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Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean**

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**Report on the Fulfillment of the
Decisions of the Sixteenth Meeting of the
Forum of Ministers of the Environment of
Latin America and the Caribbean
(March 2008 - March 2010)
Report of the Secretariat**

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I. Introduction

1. The decision by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to establish the Forum of Ministers of the Environment stemmed from the need for a regional political body to analyse and build consensus on positions relating to the issues contained in the regional and international environmental agendas. The Forum has gained strength through its meetings since 1982, and its participation in discussions of the international environmental agenda has been recognized.
2. The Forum of Ministers has translated its deliberations and agreements into specific decisions relating to the environmental priorities of the region and those agreed to internationally. Its main working bodies are the Inter-sessional Committee and the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC). The ITC consists of the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).
3. Since the convening of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; 27 January to 1 February 2008), important events have occurred in the international environmental sphere with relevant repercussions on the dialogue and decision-making process in the region, emphasizing among others, the global financial and economic crisis and the gradual but growing incorporation of the Green Economy concept; as well as international dialogue on climate change, in response to the dissemination of scientific reports and economic assessments that indicate the gravity of the socio-economic and environmental impacts of the problem and the challenges posed by the Copenhagen Agreement and the meeting of COP16 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Mexico in December 2010.
4. Similarly, note should be taken of the continuation of discussions on sustainable ecosystems management and the conservation of biodiversity, themes that continue to be of priority to the international community as a whole, in particular during 2010, International Year of Biodiversity. Among these, discussions on the establishment of a science-policy based platform on biodiversity and environmental services, as well as the negotiation of the international regime on Access to Genetic Resources and Sharing of benefits arising out of their utilization, and discussions of the Goals beyond 2010.
5. On the 11th Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, the Nusa Dua Declaration was adopted. It emphasized the importance of protecting biodiversity and the need to adopt a "green economy" low in carbon that slows climate change down. Within this framework, we must continue to respond to these topics, and take advantage of these dialogue fora to reach agreements and exchange points of view on these priority topics for our countries.

6. A general overview of the activities carried out during 2008 and 2009 indicates that through the Forum and the implementation of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), contribution to national, sub-regional and regional environmental priorities has been provided and that cooperation and coordination links with other Agencies of the United Nations system, several intergovernmental organizations, as well as other national, sub-regional and regional institutions, have been enhanced, primarily to promote capacity-building, synergies and technology support.

7. The Forum of Ministers has been strengthened as a body for political dialogue which discusses and adopts shared criteria on priority issues on the regional and international environmental agenda, including strategic matters arising from the main multilateral environmental agreements. From a programmatic point of view, the Forum of Ministers has focused its efforts on the implementation of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC).

8. The operation of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee has encouraged the implementation of the Regional Action Plan (RAP). Various activities responding to the priorities established by the countries of the region have been carried out through joint initiatives and projects of the countries, the ITC and other regional and international organizations, although more effective action is still required.

9. The institutional development of the countries of the region has been supported through various activities in the area of environmental legislation and institutions, and through cooperation projects aimed at expanding capacity to comply with multilateral environmental conventions.

10. The participation of major groups of civil society has been given special attention in the activities carried out by UNEP in Latin America and the Caribbean. This strategic orientation is consistent with UNEP's global policy and has strengthened the analysis and search for options to the environmental problems that the region is facing as a whole.

11. The present report, prepared by the Secretariat of the Forum of Ministers, outlines the progress made in carrying out the decisions adopted at the Sixteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, and is presented for consideration by the Seventeenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (Panama, 26-30 April 2010). It should be noted that a large number of expected actions on each of the Forum's decisions was entrusted not only to UNEP, but also to the Working Groups created under decision 2 and the ITC.

12. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), through its Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC), has carried out several discussions and work with the governments of the region as well as with agencies of the Inter-agency Technical Committee, to follow-up on and support the implementation of the Decisions adopted at the Sixteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment.

13. The Decisions were reported to the relevant bodies, such as the Secretariats of international environmental conventions, agencies of the Inter-agency Technical Committee and within UNEP itself, to coordinate and facilitate the monitoring of these regional agreements.

II. Follow-up on the Decisions and Recommendations of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

DECISION 1

ASSESSMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ILAC):

14. At the Sixteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, a comprehensive report was presented on the implementation of ILAC five years after its adoption, outlining the process since its adoption as part of the Implementation Plan of the World Summit on the Environment and Sustainable Development (Johannesburg 2002) and underscoring the steps taken towards its implementation at the national, sub-regional and regional levels, through the decisions of the Forum of Ministers and the actions undertaken by the countries to advance in the fulfilment of the objectives, goals and purposes of the Initiative, in accordance with the 25 main goals and 5 thematic areas.

15. The Meeting of the Forum defined the priority action areas of the Initiative in which the Latin American and Caribbean countries would focus their efforts during the 2008-2012 period.

16. Following the XVI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers and in fulfilling its mandate of reviewing the contents of the lessons learnt and the challenges to the implementation of the RAP, the Secretariat organized an Intersessional Meeting on October 20-21, 2009, in Panama City, in which Argentina proposed options for the integration of the Regional Action Plan. During this meeting, the debate on the Regional Action Plan was not completed therefore it was decided that a Contact Group be created. The Contact Group was composed of two countries per sub-region – Mesoamerica: Costa Rica and Mexico; Caribbean: St. Kitts and Nevis and the Dominican Republic; Andean sub-region: Ecuador and Peru; South America: Argentina and Brazil, as well as the members of the ITC.

17. During the period November 2009 to March 2010, the Contact Group held four (4) virtual meetings (13 November, 24 November, 9 December and 14 January) and one meeting in Brasilia, Brazil (3-4 February) which was jointly funded by the Government of Brazil and the Secretariat, in order to finalize the proposed document on the structure, format and contents of the 2010-2011 RAP. This document was circulated among the countries of the region for review and suggestions. The proposed 2010-2011 RAP will be presented for consideration of the XVII meeting of the Forum.

DECISION 2

2008-2009 REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

18. The Sixteenth Forum of Ministers decided to develop a new matrix for the preparation of the 2008-2009 Regional Action Plan and requested UNEP, as Secretariat to the Forum, to propose a RAP for the 2008-2009 biennium, aimed at

the implementation of the ILAC and focused on the set of actions agreed by the Forum of Ministers pursuant to Decision 1 of the Sixteenth Meeting, incorporating the comments made during the Preparatory Meeting of Experts.

19. As agreed, UNEP prepared the proposal, circulated it to the countries of the region for comments, after which the Secretariat distributed the final version for approval. The agreed final version was later sent out to the respective countries. The report of the secretariat containing activities carried out by the ITC in fulfilment the 2008-2009 RAP appears as document UNEP/LAC-GWG.XVII/4 of this meeting.

20. In order to continue using this tool more efficiently, the Secretariat presented the proposal of the 2010-2011 Regional Action Plan as mentioned in the previous decision.

DECISION 3

COMPOSITION AND MANDATE OF THE ITC

21. The Inter-agency Technical Committee met in October 2008 with a view to continuing the support to the efforts undertaken by the countries of the region. The meeting agreed that the support provided by each agency would be within the framework of their mandate and their respective work programme.

22. Additionally, the Committee will meet on 24 April 2010 to identify the areas in which each agency could contribute to or facilitate the implementation of the decisions to be taken during the XVII Meeting of the Forum and the 2010-2011 RAP. On the other hand, the agencies supported the preparation of a report on the progress of the region in achieving the Millennium Development Goal 7 (ensure environmental sustainability), which was presented in February 2010 and will also be disseminated in the framework of the XVII meeting of the Forum.

DECISION 4

OPERATION OF THE WORKING GROUPS

23. The last Forum of Ministers decided to establish six working groups which were open to all the countries of the region, subject to the fulfilment of paragraph 4 of this decision: a) Environmental Indicators; b) Risk Management; c) Access to Genetic Resources; d) Climate Change; e) Management of Coastal-Marine Areas and their Resources; and f) Environmental Education for Sustainable Development.

