the necessary financial resources and instruments to contribute to the solution of priority problems such as: water resources management; access to genetic resources and equitable sharing of benefits; human settlements, vulnerability and land-use planning; renewable energies; trade and environment; economic instruments and fiscal policy; climate change; and environmental indicators;

Taking into consideration the unique and special vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States in the Caribbean, identified in Paragraph 17 g) of Agenda 21, for the creation of strengths to face these vulnerabilities;

Decide:

1. To urge the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC) to present, during the first quarter of 2004, a strategic and guiding document on the availability and access to different international and national sources of financial instruments, including an analysis of fiscal expenditures. This document should be in line with the mandates of the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and the priorities of the 2004-2005 Regional Action Plan. It should also include the short- and medium-term financial and non-financial instruments considered in the ILAC, giving special interest to the following topics: water resources, drinking water and environmental sanitation as instruments for poverty reduction, as well as cross-cutting environmental issues in priority sectors.

2. To urge the ITC, in accordance with the respective mandates of the ITC agencies, to provide the necessary resources to support the regional implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, making use of the implementation mechanisms of the 2004-2005 Regional Action Plan.

3. To promote, in conformity with the mandates of the ITC agencies, the exchange of experiences among countries on the development and implementation of financial mechanisms and tools. To that end, activities foreseen for 2004 must be optimized and integrated, and a joint meeting between environmental and economic authorities should be held with the participation of all the member countries of the Forum of Ministers in the framework of the Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Inter-American Development Bank, which will take place in Lima, Peru, in March 2004.

DECISION 6

CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

Considering that Agenda 21 emphasizes the importance of citizen participation in sustainable development;

Acknowledging that the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) and the Barbados Programme of Action on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States recognize the significant role played by citizen participation in sustainable development;

Recalling that the Governing Council of UNEP, in decision 22/18, reasserts its support for decision SSVII/5, adopted at its seventh special session, on the commitment to include civil society in the UNEP work programme;

Considering ongoing national and local experiences of civil society participation, such as the National Councils for Sustainable Development;

Decide:

- 1. To promote** the systematic inclusion of civil society in the activities carried out at the national and regional levels for the implementation of ILAC and the Barbados Programme of Action.
- 2. To support** the various citizen participation mechanisms in our countries.
- 3. To urge** the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC), in accordance with the respective mandates of the ITC agencies, to allocate specific resources in the biennium 2004-2005 for the participation of civil society, as appropriate, in the implementation of the ILAC and the Barbados Programme of Action.



DECISION 7

WATER RESOURCES

Considering that the ministerial declarations at the eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in April 2003, included giving priority to the topic of water during the 2004-2005 biennium;

Noting that the World Summit on Sustainable Development reaffirmed the target in the Millennium Development Goals to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who do not have sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation;

Taking into account that, at the global level, water resources have been considered a high priority for countries in the region, mainly due to the need to provide drinking water to all of the region's inhabitants;

Underlining that this Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers defined the management of water resources as one of the eight priority lines for the implementation of the Latin American and the Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development;

Noting that the region of Latin America and the Caribbean contains one third of the planet's water resources, which makes it the region's most valuable natural resource;

Recognizing that some countries are facing declining water resources and have problems in water distribution, especially among Small Island Developing States;

Decide:

- 1. To support** the decision of the eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in April 2003, making the theme of water and access to water resources a priority for the region for the 2004-2005 biennium.
- 2. To recognize** the importance of water as an essential resource for life and economic development, underscoring activities such as tourism and agricultural irrigation.
- 3. To reaffirm** the above-mentioned target of the Millennium Development Goals by promoting initiatives for integrated management of water resources through the concept of watershed management by all the member countries of the Forum of Ministers, in order to

increase national and regional capacities, guaranteeing the active participation of all stakeholders, especially through the creation of watershed councils or local management bodies and through workshops.

4. To promote friendly and accessible technologies that will foster sound water use and sanitation, thereby preventing water loss and pollution.

5. To promote the evaluation and characterization of underground water resources as an alternative for guaranteeing access to water in terms of quality and quantity.

6. To request the agencies of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee and other international cooperation organizations to direct resources, in accordance with their mandates, towards strengthening water resource management in the region.

7. To promote systems of incentives and economic instruments for the protection of natural resources (forests and water), such as economic compensation for public and private stakeholders that contribute to conservation of the environment.

8. To encourage the consolidation and integration of existing initiatives on water resources in the region to avoid duplication of efforts.

