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Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

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

**Los Cabos, Mexico
11-12 March 2014**

A. EXPERTS SEGMENT

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Final Report of the Preparatory Meeting Of High Level Experts

I. Point 1 of the agenda: Opening of the session

1. The meeting began with an opening ceremony on Tuesday 11 March 2014 at 9:30 a.m. with words of Ms. Frida Pin on behalf of the Ministry of the Environment of Ecuador; Mr. Enrique Lendo on behalf of the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) of Mexico, and the Deputy Regional Director of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) of the United Nations Program for the Environment (UNEP), Ms. Mara Murillo. Ecuador thanked Mexico for its hospitality and said that it was an honor to have served as President of the 18th Forum of Ministers of Environment over the past two years, and recalled that this a forum also marked an historic milestone because the first meeting of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean of the Community of Latin American and the Caribbean (CELAC) was also held there. The representative of Ecuador highlighted that at that time the first steps were taken towards the construction of a new vision on sustainable development. She said that eradication of poverty is a challenge for the region and that the global crisis requires a strengthened environmental agenda. She shared that the re-establishment of the relationship between human beings and nature is very important for Ecuador and that the environment is a strategic focus of sustainable development. Similarly, Ecuador wishes to continue the consolidation of the regional objectives for sustainable development. She predicted an excellent meeting and transferred the Presidency to Mexico.

2. Mexico welcomed participants and acknowledged the leadership of Ecuador in serving as President of the 18th Forum of Ministers of Environment. The Mexican Delegate stressed that since that Forum there have been advances in the regional environmental cooperation agenda. The delegate said that Mexico, in serving as the President of this forum, has proposed that this meeting focus on two issues: 1) Review the work on regional environmental cooperation in recent years and evaluate aspects to be improved and strengthened. (2) In light of the recent international processes of importance for the world and the region, and including the results of the Conference on Sustainable Development has been proposed (Rio+20, which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from the 20 to 22 of June 2012), it has been suggested to review the relevance of these processes for the Forum of Ministers of the Environment and facilitate a number of priority thematic dialogues that include climate change, biodiversity and mercury, among others). It is also anticipated to consider the role of UNEP in catalysing initiatives on key topics as well as promoting specific areas of cooperation between the countries. Ecuador and Mexico thanked UNEP for its support as Secretariat of the Forum.

3. The UNEP Deputy Regional Director noted that the 19th Forum of Ministers of Environment of the region is the first after the Conference Rio+20. She mentioned that this current moment represents a great opportunity to strengthen the Forum to increase its influence in international and regional processes for sustainable development, as well as attract more organizations in support of their actions and seek partnerships for cooperation. She stressed that UNEP, as Secretariat of the Forum, is available to continue to support the Forum of Ministers of Environment of the region.

Point 2 of the agenda: Organization of works

2.1 Adoption of the rules of procedure of the meeting

4. It was proposed to the Expert's to adopt, mutatis mutandis, the rules of the governing body of UNEP to govern the proceedings of the meeting. This was adopted in the plenary.

2.2. Election of the Board of Directors

5. It was proposed to the Preparatory Meeting of Experts that, according to the practice established at previous meetings of the Forum, the Board of Directors is composed of a Chairman, seven Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur, taking into account the geographical representation and rotation criteria established by the ministerial meetings. The countries decided to choose the Vice-Chairs during the lunch break. At that time the Board was elected as follows:

Chairman:	México
Vice-Chairs:	Chile
	Colombia
	Guatemala
	Guyana
	Paraguay
	Venezuela
	Trinidad and Tobago
Rapporteur:	Honduras

2.3. Adoption of the Agenda and the program of the meeting sessions

6. Under this point the Provisional Agenda and the Provisional Annotated Agenda, as well as the meeting programme proposed by the Secretariat, were presented for consideration by the Experts. After some clarification to questions submitted by the delegates, they were adopted without any modification.

Point 3 of the Agenda: Follow-up to the XVIII meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (Quito, Ecuador, 31 January to 3 February, 2012)

7. Under this agenda item, the Deputy Regional Director made a presentation of the report of the Secretariat on the implementation of the Decisions of the XVIII meeting of the Forum of Ministers based on the document **UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XIX/3** which is a concise account of the intense work carried out in the intersessional period by the various working groups of the Forum.