24. Four working groups established, in line with the decision, specific activities to be developed during the biennium. After making the pertinent consultations with the countries, several calls, communications and exchanges with the coordinating countries, the Working Groups that continue to function are: Access to Genetic Resources, Climate Change, Environmental Education for Sustainable Development and Environmental Indicators.

25. Following on the agreements established by the decision of the Forum of Ministers, UNEP, in its capacity as Secretariat of the Forum, contacted the countries to obtain information on the designation of focal points within the countries for the various Working Groups.

26. Similarly, and in light of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Forum, the country coordinators of the different Working Groups were asked to send to the Secretariat, information on the activities carried out during the inter-sessional period.

27. As Secretariat to the Forum, UNEP supported the countries in organizing and convening meetings for these groups. The work carried out in each of these groups is outlined in greater detail in the respective decisions on each topic.

DECISION 5

SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

28. The Secretariat continues to work with the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) by supporting the technical programme of the Caribbean SIDS, designed in accordance with Decision 4 of the Forum of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean held October 2003, and during subsequent meetings of the Forum (2005 in Caracas, Venezuela and 2008 in the Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic).

29. In this context, activities are being carried out at different levels. The most developed activity in this group is the Partnership Initiative on Sustainable Land Management (PISLM). As recognized in Decision 5 of the last Forum of Ministers, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago offered support to the PISLM, through the Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD), and has shown its commitment through its continued support. During the period under review, a series of significant goals were achieved in regard to the PISLM, among which the following are noteworthy:

- During the 25th Extraordinary Meeting of the Commission for Trade and Economic Development Council (COTED) held 14-18 April 2008, the CARICOM Ministers of Environment endorsed the PISLM as the framework for the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation, components of the Barbados Programme of Action, and extended the mandate of PISLM to include issues relating to rural development and poverty alleviation.
- A Five-Year Rolling Business Plan for the PISLM for Caribbean SIDS 2009 – 2013 was prepared and adopted by the PISLM Task Force. The Business Plan charts the way forward and considers various ongoing projects in the Region, future projects and budgetary implications.

30. The PISLM continued the establishment of links with similar programmes at the global level. In this sense, the cooperation between the PISLM and a similar initiative in China was formalized with the participation of the project coordinator at an international meeting on land degradation organized by the People's Republic of China/GEF in dry land ecosystems in November 2008. A document entitled "*Partnership initiative on Land Degradation and Sustainable Land Management in Caribbean SIDS*" was presented at the meeting.

31. One of the most significant activities within the Working Group was the presentation of a UNEP initiative in Belize entitled "Poverty reduction and land

degradation through integrated agro-forestry and eco-tourism in the Mayan landscape in the south of Belize". Based on comments received, the project is a success and still demonstrates the usefulness of the PISLM in stimulating action at the community level to deal with the problems of land degradation.

32. Also worthy of mention is the Capacity-Building related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries. The objective is to enhance the capacity of ACP countries to implement their respective obligations under MEAs and related commitments thereby resulting in sound management of their environment and natural resources towards poverty alleviation and sustainable development focusing on, among others, mitigating the adverse effects of climate change, loss of biodiversity, drought, land degradation, chemicals, hazardous wastes and other threats to the environment. From 8th to 10th September 2009, the Caribbean Hub Needs Prioritization Workshop was held in Georgetown, Guyana. The overall aim of the workshop was to provide the Caribbean ACP States with the opportunity to assess and update the capacity inventory compiled under the 'Needs Identification and Prioritization' component of the project.

33. During the 2008-2009 biennium, UNEP completed the integrated global environmental outlooks (GEOs) of the following urban areas of the insular Caribbean: Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic; and Holguin, Santa Clara and Cienfuegos, in Cuba. At national level, the report on the environmental outlook of Cuba (GEO Cuba) was completed. UNEP also is working in completing the reports on environment outlooks in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. These reports have been prepared with the support of ministers or secretariats of the environment (national) or municipal (urban environmental outlooks), and technical counterparts selected by these bodies. The reports followed the GEO conceptual framework based on the identification of driving forces, pressures, their impact on the state of the environment, and the present responses and future actions that could be undertaken to improve environmental quality in the spheres of the report.

34. The first SEAF (Sustainable Energy Advisory Facility) workshop for the promotion of Renewable Energy Use in the Caribbean took place in Jamaica from 16th to 17th February 2009, with participation of representatives from Cuba, Dominica, Jamaica, and Suriname. The Inter-American Development Bank, the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE), the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica (PCJ) and the University of Delaware in United States representatives also participated at this meeting. As a result of this workshop, two proposals from Jamaica and Suriname were submitted for the consideration of SEAF Secretariat in May 2009. The proposal from Jamaica was selected to start the implementation.

35. In order to facilitate the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in the Caribbean, a process was begun for the preparation of a Regional Project UNEP / GEF to support the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety through the establishment of efficient, transparent, operable and sustainable National Biosafety Frameworks for Caribbean subregion countries of Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. The project will support activities at regional and national

level in each of the participating countries. A project proposal was prepared, with the participation of CARICOM, project countries and various regional and international associates, and in an advisory workshop held in Barbados in July 2009. The draft proposal was presented to UNEP in October 2009 and has been reviewed by the Review Committee of UNEP. Key decisions for the implementation of the project are still pending and efforts to achieve cooperation in garner funding from various sources are underway. It is expected that the proposal will be submitted to the GEF during 2010.

36. Within the framework of the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV), various symposiums and workshops about cleaner fuels have been carried out. Additionally, dissemination of information and training will begin on the topic during the first workshop for the Caribbean to be held in Jamaica in 2010.

37. In an effort to provide updated, scientifically-based information pertinent to our region and available to decision-makers and relevant sectors, UNEP supported the development of assessment activities related to vulnerability and data collection for the implementation of actions leading to adaptation to climate change, which were incorporated to publications dedicated to two sub-regions with high vulnerability in the region, and among which we can mention: "Climate Change in the Caribbean and the Challenges of Adaptation, 2008" which was prepared by the Secretariat of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the University of the West Indies, the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), and CATHALAC. This report was launched during the 14th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Poznan, Poland, in December 2008.

38. Also on the subject of evaluations, a project is underway in the region for the integration of climate change and ecosystem factors in risk assessment and associated planning processes. This project is located initially in the Caribbean, specifically in Jamaica, as a case study with the possibility of replication in the region. The methodology for these evaluations was completed in March 2010, and is available at <http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/RiVAMP.pdf>.

39. Regarding the subject of sustainable consumption and production at subregional level, relevant entities of the Caribbean gathered in September 2008, to review the Subregional Action Plan. In this framework, UNEP developed and initiated the Information Network on SCP for Latin America and the Caribbean, available in Spanish, English and Portuguese for the entire region. A series of trainings to train technical focal points of the countries have been carried out to allow for the appropriate use of this tool. The Network was officially launched at the Fifth Meeting of the Council of Government Experts in SCP. The network's site is www.redpys.net. Additionally, a network is also being developed for the Caribbean, in the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute CEHI in St. Lucia. Within the framework of the preparation process of the 10-Year Framework Programme to accelerate change towards sustainable consumption and production (SCP) agreed to in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and taking into account the concrete measures that have been developed in the Caribbean region, a workshop on "Strengthening of an environment suitable for the implementation of action plans of SCP at the national and sub-regional levels" was held in Georgetown, Guyana, 24-26 February 2010.

40. To meet the special needs of some of the island countries, the Program of Caribbean SIDS has added a component based on a unique approach. In the case of Haiti, Cuba and the Dominican Republic, on the basis of tripartite political agreement between the governments of Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti, initiated the implementation of the project "The demarcation and establishment of the Caribbean Biological Corridor (CBC) as a framework for the Conservation of Biodiversity, Environmental Rehabilitation and Development of Life Choices in Haiti, Dominican Republic and Cuba."