9. To promote the adoption of integrated planning approaches that take into account the linkages between land use, watershed and coastal zone management, especially for the Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean.

DECISION 8

ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES AND FAIR AND EQUITABLE SHARING OF BENEFITS ARISING FROM THEIR UTILIZATION

Taking into consideration the actions mentioned in paragraph 44 (o) of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation with regard to "Negotiate within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity, bearing in mind the Bonn Guidelines, an international regime to promote and safeguard the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources";

Considering that the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) establishes in its guiding goals and indicative objectives the adoption of regulatory frameworks for access to genetic resources and for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their utilization, compatible with the Convention on Biological Diversity;

Underscoring the contents of section B. Integrated Environmental Management, the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Ecosystems, of the 2002-2005 Regional Action Plan approved by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean;

Recognizing the contribution of the indigenous peoples and local communities to the conservation of biodiversity, as well as to the generation of traditional knowledge for centuries;

Cognizant that genetic resources also include marine biodiversity and that for many countries of the region this resource provides great economic benefits and opportunities;

Decide:

1. To request support for drafting and/or harmonizing national laws in countries that do not have such instruments, in conjunction with the development of national inventories of marine and terrestrial genetic resources.

2. To request the Inter-Agency Technical Committee to support the organization of expert workshops or meetings to exchange experiences and strengthen the institutional capacities of the countries for implementing and complying with international legal mandates in this field.

3. To urge the Latin American and Caribbean countries to actively participate in the Second Meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-Sharing of the Convention on Biologic Diversity, to be held in Montreal, Canada, from 1 to 5 December 2003, for the purpose of promoting paragraph 44 (o) of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

4. To procure and facilitate the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the design of regimes for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from the utilization of genetic resources.



DECISION 9

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Recalling that in Decision 17, paragraph 1, adopted at the Thirteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, it was agreed to support a joint meeting of Health and Environment Ministers during the first quarter of 2002, as a contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg 2002);

Considering that the theme of environment and health is an integrated and vital part of sustainable development and that, in this regard, it was included in the eight priority areas of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) and highlighted in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

Aware of the fact that 80 per cent of the region's inhabitants live in cities, the impact on human health caused by emissions to the atmosphere and other polluting processes and the work carried out over the last six years within the framework of the Clean Air Initiative supported by the World Bank;

Taking into account that the first meeting of Health and Environment Ministers of the Americas (HEMA) (Ottawa, 2002), produced a Ministerial Communiqué setting out 8 areas of priority and 12 goals that required concerted action across the region;

Also taking into account that progress has been made in the implementation of the Ministerial Communiqué through a task force consisting of representatives from the Ministries of Environment and Health in the region;

Decide:

1. To continue providing support to key regional and sub-regional mechanisms, with the participation of all the countries that are members of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, such as the HEMA, which provides clear direction for health and environment efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean and encourages collaboration among all the countries of the region, with the assistance of UNEP and the Pan American Health Organization.

2. To work closely with the Ministers of Health under a common set of objectives to deal with environment and health problems at the national, sub-regional and regional levels, and to identify priority activities and initiatives to be developed in a coordinated and cooperative manner.

3. To urge the member countries of the Forum to adopt the Clean Air Initiative at the city level, in order to achieve an exchange of experiences and horizontal cooperation and also consider the possibility of international financing

4. To recognize the work undertaken by the HEMA and its task force as complementary to the implementation of ILAC on this issue and encourage the continuation of this process, as well as the implementation of concrete activities and initiatives, such as GEO Health, agreed to by the task force.

DECISION 10

ADAPTATION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING NETWORK TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ILAC AND THE INCORPORATION OF THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN PROGRAMME OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Taking into account the priority assigned by the Forum of Ministers to the objectives of the programme of work of the Environmental Training Network of Latin America and the Caribbean;

Considering with special attention the goals of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) to create and develop national capacities in the priority themes identified therein;

Reaffirming the commitment expressed in the ILAC to: "Improve and strengthen the incorporation of the environmental dimension in formal and non-formal education, in the economy and in society";

Ratifying education's critical importance to promoting sustainable development and building people's capacity to tackle environment and development issues, as expressed in Chapter 36 of Agenda 21;

Taking into consideration that the United Nations General Assembly declared 2005-2015 the "Decade of Education for Sustainable Development";

