



**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

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

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31st October to 4th November 2005

A. PREPARATORY MEETING OF EXPERTS

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**Agenda issues of the
Fourteenth session of the
Commission on Sustainable
Development (1-12 May 2006)**

Agenda Item 7: Discussion and recommendations to the Forum of Ministers on priority environmental themes and negotiations

7.1 Fourteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (1-12 May 2006)

The Meeting of Experts will receive information from ECLAC on the themes the CSD will address at its next session (energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change.) and, on that basis, they will be able to formulate recommendations to the Forum of Ministers regarding the possibility of the countries of the region presenting shared initiatives and positions.

Source: The following information has been taken from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) Web Site.

www.un.org/desa/esa.htm

I. Energy for Sustainable Development

1. Energy is central to achieving sustainable development goals. Some two billion people have no access to modern energy services. The challenge lies in finding ways to reconcile this necessity and demand for energy with its impact on the natural resource base in order to ensure that sustainable development goals are realized.

2. The [Johannesburg Plan of Implementation](#) (JPOI), adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, addresses energy in the context of sustainable development. Among other things, the JPOI calls for action to:

- a) Improve access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services - [para. 9\(a\)](#)
- b) Recognize that energy services have positive impacts on poverty eradication and the improvement of standards of living - [para. 9 \(g\)](#)
- c) Develop and disseminate alternative energy technologies with the aim of giving a greater share of of the energy mix to renewable energy and, with a sense of urgency, substantially increase the global share of renewable energy sources - [para. 20\(c\)](#)
- d) Diversify energy supply by developing advanced, cleaner, more efficient and cost-effective energy technologies - [para 20\(e\)](#)
- e) Combine a range of energy technologies, including advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies, to meet the growing need for energy services - [para. 20\(d\)](#)
- f) Accelerate the development, dissemination and deployment of affordable and cleaner energy efficiency and energy conservation technologies - [para. 20\(i\)](#)
- g) Take action, where appropriate, to phase out subsidies in this area that inhibit sustainable development - [para. 20\(p\)](#)

3. Energy was further one of the major themes of the Ninth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-9), held in 2001. Countries agreed at CSD-9 that stronger emphasis should be placed on the development, implementation, and transfer of cleaner, more efficient technologies and that urgent action is required to further develop and expand the role of alternative energy sources. For [CSD-9 decisions](#) on energy click here.

4. This complex challenge of energy and sustainable development was highlighted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Energy is discussed throughout [Agenda 21](#). Agenda 21 highlights the fact that current levels of energy consumption and production are not sustainable, especially if demand continues to increase and stresses the importance of using energy resources in a way that is consistent with the aims of protecting human health, the atmosphere, and the natural environment.

II. Industry

5. Industry has a key role to play in achieving the goals of sustainable development as supplier of goods and services required by society, as a source of job creation and as an active participant in community life.

6. The 1997 Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly asked the Commission on Sustainable Development to focus on one economic sector each year. For 1998, the focus was on Industry in general, with special attention to sectors not covered in subsequent years."

7. The 2006-2007 sessions of the CSD will in part focus on Industrial Development.

8. Links to documents and preparations of the CSD on Industrial Development will be provided in this page as soon as they are available.

III. Atmosphere

9. Protection of the atmosphere is a broad and multidimensional endeavour involving various sectors of economic activity. Many of the issues discussed in [Chapter 9 of Agenda 21](#), on "Protection of the Atmosphere," are also addressed in such international agreements as the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer as amended, the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other international, including regional, instruments.

10. Agenda 21 notes, however, that activities that may be undertaken in pursuit of the objectives of this chapter should be co-ordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding adverse impacts on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty.

11. Particular attention is given to four programme areas. These are (1) improving the scientific basis for addressing uncertainties; (2) preventing stratospheric ozone depletion; (3) mitigating trans-boundary atmospheric pollution; and (4) promoting sustainable development with particular reference to (a) energy development, efficiency and consumption; (b) transportation; (c) industrial development; and (d) terrestrial and marine resource development and land use.

IV. Climate change

12. The Earth's climate system has demonstrably changed on both global and regional scales since the pre-industrial era, with some of these changes attributable to human activities. The atmospheric concentrations of key anthropogenic greenhouse gases (i.e. Carbon Dioxide, Methane, Nitrous Oxide and tropospheric ozone (O₃) reached their highest recorded levels in the 1990s, primarily due to the combustion of fossil fuels, agriculture, and land use changes. The [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#) concludes, in its Third

Assessment Report, that there is new and strong evidence that most of the warming observed over the last 50 years is attributable to human activities.

13. Agenda 21, which addresses climate change under its [Chapter 9 \(Protection of the atmosphere\)](#), recognizes that activities that may be undertaken in pursuit of the objectives defined therein should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding adverse impacts on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty. Agenda 21 and the [Johannesburg Plan of Implementation \(JPol\)](#) assert that the [United Nations Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) is the key instrument for addressing climate change. The entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol provided renewed optimism for the effectiveness of a multilateral approach to tackle climate change.

14. Climate change impacts can sabotage the efforts to achieve the goals of sustainable development, including in particular by augmenting poverty in developing countries especially the Least Developed Countries and the Small Island Developing States. Furthermore, development paths and production and consumption patterns have various impacts on the climate system. Hence, assuming that climate change should be considered in the broader context of sustainable development and to ensure that climate policies are integrated into national development planning and national sustainable development strategies, the CSD, in its [Multi-year Programme of Work](#), put the theme of climate change along with such issues as energy, atmosphere/air pollution and industrial development on the agenda of CSD-14/15.

15. All information on national reporting by countries on the measures they have taken to address climate change is available on the [website of UNFCCC](#).