41. In October 2008, UNEP appointed an officer to support Haiti, which will focus on the development of the Ecosystem Regeneration Initiative in the country which includes the restoration of mountain and coastal areas where the central issues are deforestation and unsustainable agricultural practices that cause soil loss through erosion, reduced soil fertility, landslides and flood disasters in vulnerable cities. The long-term outcome (10-20 years) of the Initiative will be the reduction of poverty and vulnerability to disasters, through the restoration of ecosystems and livelihoods based on sustainable management of natural resources. Currently the initiative is in its preparatory phase (2009-2010) where a long-term programme is being developed for the restoration of ecosystems for poverty reduction and disaster risk, and specifying funding sources.

42. Activities of the Montreal Protocol Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP). The Caribbean SIDS CAP is a combination of projects and initiatives to achieve this goal and build capacity at the national, regional and collective levels with the aim of assisting the Contracting Parties to fulfil and maintain compliance with the Montreal Protocol. The following activities are included:

- a) Montreal Protocol Compliance Assistance Programme. The CAP provides continuous support to all Caribbean SIDS on management of compliance of the Protocol and presentation of reports on annual data requirements to the Secretariat to the Multilateral and Ozone Fund. UNEP provided training and capacity building of ozone officers and other key national stakeholders on the management and preparation of the annual reports required by the Secretariat of the Montreal Protocol. The Caribbean SIDS have achieved 100 per cent compliance for data reporting requirements. With regard to the 2008 database, more than 85 per cent of the SIDS have eliminated the use of CFC, in compliance with the mandate of the Montreal Protocol. A meeting of Caribbean ozone officers was organized by UNEP in collaboration with the Government of Belize (Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment) and the UNDP country representative for Belize, was held in Belize, 2-5 March 2010. Fourteen (14) countries including Haiti (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago) participated in the meeting which was aimed at determining new national implications and requirements based on recent decisions of the Montreal Protocol in accordance with the Meeting of the Parties and the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol; reviewing the implementation status and management of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC), with a view to their elimination, in keeping with the Montreal Protocol, and lastly, benefits of energy management and

climate change. The process was achieved through training for the execution of national surveys and project preparation; information on the role of the National Refrigeration Associations in support of the implementation of the Montreal Protocol; analysis and control of the trade in Ozone-Depleting Substances (ODS) and analysis of the challenges of implementing the Montreal Protocol in approved projects.

- b) Exchange among Networks. The main objective is to build capacities of the national ozone workers and prepare and implement strategies to deal with the emerging issues such as favourable technologies for the ozone layer, the need for new skills, illegal trade of ODS, alternative technologies to using methyl bromide, CFC inhalers and the trade of ODS technologies that contribute to ODS dependence. Since 2008, four meetings of the network were held in which the Caribbean countries participated.
- c) Development and implementation of national Montreal Protocol policies and legislation. The CAP provided support to the Caribbean SIDS on reviews and development of national legislations and in particular, the establishment of licences to control the trade in ODS. This support is provided through national and regional policy workshops and, where necessary, through special assistance and resources to countries that are at risk of non compliance or those that are fully non compliant.
- d) Support for Country-specific Policy and Legislative Compliance with the Montreal Protocol. With this goal in mind, support was given to Haiti, Guyana and Barbados. Ten (10) SIDS have established an informal information exchange system for the trafficking of ODS with countries of Asia Pacific for provisional approval of ODS freight before reaching to the respective countries. A training course was also held for the national partners on the implementation of ODS licensing system in Dominica, Belize and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. All the countries received assistance towards maintaining compliance. With regard to the 2007 and 2008, reports on compliance with the Protocol, the Ozone Officers Network of the English-speaking Caribbean were the first to complete all the data required by the Ozone Secretariat.
- e) Technological support and capacity-building at the national and regional levels. UNEP coordinates the transfer of the best available technology to support the sustainable compliance and transition of ozone-friendly technologies through a combination of national and sub-regional workshops, targeting both the private and public sectors. Special attention is paid to the air-conditioning and refrigeration as this sector is the largest user of ozone depleting substances in the Caribbean SIDS. Additional regional workshops to facilitate the creation of capacities for adaptation to technologies in the long-term were held in Trinidad and Tobago 2008 (8 countries), Grenada 2009 (14 countries). Cuba and the Dominican Republic participated in similar workshops in Argentina and Colombia in 2008 and 2009 respectively. In addition, this policy training was included in all the activities of the national project to phase out the use of ODS.

- f) Training of customs officials, other government workers and the private sector responsible for the trade in ODS and ODS dependent technologies. To date, customs training has been conducted in all Caribbean SIDS and 7 regional workshops have been held since 2003 to address the functions and responsibilities relating to the trade in ODS and the technologies that use ODS.
- g) Training and awareness-raising in relation to the monitoring and control of illegal trade in commodities traded by virtue of multilateral environmental agreements. In May 2007, a workshop for the English-speaking Caribbean on the management and control of illegal trade was held in Saint Lucia, with particular reference and focus on commodities controlled under the Montreal Protocol. National ozone and customs officials from each of the 14 CARICOM member-states, including Haiti, as well as representatives from regional organizations such as the CARICOM Secretariat, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and the Caribbean Customs Laws Enforcement Council also participated in this workshop. The Customs Enforcement Network was established in 2008, and its first meeting was held in 2008 together with the Network of Latin American countries.
- h) Green Customs Initiatives (GCI) Training. The objective of the Initiative is to strengthen compliance and the enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements through integrated capacity building of customs officials within the framework of the enforcement of these agreements. Workers are trained in various agreements at the same time in order to achieve greater efficiency than if they were trained separately for each agreement. The Green Customs Training Initiative for 2009 will be held in the Customs Training Centre, in November 2009, in the Dominican Republic. This training programme for all small island states will focus on the training of trainers that allows for the nationalization of GCI methodology.
- i) Support to institutional strengthening and national ODS phase-out action plans. The main objectives of this project are to support increased national capacity, national plans of action for the phasing out of ODS and the implementation and compliance of the Montreal Protocol. The national projects for which UNEP is responsible are: creation of regional workshops and networks; horizontal cooperation; support to training and capacity building; training and technological support of long-term options for refrigerant alternatives; research and development activities, among others. The CAP has undertaken project activities in the following countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Bahamas, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Surinam. It provides support services for compliance and the work network in Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago.

43. Within the framework of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), so far in this biennium, a series of activities have been carried out. The regional meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean on SAICM was held in Panama City, February 14th -16th, 2008 under the patronage of the Governments of Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America. The

next meeting will be held in March 2010. In follow up of this meeting, other meetings of the regional coordination committees were held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 11th to 13th June 2008, as well as the SAICM Workshop for the Caribbean region on chemical products and tools for harmful substances, in Bridgetown, Barbados, 10th to 13th March 2009.

44. The Caribbean Hotel Energy Efficiency Action Programme (CHENACT) supports the Caribbean hotel sector in migrating towards higher energy efficiency and use of renewable energies. This project will also explore the possibilities of obtaining carbon credits for reduced carbon dioxide emissions through the clean development mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Synergies have been created within the CHENACT project and UNEP, so that the participants not only comply with the Kyoto protocol by reducing their carbon dioxide emissions, but also with the Montreal protocol in relation to the phasing out of ozone depleting substances in air-conditioning and refrigeration equipment.

DECISION 6

ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS

45. At the last meeting of the Forum of Ministers, the importance of developing and using environmental indicators was highlighted, taking into account the work and recommendations of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) working group. To this end, a meeting of the Committee on geo-spatial information and land observation systems was held (Panama City, Panama; 2-3 October 2008). The work timeline was adjusted, and the structure of the Atlas of Our Changing Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean, one of the main activities of the Workplan for this biennium, was agreed.

46. The Atlas, which is a joint undertaking between UNEP and CATHALAC, with the support of the member countries of the TAC, is in its final stages of development. A final version of the Atlas is expected to be ready for printing by May 2010.