Recognizing the progress made in environmental education in the region and concretely in the important process of legitimization, institutionalization, professionalization and conceptual, theoretical and methodological development, as well as gradual incorporation of the environmental dimension into study programmes, management processes and development plans;

Recognizing also that there are still major obstacles that impede greater effectiveness and impact of the education activities undertaken, while huge difficulties for communication, cooperation, exchange of experiences and environmental education projects among the countries of the region persist;

Convinced of the need to move forward in strengthening environmental education programmes as part of State policies in the different countries of the region through processes of cooperation, communication and exchange among the countries;

Emphasizing that the financial contributions to the Network Trust Fund come from the Environment Ministries or their equivalent in each of the countries of the region, and they play a fundamental role in implementing the ILAC;

Noting the unequal contributions of the countries to the Network Trust Fund and the limited resources available at this time for implementing the programme activities for the 2004-2005 biennium;

Decide:

- 1. To redirect** the Work Programme of the Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean towards the development of national capacities and training in the priority themes identified in the ILAC.
- 2. To request** the countries in the region to reconfirm their commitments and to make efforts to comply with their annual contributions to the Environmental Training Network Trust Fund.
- 3. To extend** the operation of the Network Trust Fund for two more years until the next meeting of the Forum of Ministers and request UNEP to continue administrating the Fund.
- 4. To use** the financial resources from the Trust Fund of the Environmental Training Network in a priority manner to ensure fulfilment of the provisions in point 1, with the main direct beneficiaries being the officials, specialists, and general personnel in the Environment Ministries or their equivalent in each of the countries of the region.
- 5. To recognize** the importance of the role of teachers, public educators and civil society in implementing the ILAC through activities such as courses, events, research and community action.
- 6. To ratify** the usefulness of the Publishing Program of the Environmental Training Network of Latin America and the Caribbean, adapting it to fulfil the provisions referred to in point 1, including translation of the texts into English, depending on the interest of the English-speaking Caribbean countries and the availability of funds.
- 7. To develop** in the period 2004-2005 within the work programme of the Environmental Training Network of Latin America and the Caribbean and in accordance with the availability of funds, at least two workshops for training and development of national capacities, with the participation of all the countries of the region, directed towards the priority goals of the ILAC, beginning with:
 - a) Trade and environment
 - b) Integrated management of ecosystems
- 8. To strengthen** the promoting, linking, coordinating and supporting nature of the Environmental Training Network, redirected in keeping with the ILAC towards environmental education, capacity-building and training processes, establishing partnerships and coordination mechanisms with other regional, sub-regional and national environmental education networks.
- 9. To support** the proposal of a Latin American and Caribbean Programme of Environmental Education for Sustainable Development so that it may be carried out within the framework of the Environmental Training Network. In this context and in accordance with the availability of financial resources, it is recommended that the exchange of specific educational specific experiences among the countries of the Forum be promoted, in addition to the capacity-building of educators and the training of relevant actors in civil society.
- 10. To request** that the UNEP and the Inter-Agency Technical Committee identify and negotiate technical and financial resources, in accordance with their specific mandates and the ILAC mandates, to support the Network's activities and particularly the development of the Latin American and Caribbean Programme of Environmental Education for Sustainable Development.
- 11. To request** the assistance of regional and international agencies to prepare modalities of environmental education for decision-makers and particularly members of national assemblies and parliaments.

12. To consider the need to establish coordination mechanisms between environmental and educational authorities at the national level and, at the same time, urge UNEP to design effective and efficient coordination mechanisms at the regional and sub-regional levels, with a view to strengthening environmental education.

13. To request the member countries of the Forum of Ministers to reinstate talks at the next session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (Jeju, Republic of Korea, 29-31 March 2004), to restore a global environmental training programme in cooperation with UNESCO.

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DECISION 11

ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS

Taking into account the decisions of the Tenth and Thirteenth Meetings of the Forum of Ministers and the First Special Meeting of the Inter-Sessional Committee of this Forum in relation to our region's need for an effective tool with environmental statistics and indicators to provide pertinent support for the decisions adopted in the framework of this Forum and of national agendas;

Taking into account, with special attention, that the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) includes specific guiding goals and indicative objectives in relation to indicators and, in particular, the following goal: "To develop and implement an assessment process to follow up on the progress made towards attaining sustainable development objectives, including the results of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, adopting national and regional sustainability indicators that respond to the region's unique social, economic and political features";

Taking into account that the indicators to monitor progress in the implementation of the ILAC must be based on basic environmental statistics that must serve multiple purposes, both regional and national;

Acknowledging the work carried out in 2003 by UNEP and the government of Costa Rica, including the meeting of experts on environmental statistics and indicators of the Forum of Environment Ministers (August 2003) during which a proposal on a core set of environmental indicators for ILAC were developed, as well as a proposal for a common methodology sheet;

Decide:

1. To support the Environmental Statistics and Indicators Project of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XIV/8) to produce a core set of (national) environmental indicators, as well as the required economic, social and institutional indicators, to assess progress in the implementation of the ILAC.