3.1 Evaluation, strengthening and governance of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

8. In connection with Decision 1 of the XVIII Meeting of the Forum, on governance and strengthening of the Forum of Ministers, it referred to the results achieved at the intersessional meeting held in Quito in March 2013, which considered that the experience and track record of 30 years of the Forum should be the basis for the review and updating of the regional environmental agenda and consolidation of the work of the Inter-agency Technical Committee. It was mentioned that, in support to the task of updating the regional agenda, the secretariat conducted a survey of information and identification of the different priorities defined in regional and sub-regional intergovernmental areas in the field of environment and sustainable development. This mapping will be presented later by the Secretariat.

9. He then referred concisely to the initiatives and activities undertaken to comply with the decisions taken at the XVIII Forum, stressing the identification of synergies, cooperation, and leadership of the working groups.

10. The Chairman of the meeting congratulated the Secretariat and countries for the work undertaken in compliance with the decisions of the Forum. He recalled that the report is a synthesis of a general nature and invited the participants to comment on it.

11. The representative of Guyana, joined in expressing sincere thanks to the Government of Mexico for their hospitality and hosting of the meeting. He further congratulated the work performed by the various working groups and expressed willingness to participate in the working group on indicators, and chemical and hazardous waste, or any other as the chair sees fit.

12. The representative of Peru thanked the Secretariat for the presentation of the report and the systematization of the achievements during the last period. By linking with the governance of the Forum report, he mentioned that the results achieved by the groups deserve to be visible as an effective contribution to the strengthening of the Forum. The performance of the working groups reveal the level of commitment issues prioritized by the Forum itself.

13- The representative of Trinidad and Tobago thanked Mexico for hosting the Forum, and the Secretariat for the report. He mentioned that Trinidad and Tobago has advanced in the design of draft legislation for the control of air pollution and on solid waste, whose approval is expected soon. He also expressed the interest in participating in the working groups of the Forum.

14. The representative of Chile thanked the Secretariat for the preparation of a comprehensive report, mentioning that his country participate in some of the working groups, because of the large number of issues that demand a level of dedication and specialized and permanent follow-up. In this regard, requested the agendas and results of the working groups, to communicate earlier and frequently, in order to channel information at the national level and promote a more active involvement in the various technical bodies. The representative of Panama, who emphasized the importance of receiving advance scheduling activities, supported this comment.

15. The representative of Jamaica said that, in addition to the monitoring and implementation of the decisions taken previously, the Forum has institutional weight to serve as a regional platform to meet and respond to the challenges of the environmental agenda, in particular in view of the importance of the current processes. The Forum is set to have a significant impact in the forthcoming meetings of the international agenda, such as the Conference of the parties of the Convention of the United Nations Framework on Climate Change and the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States.

16. The representative of the Bahamas thanked the Government of Mexico for hosting the meeting and for its permanent commitment to the Forum. He also thanked the Secretariat for its substantive support. The Forum is a very important instance of coordination and efforts should be made to link its work with other related initiatives, since the countries receive multiple demands. Taking as an example the Working Group on environmental indicators, he mentioned that there are other initiatives for the development of environmental indicators for which countries are called, therefore, ways should be sought to combine efforts to simplify the workload of countries and institutions.

17. Under this item, the Chair announced that it carried out consultations based on the discussions held by the Bureau of the XVIII Forum of Ministers and has elements to integrate a proposal for a decision on the strengthening of the Forum. These elements include, firstly, consider that the holding of the first United Nations Assembly on the environment in June this year, represents an opportunity to consolidate the work of strengthening of the regional forum, joining forces to participate in a constructive way and have a common thread that will allow the region to have more force and impact on the international agenda. Another element would be the promotion of a dialogue among politicians to prioritize the regional agenda to facilitate the process of identification of sustainable development goals in the post 2015 development agenda, for which it would be desirable to have the support of a working group. The creation of a mechanism of exchange of information online would also have to be considered so that countries can have an understanding of the areas of work of the various bodies and sub-regional and regional institutions; this platform could be hosted on the same web site of the Forum of Ministers.

3.2 Regional environmental Agenda

18. UNEP presented the revision of the existing intergovernmental priorities on sustainable development, emphasizing environmental issues in Latin America and the Caribbean. The document number UNEP/LAC/IWGW-XIX/8 contains information about the agendas of different organizations supporting governments in priorities for different sub-regions, as well as priorities already identified by governments in different organizations that can be addressed at the regional level to promote synergies, knowledge sharing and South-South cooperation.

19. The representative of Mexico presented a draft decision on the governance and strengthening of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, which proposed, *inter alia*, to establish a working group to prioritize

the issues of the regional environmental agenda, considering those that may be integrated into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the post-2015 development agenda, and calling for the creation of an information Clearing House Mechanism (CHM) together with other sub-regional and regional agendas and efforts.