47. The following activities were accomplished:

- a) Reactivation of the ILAC discussion forum
- b) Capacity Development Workshop for Biodiversity Indicators in the Mesoamerican Region: a joint effort between World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and UNEP, through the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. The workshop was part of the activities planned by WCMC in fulfilment of the alliance on 2010 Biodiversity Indicators, contributing to the creation of capacities for the generation of indicators that allow for the follow-up to ILAC goals 1.1 to 1.4.

48. With regard to the Environmental Indicators Working Group (EIWG): ILAC Discussion Forum, the work was re-started through the virtual forum (www.geodatos.org) on May 18, 2009. Twenty (20) methodological Sheets were discussed. As a simultaneous discussion tool, virtual tools were used through sessions for consolidating comments in which country focal points participated. Comments were mainly received from countries that have already prepared the ILAC report (Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia and Mexico). In addition,

ECLAC supports the revision activities of the methodological sheets that have been agreed to by consensus and those that have not been agreed to.

49. The meeting of the Environmental Indicators Working Group was held August 26-28, 2009 (Santo Domingo de Heredia, Costa Rica). The work sessions were focused on discussing twenty-three non-consensus indicators. At the end of the meeting, consensus was reached on seventeen of the indicators discussed; four were eliminated, two remained without consensus and ten new indicators were proposed. The EIWG will present a total of 31 ILAC indicators with their agreed methodological sheets to the Forum of Ministers. Two of the indicators are synergies in the sense that they allow for the measuring of objectives. In the case of the twelve indicators without methodological sheets, sheets were prepared for five of them. The seven remaining indicators pose difficulties with regard to the availability of viable and necessary information for their preparation. After the meeting, the indicators were organized in three categories according to their progress status: consensus, under development and emerging. The proposed indicators at the Costa Rica meeting were entered separately.

50. The virtual discussions continue; to date discussions have been held on seven proposed indicators in Costa Rica and two under development.

51. The progress achieved in the six thematic ILAC areas covers the twenty-five goals presented in forty-five indicators. However, the definition of some of those indicators presents challenges, which has made it difficult to arrive at a consensus among the countries. Currently, there are thirty-one (31) Methodological Sheets for which consensus was achieved (69%), two under development (4%) and twelve emerging (27%).

52. The following is the progress achieved by thematic area:

- i. Biological Diversity: Three indicators; all agreed to.
- ii. Management of Water Resources: Nine indicators, four agreed to (44%), one under development (11%) and four emergent (44%).
- iii. Vulnerability, Human Settlements and Sustainable Cities: Eleven indicators, ten agreed to (91%) and one emergent (9%).
- iv. Social issues including Health, Poverty and Inequality: Nine indicators, five agreed to (56%), one under development (11%) and three emergent (33%).
- v. Economic aspects including trade, consumption and production patterns: Six indicators, five agreed to (83%) and one emergent (17%).

53. Institutional Aspects: Seven indicators; four agreed to (57%) and three emergent (43%). Among the conclusions agreed to, the following can be emphasized:

- The need to review the formulation of some goals and the relevance of some indicators concerning the same.
- The incipient development of the environmental dimension, together with the national statistics systems in countries that make the construction of ILAC indicators difficult.

- The need to strengthen national statistical entities through an increase in budgets, capacity-building and formalizing inter-institutional coordination with environmental entities.
- The need to produce a 7-year regional ILAC report of its constitution as far as possible, with national data.

54. Additionally, a joint ECLAC/UNEP workshop was held (Santiago, Chile; September 2009): Construction of Environmental Indicators (ILAC/ODM7) in Latin American countries.

55. The EIWG, jointly with the Statistics Division of ECLAC, is reviewing the relevance of indicators proposed to measure goals. Instances in which proposed indicators do not reflect the goal to be measured were detected. The EIWG expects to formulate concrete proposals to improve the use of follow-up indicators to the ILAC initiative.

56. During the 2008-2009 biennium, UNEP provided technical support for the preparation of national ILAC reports in Peru (launched in May 2008, www.pnuma.org/deat1/publicaciones.html). Panama and Cuba are in their final phase and their publications are expected before April 2010. UNEP and ECLAC prepared project proposal during this biennium, without obtaining the required financial support for their implementation. The projects formulated point to the improvement of national capacities to implement system of ILAC indicators in Latin America and the Caribbean.

DECISION 7

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION

57. In the framework of this Decision, the Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean agreed to integrate a regional network of authorities responsible for atmospheric pollution, with the objective of carrying out technical exchanges and promote capacity building, as well as assessing options for reducing air pollution during the 2008-2009 period.

58. UNEP, with the support of the Global Atmospheric Pollution Forum, organized the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Network on Air Pollution in Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held in Panama City in March 2009. Antigua and Barbuda, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay participated in this seminar, in which government representatives analyzed topics such as: regional and global trends in air pollution, its impact on health, the needs for the Latin America and Caribbean region, the transport sector and air pollution, bio-mass burning, among other topics. This subsequently led to intervention and discussion by representatives of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, which defined a series of priority actions to be put into practice by the Network, with the support of UNEP and the Global Forum.

59. The second meeting of the Intergovernmental Network on Air Pollution in Latin America and the Caribbean was held in October 2009, where a technical seminar was also organized on atmospheric pollution global and regional trends, health

costs and benefits and international cooperation efforts on this issue and, a proposal for a Framework Agreement on Atmospheric Pollution was developed and is being submitted for approval of the XVII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers.

DECISION 8

BETTER FUEL FOR A BETTER QUALITY LIFE

60. Through this decision, the Ministers of the Environment confirmed the importance of this topic at the last meeting of the Forum.

61. The Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV), established by UNEP, is the global initiative for *promoting cleaner fuels and vehicles* in developing countries and those in transition, and provide technical, financial and training support in the development of policies to fulfil the global objectives of clean fuel and vehicles. This partnership brings together more than 110 organizations including governments, the private sector (petroleum and vehicle industries), civil society and international organizations dedicated to cleaner air and reduction of the emissions of greenhouse gases by vehicles. Initiatives are already underway in Chile, Paraguay, Mexico and Colombia, with the support of the PVFC, and symposiums and workshops on cleaner fuel have been conducted. A workshop will be held in December in Chile to develop mechanisms to provide incentives for vehicles with low or zero emission.

62. The Partnership has promoted the termination of the marketing of leaded petrol in the region, promoted the agreement between LAC environment ministers on progress towards fuels with 50 ppm sulfur content; promoted a programme to incorporate particulate filters on trucks in Santiago, Chile.

63. Several seminars to promote the importance of fuel quality on vehicle emissions, in developing recommendations for clean fuels and vehicles to Central America and Dominican Republic, among others, were also conducted

64. Additionally, UNEP will soon launch a Global Fuel Economy Initiative, the objective of which is to act as a catalyst for and contribute to the harmonization of large quantities of greenhouse gases, as well as the use of oil by improving fuel economy in the automotive sector in the face of rapid growth in the use of automobiles globally

DECISION 9

NATURAL PROTECTED AREAS

65. During the last Forum's meeting, the Ministers recognized the importance of the work carried out by the Latin American Technical Cooperation Network on National Parks and other Protected Areas and Wildlife as a mechanism for regional cooperation and integration.

66. Work has continued in support of the Latin American Network on Technical Cooperation in National Parks, other Protected areas, Wild Flora and Fauna (REDPARQUES). In this framework, UNEP participated in the revision of the publication "Financial Sustainability of Protected Areas in Latin America" and in the Virtual Regional Forums for the preparation of the Voluntary Guidelines for the Establishment and Ordering of Protected Areas in Latin America. Discussions have

begun with REDPARQUES, for the upcoming Regional Symposium on Climate Change and Protected Areas which is proposed for October or November in Huascarán, Peru.