2. To approve the matrix of core data and indicators as the initial component of the project, as well as the design of the methodology sheets used to measure the indicators and variables of the ILAC in the various countries of the region (UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XIV/8).

3. To request UNEP to develop software tools at the regional scale to present all the indicators and to provide a regional perspective of the progress in the implementation of the ILAC objectives.

4. To advocate the gathering and harmonizing of national environmental variables and indicators in the framework of the Forum and promote the construction of a system of regional environmental information under the coordination of the Costa Rican Government,

as coordinator of the Forum's working group on environmental indicators, and UNEP, which will require the strengthening of capacities and relations with other similar initiatives being developed.

5. To request the agencies of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee, in accordance with their respective mandates, and other regional organizations to work with UNEP in implementing the activities approved in this decision and other initiatives at the regional level, particularly those aimed at strengthening and consolidating the processes for integrated environmental reports known as Global Environment Outlook (GEO) reports at their different levels.

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DECISION 12

SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Considering that one of the objectives that the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development established in its Plan of Implementation was the promotion of a 10-year programme in support of national and regional initiatives to accelerate change towards sustainable consumption and production patterns;

Taking into account that in the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development, presented and approved at the aforementioned Summit, the Latin American and Caribbean countries expressed the need to incorporate clean production concepts in industries and to work in favour of sustainable consumption;

Taking into account that the results of the First and Second Meetings of Latin American and Caribbean Governmental Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and in Managua, Nicaragua, respectively, include: a proposal for the creation of a Regional Council of Governmental Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production and a Contribution to the Construction of a Regional Platform on Sustainable Consumption and Production;

Considering that the results of the First Meeting were recognized as exemplary actions at the eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (New York, May 2003) and at the International Meeting on the 10-Year Programme for Sustainable Consumption and Production (Marrakech, June 2003);

DECIDE:

1. To promote the Regional Strategy on Sustainable Consumption and Production proposed at the Second Meeting of Latin American and Caribbean Governmental Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production.

2. To establish a Regional Council of Governmental Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production and to raise the financial resources required for its operation. This Council should install ongoing communication and participation mechanisms with associations of the production sector and consumers at the regional level.

3. To carry out a compilation of the major activities on sustainable production and consumption in each country of the region and analyse these activities in order to identify best practices and lessons learned and share them with the countries in the region, especially in relation to cleaner production.

4. To promote the strengthening of institutional capacities of governments through the continuous exchange of information among institutions in different sectors, as well as workshops, training, and technical assistance.

5. **To promote** the strengthening of capacities of the production, financial and consumer sectors by means of workshops, training, information exchange and technical assistance, with special emphasis on micro-, small- and medium-scale enterprises.
6. **To carry out** campaigns to increase awareness and knowledge of sustainable production and consumption at all levels of society.
7. **To implement** pilot projects on sustainable production and consumption for industry and service sectors, taking into account the wide variety of such sectors in the region.
8. **To promote** the supply and demand of sustainable products and services.
9. **To create** opportunities for dialogue among the various national and sub-regional initiatives on sustainable production and consumption.

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DECISION 13

IMPLEMENTATION OF ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS AND FISCAL POLICY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Recalling the importance of implementing the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), prepared by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and approved by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002;

Taking into consideration that Section VII), paragraph b), statement 9 of the ILAC operational guidelines calls for: "Creating or strengthening economic, tax, and fiscal instruments to promote sustainable development";

Considering statement B, number 5) of the ILAC Action Priorities, which reads: "To establish a system of economic incentives for productive and industrial processing projects that will save natural resources and energy and eventually reduce the amount of effluents discharged into water, land, and air";

Taking into account that all the countries of the region have been making efforts in this theme;

Recalling the work conducted along these lines by different regional and global organisms, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank, and the Global Environment Facility (GEF);

Decide:

1. **To request** the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC), in accordance with the respective mandates of the agencies that form it, and other regional organizations to support, together with the member countries of the Forum, the design of economic and fiscal policy instruments for environmental management, taking into consideration the lessons learned and the successful cases implemented in Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. **To request** UNEP, with the support of the ITC, to convene a meeting to be held during the first semester of 2004 to design economic and fiscal policy instruments for environmental management. The meeting should include significant participation on the part of the countries of the Forum of Ministers and appropriate and equitable regional representation.