20. The representative of Cuba welcomed the initiative to provide information on the agendas of different organizations in the region, as well as the draft decision proposed by Mexico. The representative clarified that Cuba was neither a member of the Organization of American States nor of the Caribbean Community.

21. The representative of El Salvador described the ongoing work of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD) and its linkages with the contents of the presentation, and offered support to enhance the draft decision, highlighting the issues of access to genetic resources and biosafety. The delegate of Peru reported that, while the Andean Environmental Agenda remains in force, the Andean Environmental Committee has ceased to operate, and suggested that the Secretary's document may also consider initiatives linking environment with other issues such as health, economics, and education. He also supported the need for an assessment of ILAC progress to explore new targets. In this regard, he claimed the importance of establishing a working group, as it would facilitate the work of country focal points and promote cooperation, coordination and exchange of experiences. He suggested that the Clearing House Mechanism (CHM) might become a tool to support this process.

22. The delegate of Colombia recommended the identification of intersections between priority areas and existing mechanisms in order to maximize synergies and avoid the duplication of efforts and agendas, citing the role of the South Pacific Commission as an example. Colombia recognizes the progress achieved in regional agendas and the role of UNEP and the Forum in mainstreaming environmental issues in the development agenda. She also expressed support for Peru concerning the added value of the CHM in terms of information and coordination and stated that, given its role as a coordination and dialogue platform, the Forum may support this initiative. Colombia would like to strengthen the relevance of the sustainable use of biodiversity among the priorities described in the presentation. In the institutional area, focus is on the need to mainstream the environmental dimension of developing. Colombia approves the governance proposal and its role in this Forum.

23. The Brazilian delegate stressed that MERCOSUR ministers defined five priority areas of work at their last meeting in Venezuela, not excluding other regional priorities. Brazil considers that, while the ILAC had been a breakthrough, its relevance had declined in recent years except in areas of work that have not been taken up by other platforms or initiatives. He also stated that, for Brazil, the Forum is one of the most important platforms for dialogue between Ministers of the Environment in the region, and that areas of work in which countries in the region have faced challenges in harmonizing their standards or approaches should be prioritized.

24. The Bahamas delegate emphasized that, in his opinion, ILAC's current priorities—all considered relevant—was the most important slide of the presentation.

Bahamas noted that these priorities are being implemented by several institutions and agencies but the status/progress of implementation remains unclear. A number of emerging issues were highlighted, including invasive exotic species, climate change, the links between environment, tourism and health, climate change, "blue carbon", hydrofluorocarbons, and early warning systems for environmental threats. The need for the mechanism reporting at various levels (technical, political), and the importance of recognizing that the Forum should support and consider global processes, such as UNEA, SIDS International Conference, and the post-2015 development, were mentioned and so was the importance to take stock and develop a global reporting mechanism. In this regard, the Chair of the Forum noted that the timing of this process was crucial to support these ongoing processes.

25. Ecuador mentioned that firstly, the Forum's potential for the coordination and implementation of activities and regional policies on environment and sustainable development should be emphasised, and indicated that the Forum has been accumulating experiences in the region for 30 years. The new governance should ensure that sustainability is integrated into the new development agenda. She agreed with Peru indicating that the Andean Community is currently under a reengineering process and with Colombia on the inclusion of the South Pacific Commission. Ecuador also mentioned that the ILAC priorities are to be reconsidered and expressed support for Mexico's proposal.

26. Argentina noted that the region has overcome differences and highlighted that noticeable progress had been achieved since the last intersession meeting. It supported previous motions, particularly that presented by Peru on the need to make environmental efforts implemented in the region visible. The country also expressed the need to be more precise about the aim of such efforts. Argentina agreed with Bahamas in that defining the emerging issues is no easy task, and did not oppose Mexico's proposal of upgrading ILAC's agenda but mentioned the need that both political and technical aspects be taken into account in determining the composition of the Working Group. Cuba's intervention on ongoing processes and their impact on decision making was supported. The country suggested the possibility of increasing UNEP's support to regional and sub-regional processes mentioned in the presentation, within the process of strengthening UNEP regional offices. The Chair replied that the draft decision had foreseen an open Working Group where every country could participate, and also felt the need to link it with relevant regional processes.