67. UNEP participated in the Third Mesoamerican Congress on Protected Areas from 8 to 12 March in the City of Merida, Yucatan, Mexico. This Congress was organized by the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), the Environment and Natural Resources Secretariat of Mexico, through the National Commission on Natural Protected Areas and the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor-Mexico. The main objective of the congress was to follow up on the six priority lines identified by the member countries, namely: protected areas, indigenous and afro descendent peoples, territorial management and governance of protected areas, regional integration and cooperation, and lastly the financing of the protected areas.

68. Support has continued for the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor-Mexico, mainly for capacity building activities for protected area officials in the region, specifically through UNEP's participation with technical conferences and support to participants from Central America and the Caribbean to attend Courses on Connectivity and Management of Protected Areas in Mesoamerica, that have been held in Chajul, Montes Azules, in the State of Chiapas, Mexico. Support was also provided to the Ministry of Environment of Guatemala to facilitate the reproduction and subsequent exhibition of a photograph collection titled "Mesoamerican Biological Corridor: Space for Life", in Guatemala.

69. An initiative that promotes the conservation and increase of forestry areas, and which is being implemented at national and sub-regional levels, is the Payment-for-Environmental-Services (PES). The use of this instrument has grown particularly in the Mesoamerican region. At the request of the Council of Ministers of the Environment of this sub-region, UNEP, together with the Central American Commission on Environment and Sustainable Development (CCAD for its initials in Spanish) started the Project to prepare a Proposal for the Establishment of a Mesoamerican Fund for Payment-for-Environmental-Services currently being executed.

70. Similarly, UNDP, through its Regional Environment and Energy Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean, in alliance with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) through its Global Protected Areas Strategy, is working within the framework of a regional initiative to strengthen the sustainable financing of the National Systems of Protected Areas in the Region. This initiative began in 2008 with the implementation of Scores Cards for the Financial Sustainability of Protected Areas Systems by the governments and an expert group on financing protected areas in 19 countries of the region. Currently, the results and considerations resulting from the implementation of this Card has been recognized in a Regional Report which will be published at the end of this year, with the aim of helping decision-makers and persons responsible for the management of protected areas in the region to identify the financing needs and gaps in the Protected Areas Systems and provide inputs for the design of support activities at the national level. UNDP has carried out projects in Protected Area Systems in several countries of the region.

71. Finally, conservation projects are being carried out with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Among those worthy of mention are: the continuation of the Andean Paramus Conservation Project and the Argentinean umbrella project, capacity building in the management of invasive species in Panama; the project for Improvement of Certification Schemes for the Sustainable Planning of Tropical Forests in Mexico and Brazil, and Bio-security projects within the framework of the Cartagena Convention on Bio-safety Convention to the Biological Diversity in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, Panama, Guatemala and El Salvador.

DECISION 10

SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

72. On the topic of sustainable consumption and production (SCP), significant progress was made with respect to the implementation of the Regional Action Plan of Latin America and the Caribbean. Countries of the region including Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador and Uruguay have started to adopt national SCP policies and strategies. Additionally, a Dialogue Table on SCP will be held in Mexico in mid 2010, which is expected to initiate the definition and establishment of an integrated SCP policy.

73. UNEP also conducted an evaluation of the status and progress of SCP in the region, which was presented in September 2009 during the Fifth Experts Meeting on Sustainable Consumption and Production (Cartagena, Colombia; September 16-18, 2009).

74. At the sub-regional level, relevant Caribbean entities met in August 2008 to review the Sub-regional Action Plan. Similarly, Mesoamerican government focal points met to prepare a specific recommendation on SCP to the Ministers of the Environment of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development, reinforced by decision 19 of February 2010 adopted at the Regional Intersectoral Committee on Cleaner Production, held in San Salvador, from 18 to 19 February 2010. In the Caribbean, a training course for the preparation of national SCP programmes took place from 24 to 26 February 2010. Round table discussions have been held in Brazil and Uruguay.

75. With respect to small and medium-sized enterprises with SCP practices in the region, efforts are being made to create a specific working group of Small and Medium-size Enterprises (SMEs). It is possible that a meeting of the representatives of the private sector will be convened before the end of the year (2009) to discuss their vision on the draft 10-year Framework Programme (10-YFP).

76. UNEP developed and initiated the SCP Information Network for Latin America and the Caribbean which is available in English, Spanish and Portuguese for the entire region. A series of training courses to train technical focal points of the countries to use this tool has been developed. Its official launch took place at the Fifth Meeting of the Regional Council of Government Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production. The Network's website is www.redpycs.net. In addition, a network for the Caribbean of the Caribbean Environmental Health

Institute (CEHI) in Saint Lucia is now operational. This network also feeds into the Information Network.

77. With regard to the topic of sustainable public procurement (SPP), a Mercosur project has been developed, which gave rise to a proposal for the inclusion of SPP criteria, an SPP manual; and a communication campaign proposal. An SPP training workshop for Central America was held in Costa Rica in October 2008, in conjunction with the Government Purchasing Network of the Organization of American States (OAS). Additionally, the project for SPP capacity building at the regional level has begun with the participation of 5 pilot countries: Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile and Uruguay. Two training courses which focused on SPP were also held for South America (Chile, May 2009) and Mesoamerica (Mexico, July 2009).

78. The Fifth Meeting of the Regional Council of Government Experts on SCP was held in September 2009 in Cartagena, Colombia. The object of this meeting was to assess the region's SCP progress based on the priorities identified by the Experts Council and ratified by Decision 10 of the Forum of Ministers, and to define the specific contributions of the region to the ten-year Programme Framework which will be presented to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) during this year 2010. The regional priorities that were approved at the Fifth meeting of the Council were presented to ECLAC's Regional Implementation Meeting and incorporated in the regional reference document for the region to be discussed at the CSD. These recommendations will be presented to the Seventeenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers for their consideration.

DECISION 11

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

79. At the Sixteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, the Ministers decided to reaffirm their support and approve the Latin America and Caribbean Environmental Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (PLACEA), being coordinated by Brazil during the 2008-2009 biennium.

80. In this case, within the framework of the Sixth Ibero-American Congress on Environmental Education which was held in San Clemente del Tuyu, Argentina from September 16-19, 2009, the Third Meeting of Specialists in Public Management and Environmental Education of Latin America and the Caribbean was held on September 18 at this same location. One of the agreements of the meeting was to prepare an instrument that makes it possible to compile a registry of the different didactic media that each of our countries has been using and implementing between 2004 and 2009. The aim of compiling the information, in addition to sharing it with the countries, is to use it as a basis for preparing a proposal of concrete activities for the Regional Plan of Action of PLACEA for 2010-2011. Chile, with the support of UNEP, prepared a matrix which was circulated to the countries of Latin America. With the input received, the Coordination of PLACEA proposed to prepare a note to be presented at the Seventeenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers. It was also agreed during the meeting that UNEP would create a webpage for PLACEA with a discussion space that would also serve as a documents

depository. To this end, UNEP has made available a space where all of PLACEA's information has been included –

<http://www.pnuma.org/educamb/placea.php?mensup=10&menuinf=6>.

81. Under the “Water as source of life” International Decade for Action 2005-2015 initiative, whose commitment includes the Millennium Development Goal to reduce by half, the number of persons living without access to drinking water by 2015 and cease the unsustainable use of water resources, two important events in relation to this subject were convened during the second half of 2008: the Tenth International Course on Coastal Area Management, held in Mexico, where there was significant discussion on a wide variety of management topics, both of water and of natural resources as well as on strategic planning and management of wetlands and coastal zones; and the Forum of Waters of the Americas, in Brazil, in preparation for the World Water Forum in Turkey in March 2009.

82. UNEP has continued a series of activities within the framework of the Environmental Training Network together with Universities and other environmental entities. These include the publication of Environmental Education textbooks for primary and secondary schools (1000 copies of 6 primary texts, and one secondary); an agro-forestry Course with the University of Chapingo; a coastal area management course with the University of Guadalajara; scholarships for participants of the Fifth International Seminar in Colombia and an Intensive Course in Plant Systems; as well as support to the Centre of Knowledge and Socio-environment Care of the Plata Watershed in the framework of its Steering Committee.