3. To ask UNEP, with the support of the ITC and in accordance with the respective mandates of the ITC agencies, to give priority to political meetings at the highest level between fiscal or economic and environmental authorities to identify opportunities for political and institutional action in all matters pertaining to the design and implementation of economic instruments for environmental management.

4. To strengthen the efforts being conducted by each country in the region to consolidate a legal and institutional framework that will appropriately support the operation of fiscal instruments for environmental management. In addition, to promote and facilitate, financially and technically, exchanges of experiences in this field with the participation of all the member countries of the Forum, including issues such as payment for environmental services, reparation and compensation fees for discharges and emissions, carbon sequestration, collection of user fees and water rates, among other topics.

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DECISION 14

CLIMATE CHANGE

Considering that the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), agreed to in the framework of the first special meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, was approved at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg 2002);

Recalling that the ILAC acknowledges the important contribution that bilateral, sub-regional and regional activities can make to promoting sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean in the framework of the Platform of Action towards Johannesburg 2002, approved in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in October 2001;

Taking into consideration that the ILAC operational guidelines call for active promotion of the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and include an appeal for the ratification of this agreement, particularly by the countries with the greatest emissions of greenhouse gases;

Taking into account Decision 3 of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean regarding the Kyoto Protocol, which expresses clear disagreement with any attempt to back away from the implementation of commitments to reach the objectives established in the UNFCCC;

Taking into consideration decision 22/3 of the twenty-second session of the Governing Council (Nairobi, February 2003), which points out the need to strengthen UNEP's role, in coordination with the Secretariat of the UNFCCC, to support regional and national activities to reduce the vulnerability of the developing countries to climate change and especially the least developed countries and the small island developing States;

Considering the call made by the Preparatory Meeting of Experts on Land Use and Land-Use Change and Forestry in the framework of the Kyoto Protocol, during the November 2003 meeting held in Mexico, on the need to promote capacity building and prompt implementation of forest projects in the framework of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM);.

Decide:

1. To promote compliance with the ILAC operational guideline that deals with promotion and support for implementing the Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC.

2. To support Decision 3 of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and to urge the countries that have not yet done so, to ratify the Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC.

3. To support decision 22/3 adopted at the twenty-second session of the UNEP Governing Council (Nairobi, February 2003), emphasizing the need to strengthen UNEP's role in the Latin American and Caribbean region to reduce the vulnerability of the developing countries to climate change, in particular the least developed countries and the small island developing States, and to intensify UNDP's contributions to the countries of the region in this area.

4. To welcome the call made by the Preparatory Meeting of Experts on Land Use and Land-Use Changes and Forestry in the framework of the Kyoto Protocol prior to the Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and in relation to the importance of forestry projects in the CDM.

5. To support the continuation of efforts to facilitate prompt implementation of the CDM (including the issuing of emission reduction certificates in line with the provisions in decision 17/CP.7), both in renewable energy and energy efficiency matters and in issues related to afforestation and reforestation processes of the CDM and other means of reducing greenhouse gases.

6. To consider adaptation to global climate change a theme of high priority to the countries of the region and, in this context, to urge the Annex 1 countries to initiate prompt implementation of the Special Climate Change Fund (in accordance with decision 7/cp.7) and prompt access to its resources. The Annex 1 countries are also urged to find additional financial means to enable the countries of the region to successfully address implementation of measures to adapt to such changes.

7. To welcome with satisfaction Argentina's offer to submit its proposal to host COP 10 and to provide it with full support, and also to thank Mexico for its acceptance to represent the region as Co-Chair of Roundtable 3, to be held during the ministerial segment of COP-9.