83. Additionally support has been provided to the preparatory process of the Children and Youth International Conference on Environment that will be held from 5 to 10 June, 2010 in Brasilia, Brazil (<http://confint2010.mec.gov.br>).

84. In December 2009, an agreement was signed with the University of the West Indies (UWI) to incorporate environmental topics in universities of the Caribbean. This is a follow-up to a sub-regional workshop that was held 22-24 September 2009 at UWI in Kingston, Jamaica for the development of a regional network aimed at incorporating the environment and sustainability in universities of the Caribbean, particularly the conceptualization of a programme within the context of the Caribbean, with an action plan to integrate priority environmental topics such as ecosystems management, climate change and resource efficiency in a wide range of disciplines at Caribbean universities.

85. According to the Forum's mandate, UNEP has continued the administration of the Network's Trust Fund.

DECISION 12
ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES AND THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE
DISTRIBUTION OF THE BENEFITS ARISING FROM THEIR USE AND
PARTICIPATION OF THE REGION IN THE NEGOTIATION OF AN
INTERNATIONAL JUDICIAL REGIME

86. As a region which possesses the widest range of biodiversity on the planet, the Ministers considered the strengthening and development of capacities in the countries of the region to participate in negotiation and implementation of the international regime within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and in particular, fair and equitable benefit-sharing (ABS). In Decision 8 of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Forum (Caracas, Venezuela; 2005), the creation of a regional discussion group for international regime negotiations was done, as well as the promotion of sub-regional and regional activities including meetings, workshops and other means of increasing knowledge and exchange on access to genetic resources, benefit-sharing and traditional knowledge, identification of priorities and demands of the Region and its superior position in the negotiation process of the International Regime. Decision 12 of the Sixteenth Forum adopted the conclusions of the meeting of the working group (Paipa, 2007) and renewed the mandate of the Group.

87. The second meeting of the Working Group on Access to Genetic Resources (Quito, Ecuador; 29-30 April 2008) was held before the Ninth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Bonn, Germany; May 2008) this enabled the negotiators within Latin America and the Caribbean to the *Ad Hoc* ABS Working Group of CBD, to have the recommendations of both meetings for their participation in multilateral meetings.

88. Given the intense negotiations taking place towards the adoption of the ABS Regime at the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Nagoya, October 2010), UNEP and the CBD Secretariat organized regional consultations for all GRULAC countries, which was held January 15-16, 2010, at which consensus emerged on elements and principles of the regime. The ninth and last meeting of the ABS Working Group will be held in March 2010 in Cali, Colombia.

89. Additionally, a regional ABS project related to the strengthening of the implementation of access to genetic resources and a benefit-sharing regime in nine countries of Latin America and the Caribbean has been prepared. The proposal was approved by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the project document is being prepared in consultation with the countries involved.

DECISION 13
STRENGTHENING OF THE PARTICIPATION OF THE
AGENDA 21 MAJOR GROUPS

90. During the last meeting of the Forum, the Ministers established the importance of considering the recommendations of the Civil Society Forum of the region, regarding the improvement in the Agenda 21 major groups' participation.

91. In order to assist with the fulfilment of the agreement regarding the participation of civil society, UNEP has continued the practice of inviting

representatives of organizations of Civil Society to meetings, with the aim of having and incorporating their perspectives and approaches into the decision-making process of the main UNEP bodies.

92. At the last Civil Society Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean, held 30 November to 1 December 2009 in Panama City, Panama, representatives from nine main groups participated (approximately 20 delegates). The recommendations recorded in the declaration were focused on the main topics to be discussed in the framework of this Forum of Ministers, as well as by UNEP's Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, with particular emphasis on its impact for the region. It included topics such as: the Green Economy Initiative; International Environmental Governance for Sustainable Development; Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) as well as Biodiversity and Ecosystems. From 23 to 25 November 2008, the annual Regional Civil Society Forum took place in Argentina.

93. During the biennium, 4 sub-regional workshops of the TUNZA Youth Network were held. In these meetings the participation of youth from indigenous and rural communities, and other groups has been emphasized. These workshops were carried out in Guatemala City, Guatemala, for the Mesoamerica subregion; in Grand Anse, Grenada for the Caribbean subregion with the support of the Caribbean Youth Environment Network (the GEO for Caribbean Youth was launched in this framework); in Buenos Aires, Argentina, for the South Cone countries; in Quito, Ecuador for the Andean subregion. It must be emphasized that the GEO focal points also participate in these meetings.

94. Dissemination of information among the participants in regional Civil Society forum and with the Tunza Network was promoted through a regularly-updated webpage, (http://www.pnuma.org/sociedad_civil_m/index.html) and (<http://www.unep.org/tunza/>).

95. The work with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), has promoted the implementation of a partnership to strengthen the task of communications on Gender and the Environment through the implementation of a set of radio programmes aimed at rural women, as well as training projects that promote a better quality of life.

96. The participation of youth and children from the region in the World Youth and Children TUNZA Conferences (Children Norway 2008, Children and Youth South Korea 2009) was outstanding, due to their preparation and the proposals they presented during the meeting.

97. The training programme on new information technologies, the state of the environment in Latin America and the Caribbean, climate change and the integrated management of water resources, for journalists and communicators have been strengthened.

98. The Global Environmental Citizenship (GEC) Project was a first regional initiative created as an innovative experiment and supported by the GEF. It was a pilot capacity building project and environmental awareness exercise whose goal was the development of a consciously pro-active citizenry capable of contributing to and influencing national decision-making and action around GEF focal areas. The

Project did have an important catalytic role in introducing participatory models of decision-making and consensus building at the national and municipal levels of participating countries and selected municipalities.

DECISION 14

RENEWABLE AND/OR ALTERNATE ENERGIES

99. In accordance with the mandate of the Forum of Ministers, in order of promoting the development and progress of technologies as well as renewable energy programmes or their support mechanisms, a workshop to present the tool of the Sustainable Energy Advisory Facility (SEAF), and initiate some pilot programmes using this tool, was convened jointly by the Secretariat and the UNEP-RISOE Centre on Energy, Climate and Sustainable Development. SEAF is designed to offer a quick and flexible response to promoting development and implementation of policies, strategies and sustainable energy technologies. In this framework, two workshops were carried out, one in Panama for Latin American countries, and one in Jamaica for the Caribbean countries, both in February 2009. Another workshop was held in October 2009, in coordination with the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE).

100. Also related to Renewable Energies is the Caribbean Hotel Energy Efficiency Action Programme (CHENACT) project which aims at assisting the Caribbean hotel sector as this sector is migrating towards higher energy efficiency and use of renewable energies. This project will also explore the possibilities of obtaining carbon credits for reduced carbon dioxide emissions through the clean development mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Synergies have been created within the CHENACT project and UNEP, so that the participants not only reduce their carbon dioxide emissions but also comply with the Montreal protocol in relation to the phasing out of ozone depletion substances in air-conditioning and refrigeration equipment.

101. The regional UNDP initiative *“Energy (challenge) for achieving the MDGs in the Caribbean”*, which activities began at the beginning of July 2009, should also be highlighted. The objective of this regional project is to increase the capacity of the energy sector at the national level as well as at the regional level, so that this effectively contributes to achieving the MDGs in the region. Other support provided by UNDP’s *“Energy (challenge) for achieving the MDGs in the Caribbean”* the objective of this project is to provide assistance to countries involved for the mobilisation of financial, technical and human resources to facilitate the implementation of renewable energies and energy efficiency projects, or to facilitate technological changes that contribute to sustainable development, based on low carbon emission technologies.

102. In Brazil, UNDP supported the formulation and implementation of buses propelled by hydrogen cells, whose launch took place during the second trimester of 2009.

103. UNDP has contributed to the construction of the Regional Wind Power Technology Centre in Mexico, through the Action Plan project to eliminate barriers against the large scale implementation of wind power in Mexico. To date, the

project has been able to negotiate investments which ensure the installation of farms that are capable of generating wind power of 10 MW in the country.

104. In April of this year, a National Seminar for the Financing of Photovoltaic projects also took place in Mexico, with technical advice and specialized implementation from UNDP, through the Domestic Photovoltaic Cell Systems project linked to the Mexicali Network.

105. In Chile, the last executing year of the Renewable Energy for Rural Electrification project took place under the implementation and guidance of UNDP, within the framework of the National Rural Electrification Programme of Chile. The activities within this project contributed to the removal of barriers from the use of Non-Conventional Renewable Energies. Similar projects in Costa Rica, Bolivia and Peru, under the implementation and monitoring of UNDP, were in their last year of implementation.

106. Another project which final activities took place at the beginning of 2009, under the implementation and monitoring of UNDP, was the Small-Scale Hydroelectric Development project for Productive Uses in Areas Outside the Network. This contributed to the reduction of Greenhouse Gases originating from fossil fuels management in the generation of electricity for productive uses in rural areas not included in the National Interconnected System, through the removal of barriers and a decrease in the cost of implementation and dissemination of the Small Hydroelectric Powerhouse in Nicaragua, to promote productive development in rural areas outside the network.

DECISION 15
RECOGNITION AND STRENGTHENING OF THE PARTICIPATION OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

107. The incorporation of indigenous groups in the regional meetings of the Civil Society as well as in the sub-regional workshop of the Tunza Network and the International Children and Youth Conference has been a priority.

108. From June 15-20, 2008, a Week of Sustainability, Culture and the Environment was celebrated in the Lagunera region in Mexico. This activity was organized by *Mundo Sustentable* (a non-governmental organization in Mexico) in collaboration with the Presidency of the Latin America and the Caribbean Civil Society Forum, and UNEP. Representatives of indigenous people were invited.

109. Additionally, the participation of indigenous people, particularly the Emberá Wounnan, the Nögbe-Bugle and the Wargandi people, were included in the MDG Joint Programme Project: "Incorporation of Measures for Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Management of Natural Resources in Priority Watersheds of Panama", which is mentioned in greater detail in Decision 17 on Climate Change. They have also been included as an integral component of the project and the decision-making and approval processes of the work programmes, and will participate in the various stages of the project.

110. Similarly, members of traditional communities participate regularly in the meetings of the Working Group on Access to Genetic Resources.

111. UNEP, in collaboration with the CBD Secretariat, is organizing the Workshop for Indigenous and Local Communities of Latin America and the Caribbean on new information technologies, tourism and biodiversity in forest ecosystems, which will be held in Panama from April 6-8, 2010. The objective of the workshop is to disseminate knowledge, among the indigenous and local communities and their touristic operators, on the use of new information and communication technologies to improve the presentation of their products and services, and raise awareness among the visitors about the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

DECISION 16 **SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT**

112. At the Sixteenth Meeting of the Forum held in the Dominican Republic in 2008, the Ministers of the Environment felt it necessary to prepare a regional proposal which outlines the strategies and actions required to increase the flow of financial resources to support implementation at the national, sub-regional and regional levels of the UNCCD, in keeping with a synergy that should be in line with the provisions of the UNCCD Ten-Year Strategy.

113. To this end, a proposal for a "Regional Strategy for the mobilization and better use of resources for the combat against desertification and drought in Latin America and the Caribbean" was developed by the Global Mechanism of the UNCLD, in consultation with the ITC agencies. This final version will be presented for consideration at the Seventeenth Forum of Ministers of the Environment of LAC.

DECISION 17 **CLIMATE CHANGE**

114. The Latin American and Caribbean region is faced with the threat of climate change. Many countries in the region show high levels of vulnerability to extreme climatic phenomena that are capable of unleashing disasters that compromise their developmental process, as is the case for Caribbean SIDS.

115. The Forum of Ministers has contributed meaningfully to the participation of the countries in these processes, with the issue being dealt with at regular meetings, consistent with the importance that it has been given at the global and regional levels. It is currently included as one of the priorities in the Regional Action Plan.

116. In order to continue to channel efforts towards the strengthening of regional capacity for active participation in the negotiation and implementation processes of the United Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), UNEP has continued its joint initiative with UNFCCC through regional workshops for negotiators. The Latin American workshops were held in Poznan, Poland in November 2008, thereby facilitating the participation of the region in the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties of UNFCCC, and in Panama, from May 21-22, 2009. The workshops for Caribbean negotiators were held within the framework of the AOSIS group.

117. The consultation processes at the sub-regional level were also promoted, particularly through the Climate Change Negotiators Workshop for countries of the Central America Integration System and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) held in Leon, Nicaragua, from 11-13 May 2009. This was organized jointly with the Central American Commission of Environment and Development with the cooperation of the Danish government.

118. In an effort to provide updated, scientifically-based information relevant to our region and make it available to decision-makers and relevant sectors, UNEP supported the development of assessment activities related to vulnerability and data collection for the implementation of climate change adaptation actions. Also on the subject of evaluations, a project is underway in the region for the integration of climate change and ecosystem factors in risk assessment and associated planning processes. This project, located in the Caribbean, specifically in Jamaica, is a case study with the possibility of replication in the region.

119. Meanwhile, at the national level, UNEP is supporting the design of a programme for the implementation of the first phase of the Brazilian Climate Change Panel. The project is being promoted by Brazil to implement its National Plan against Climate Change.

120. In September 2008, UNEP signed an agreement for the implementation of joint actions with the Mexican Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources. It includes the creation of capacities in the implementation of multilateral agreements, particularly for adaptation and mitigation of the effects of climate change as well as the promotion of cooperative South-South actions in the Latin American and Caribbean region, among other actions.

121. UNEP has been participating in the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction organized by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), held on March 17-19, 2009 in Panama. Awareness and exchange of experiences on policies and legislations concerning climate change were also promoted within the framework of the XI Meeting of the Environment and Tourism Commission of the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO), which was held 5-6 March 2009 in the Dominican Republic. Additionally, capacities were enhanced through conferences on climate change provided at the Fifth Training Programme in Environmental Law and Policies which took place in Asunción, Paraguay, May 20-30, 2008, and in the Programme for Regional Environmental Governance of Marine-Coastal Areas held in May 2009 in Panama.

122. UNEP, within the framework of the UNDP/Spain Fund for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, is participating in the implementation of three joint programmes which are aimed at increasing the capacity of the population and the country to adapt to climate change and their capacity to carry out mitigation actions in Panama, Peru and Nicaragua (2008-2011), namely:

- Joint Programme: Incorporation of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Measures in the Management of Natural Resources in two Priority Watersheds in Panama.
- Joint Programme: Adaptive and Integrated Planning of Environmental Resources and Climatic Risks in High Andean Micro basins in Peru.

- Joint Programme: Local Environmental Management for the Management of Natural Resources and Provision of Environmental Services in the Bosawas Biosphere Reserve of Nicaragua (for more information visit http://www.undp.org/mdgf/environment_jp.shtml).

123. UNDP has moved forward with the implementation of a key component of its climate change programme, the Carbon-2012 Project. Thanks to a sizeable donation from the Government of Spain, this four-year project offers support to countries of the region by mobilizing funds for combating carbon emissions, as well as being a potential source of funding for climate change mitigation projects which contribute to sustainable development. The Carbon-2012 was implemented in eight countries of the region, with equal representation in the Caribbean, Central America, the Andean countries and the Southern Cone.