8. To recognize UNDP's efforts and to urge it to continue and to intensify its significant contribution to the countries of the region in the field of climate change, especially in reference to vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

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DECISION 15

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Recalling that the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) agreed to at the first special meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 31 August 2002, and approved by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, recognizes the important contribution that bilateral, sub-regional, and regional activities can make to the promotion of sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean, within the framework of the Platform for Action towards Johannesburg 2002, approved in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in October 2001;

Highlighting the positive contribution that the productive use of renewable energy sources can make to the sustainable development of the countries of the region as they help to mitigate poverty, increase energy security, and diversify national and regional energy matrixes; reduce the risks of water variability; decentralize the production of energy;

improve the countries' technological and industrial base; and universalize electric power supply and use;

Considering that access to energy is of fundamental importance to promoting economic growth, to protecting the environment and to social equity;

Taking into account the Brasilia Platform on Renewable Energy that was adopted at the Regional Conference on Renewable Energy for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Brazil in October 2003;

Decide:

1. To advocate fulfilment of the goal set by the ILAC to ensure that by the year 2010 the region, considered as a whole, will be using renewable energy in at least 10 per cent of its total energy consumption.

2. To provide firm support at the International Conference on Renewable Energy (Bonn, 2004) for the creation of a technical and financial cooperation fund that will facilitate the industrialized countries' cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean in technological development matters, help to reduce current costs and increase the investment in renewable energy sources in the countries of the region.

3. To urge the financial institutions to finance national, sub-regional and regional renewable energy projects.

4. To determine the agenda, needs, implementation possibilities and support needed by each country in the region to reach the above-mentioned ILAC goal (renewable energy in 10 per cent of the total energy supply).

5. To prepare studies on experiences and existing projects in the region that can be used to draft initiatives for cooperation and to replicate and adapt those results to the demands of other countries.

6. To mobilize the political support needed to implement the provisions in the Latin American and Caribbean Platform on Renewable Energy and incorporate the region's priorities and contributions into the agreements of the Bonn Conference (2004).

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DECISION 16

TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT

Considering the content of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, adopted on 24 November 2001, within the framework of the World Trade Organization;

Recognizing the indications in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, emphasizing the important role that trade can play in the area of sustainable development and the abolishment of poverty;

Reiterating the action priorities of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC);

Recognizing the current importance of the theme of environment in the bilateral, regional, and global trade negotiations in which the region is immersed;

Decide:

- 1. To seek** opportunities for an exchange of experiences and consolidate capabilities in trade and environment issues, based on the knowledge obtained by countries that have included environment-related topics in their trade negotiations.
- 2. To urge** the Inter-Agency Technical Committee, in accordance with the respective mandates of the agencies that form it, to support sustained capacity-building programmes, both in the context of agreement negotiations and in the stage subsequent to the negotiations.

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DECISION 17

**REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE TWELFTH SESSION OF
THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Reflecting on the decisions of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) pertaining to the strengthening of regional and sub-regional processes to benefit the coordination of its work and facilitate the implementation of the adopted commitments;

Recalling the decision adopted by the eleventh session of the CSD to invite regional commissions to consider the possibility of organizing regional implementation meetings to contribute to the work of the CSD, in collaboration with the CSD Secretariat, and in collaboration with other regional organizations and organisms, as pertinent, as well as with regional fund offices, international financial and commercial programmes, and other organizations and organisms of the of the UN system;

Taking into consideration that these meetings should preferably take place prior to the CSD review session;

Considering that the Segment of Experts of this Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, held on 20 and 21 November 2003, ratified the need for the region to hold a preparatory meeting sufficiently prior to the twelfth session of the CSD, in order to reach a consolidated stance and arrive at the event with strengthened regional proposals;

Decide:

- 1. To stress** the need to hold a preparatory regional consultation for the forthcoming meeting of the CSD. To this end, this Forum accepts the offer of Panama to host this meeting during the last week of January 2004.
- 2. To recognize**, however, that for this preparatory meeting to take place, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), primarily, and the other agencies of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee and donor-governments committed to the success of the Commission's efforts, need to commit themselves to delivering a response to the Government of Panama no later than 15 December of this year. This response must mirror the economic and logistics commitments that each will assume to support this activity, as well as the total budget, in order to adopt a final decision in this regard before the end of the year 2003.
- 3. To entrust** the Chair of the Forum with making the necessary arrangements to obtain financing for the meeting and to determine the place and date on which it will be held.

DECISION 18

GRATITUDE TO THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA

Decide:

To express the deep gratitude of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to the people and Government of Panama for the generous hospitality extended during this Meeting.

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Annex III

List of Participants

Annex III. List of Participants

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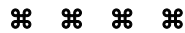


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