124. Another regional initiative that UNDP has driven in response to the commitment made at the COP 13 held in Bali 2007, embodied in the roadmap from Bali ("Bali Road Map"), is the Policy Project 2012: Support for Investment and Long-Term Financing to tackle Climate Change: Assessing the Implications for Policy until 2012 and beyond ("Policy 2012"), which aims to increasing national capabilities of countries in the region to: coordinate the implementation of the ministerial views, participate in the process of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and negotiate the national positioning within the period of the Bali Action Plan, and analyze the investment and financial flows to address climate change in a maximum of three key sectors and / or economic activities by country, and improve sectoral planning capacity to face climate change.

125. This initiative could reach 19 countries when it attains its maximum coverage. At present, it is active in Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, and Uruguay. The general objective of the initiative is to support countries as they participate in this challenging and complex process of negotiation, with the assistance of the national stakeholders in the coordination of the various points of view in order to define their policies with respect to climate change, which must reflect a cross-cutting approach in a variety of sectors. A number of workshops have been organized to initiate national dialogue in different countries of the region.

126. In terms of economic issues related to the theme of climate change ECLAC has carried out studies of the economics of climate change, including sectoral studies of the economic impacts of climate change and measuring their social impacts. They arise from the common interest of countries in the region to analyze the socio-economic consequences of climate change and develop mitigation and adaptation policies, and leveraging financial resources to address this phenomenon.

127. Various projects related to topics such as opportunity cost analysis and positions around the country in Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) initiatives and to identify incentives to produce eco-efficient urban infrastructure (transport and services) have been carried out, as well as the assessment of potential markets for the development of industrial goods and services (case study in Espirito Santo, Brazil).

DECISION 18
CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES

128. The Ministers of the Environment highlighted the importance of environmentally-sound management of chemical substances and hazardous wastes, including electronic waste, and urged the ITC and UNEP to continue to provide technical support to the countries for conducting inventory checks of chemical substances and hazardous wastes; establish policies for the management of chemical substances and hazardous wastes, as well as dealing with their storage and final disposal.

129. For its part, the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council of UNEP, held 16-20 February 2009, adopted decision 25/5 on the management of chemical substances. Countries were urged to continue work in this area, particularly in relation to the strengthening of capacity for the storage of mercury as part of international actions relating to mercury.

130. To this end, UNEP is implementing the Project entitled "Reduction of mercury supply and research of mercury storage solutions". This project involves two regions: Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. It is a joint effort between UNEP and the Basel Convention Regional Coordination Centre. The results of the Project for the Storage of Mercury in Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean will serve as input for the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee, which is responsible for preparing a legally-binding global instrument. In order to begin this process, a first Workshop for the mitigation of the Mercury Storage Project for Latin America and the Caribbean was held (Montevideo, Uruguay; April 22-23, 2009) and a technical-policy Executive Committee of the Project was formed to coordinate/facilitate actions with different stakeholders of the region. This Committee met for the first time on December 15-16, 2009 in San Paolo, Brazil and moved forward in defining the scope and contents of the regional feasibility study for the long-term storage of mercury. The Committee decided that the regional group would meet again in April 2011 to evaluate the progress achieved.

131. Within the framework of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), a series of activities have been carried out so far in this biennium. The regional meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean on SAICM was held in Panama City, February 14-16, 2008 under the sponsorship of the Governments of Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America. The next regional meeting will be held in March 2010 in Jamaica.

132. In addition to this meeting, the meetings below were held as follow-up activities:

- First Meeting of the Regional Coordination Committee, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, 11-13 June 2008.
- Regional Consultation Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean on issues relating to international management of chemical products, Viña del Mar, Chile, 17-19 December 2008.

- Workshop on Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) for the Caribbean on chemical products and instruments for hazardous wastes, Bridgetown, Barbados, 10-13 March 2009.
- Second Meeting of the Regional Coordination Committee, Santiago de Chile, Chile, 15-16 November 2009.

133. UNEP also organized two workshops before the SAICM regional meetings, namely:

- Workshop on the continued management of Polychloride-Biphenyl in the Latin American and Caribbean Region (11-12 February 2008); and
- Workshop on the development of national institutions and infrastructure for the sound management of chemical products (13 February 2008).

134. UNEP, in collaboration with the Stockholm Centre in Uruguay, is executing a Global Environment Facility (GEF) project entitled "Support to the implementation of the Global Monitoring Programme for Persistent Organic Pollutants in Latin America and the Caribbean". The objective of this project is to support the participating countries to strengthen their capacities and contribute with regional data to global monitoring of the efficiency of the Stockholm Convention. Antigua and Barbuda, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay are involved in this project.

135. The project was launched on November 3-5, 2009 in Montevideo, Uruguay and its workplan was approved. Training needs were identified and sampling and analysis protocols were reviewed.

136. With regard to solid waste, UNEP facilitated technical support to Costa Rica from Argentina through South-South Cooperation in 2008, for the development of national policies in the management of solid waste. Specific recommendations were formulated which underscore the concept of "integrated waste management" and focus on civic participation and environmental education.

137. Peru, with the support of UNEP's International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC) and the Peruvian organization *Cooperación*, developed a solid waste management project, reinforcing the life cycle focus on the development of the Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan (ISWMP) in the Lima region (Peru), both at the policy and implementation level, and strengthening local and regional capacity to manage the system.

138. Similarly, the global project for integrated solid waste management, currently being carried out at the city level is aimed at supporting the design of specific plans that permit the minimization, segregation, collection, transport, reuse/recycle, recovery of resources, treatment and disposal of solid waste.

139. UNEP has supported Mexico and countries of South America to begin the process toward coordination and cooperation at the national and regional level within the framework of the global process which is being carried out for the chemicals block. To this effect, the workshop entitled "Regional Awareness-Raising Workshop on Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination for the Implementation of

the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions" was held on November 23-25, 2009.

140. UNEP contributed to the preparation of the progress report presented at the Third Regional Implementation Meeting (RIM) on Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, in preparation of the 18th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-18). The RIM was jointly organized by ECLAC and the Government of Guatemala and was held 26-27 November 2009. The report referred to the progress achieved in Sustainable Consumption and Production, Mining, Transportation, Chemicals and Waste.

141. UNEP has supported the countries of the region in implementing multilateral environmental agreements. Within this context, a sub-regional workshop for Latin American countries on the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) was held in El Salvador in 2008, to raise awareness and explore synergies between different trade agreements with related provisions, particularly in the context of the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR/CAFTA).

142. Training has also continued in countries regarding the use of ozone depleting substances, capacity-building of national ozone officers through sub-regional networks to develop and implement strategies to address emerging issues such as ozone-friendly technologies, the need for new skills, the illegal trade in ODS, alternative technologies that use methyl bromide, measured-dose inhalers with CFC and trade in ODS-dependent technologies that contribute to ODS dependence.

143. In addition, a Training of Trainers Workshop on the Green Customs Initiative was held in February 2008 in Caracas, Venezuela. Another such was held in the Dominican Republic in November 2009. The object of this initiative is to strengthen the compliance and implementation of MEAs through the integrated creation of capacities for customs officials within the MEA execution chain. To this end, customs officials were therefore trained in fulfilling trade requirements of several MEAs at the same time, making the workshop more efficient than the one in which training is for a single multilateral agreement.

144. UNEP, in support of the implementation of the Stockholm Convention, has developed and is implementing global and/or regional projects as an agency of the Global Environment Facility. In this framework, particular mention is made of the project on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRPR) in which Chile, Ecuador and Peru constitute the global component, and Costa Rica, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua make up the regional component. Also, UNEP is currently supporting Brazil in developing its national implementation plan

DECISION 19

SETTLEMENTS / SUSTAINABLE HOUSING

145. Decision 19 advocates increased regional cooperation to promote carbon-neutral buildings or zero net-energy consumption. Consequently, UNEP implemented the "Sustainable Urban Housing Initiative" (SUSHI) with a pilot programme in Sao Paulo, Brazil. This initiative, carried out within the framework of

the Sustainable Building and Construction Initiative (SBCI), which is a partnership between UNEP and company leaders at the global level, seeks to develop a method of guaranteeing that the social housing programmes have design criteria and construction practices that support the principles of sustainable construction.

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