27. Trinidad and Tobago declared that the Forum is an important place for the various sub-regional platforms to exchange information and strengthen dialogue. With respect to ILAC, the country expressed that the issues covered are perhaps too broad and sometimes lacking precision and that it is important to focus on specific and concrete issues. Marine pollution and invasive species were mentioned as examples. In the opinion of the country's delegate, the issue of land use planning has been overlooked and needs more attention from the Forum. As for air pollution, it is important to strengthen cooperation between countries given the transnational nature of the issue, as well as the development of consistent standards. The need to strengthen environmental education in the Caribbean was also highlighted.

28. Jamaica hopes that the Forum will focus on specific priorities that may fall within the areas in which many sub-regional organizations were working. These priority areas would not be new issues but issues that would have already been identified. The post 2015 ODS process, and the influence of environment on economic decisions and other government sectors were highlighted as emerging issues. The importance of defining a two-year timeline with clearly defined responsibilities for the Forum, and responsibilities of different agencies. With reference to the Inter-Agency Technical Agency, it was suggested to combine several existing groups into a single group with a focus on implementation measures.

29. The delegate of Chile reminded the audience that this is the only forum that bring together representatives of all the 33 countries in the region and stressed the importance of focusing on issues where funding is available for implementation, instead of continuing to multiply declarations of good intentions.

30. The delegation of Dominica took the floor and expressed its concern about the fact that land use planning and food security are being overlooked.

31. Venezuela expressed concern about the possible duplication with decision 1 adopted during the previous meeting of the Forum, and requested information on the actions undertaken for its implementation during the inter-sessional period. The Chair of the Forum supported the importance of reviewing progress to date, as well as identifying areas that are working well and those that require changes, and requested the assistance of the Secretariat to describe these achievements. UNEP took the floor to give a brief overview of the progress from the last meeting in Quito, and described the meetings and process that were undertaken to implement decision 1. As a response to the request from Venezuela, Cuba described the discussion held in the meeting held the previous month, where issues for the preparation of the agenda of the Forum of Ministers were analysed.

32. The delegate of Peru reaffirmed the importance of the Forum to build on previous achievements and therefore supported the review of ILAC priorities and the role of a mechanism such as the CHM, which is said to complement the work of working groups.

3.3 Environmental training network

33. Colombia made a presentation, summarizing the proposal of environmental education as a follow-up on Decision 2 of the last meeting of the Forum of Ministers and which was prepared at a meeting of the focal points of the Environmental Training Network, organized by Colombia in Bogotá, on February 27-28, 2014.

34. The Chairman welcomed the proposal and suggested its approval on a none objection basis, opening the debate to comments by countries.

35. Peru agreed with the proposal, confirming its commitment to strengthening of environmental education in the region as an opportunity for the countries to renew their response on the topic. Capacity building provides support to the implementation of environmental legislation. This is also represented by

highlighting the Seventh Iberoamerican Environmental Education Congress organized by the Ministry of Environment of Peru, in September this year.

36. Mexico recommended the establishment of a clear evaluation of the effectiveness and the impact of environmental education in the population, beyond existing indicators that simply measure processes. Indicators working group was asked to take this issue into consideration.

37. Ecuador noted the significant progress that the Environmental Training Network has made in environmental education. She expressed support for the implementation of the commitments made in the workshop held in Bogotá. She also stressed that activities during 2012 and 2013 in the Ministry of Environment have been focused on the implementation of the Citizen Environmental Education Project "we are part of the solution" which consists of three components: eco-workshops for training of environmental advocates in rural communities, the Guardians of the Earth Network for children awareness on good environmental practices and Ruta Verde (Green Route) for knowledge and appreciation of protected areas targeted for high school students. The components of this project address some priority areas of the Latin American and Caribbean Strategy. She added that opportunities to establish strategic alliances around this subject should be explored.

38. The representative from Guyana, sought clarification on the noticeable lack of participation of English speaking Caribbean countries in the activities of the Environmental Training Network.

39. The Secretariat explained that there was no intention of omitting the English-speaking countries or others such as Haiti and Suriname. Since the last forum, activities have been gradually implemented. The Environmental Training Network program is modest, but in fact, it provided support to English-speaking Caribbean and Haiti. For example, the University of West Indies (UWI) participated in the official launch of the GUPES initiative (Global University Partnership on Environmental Sustainability) of UNEP on June 5 at Tongji University, Shanghai, China. In addition, UNEP sponsored the participation of the University of West Indies (UWI) and the Université d'Etat d'Haiti (UEH) at the VII World Congress of Environmental Education that took place in June 2013 in Marrakech, Morocco. Also in the framework of the climate change program the Regional Office of UNEP and the Environmental Training Network; UNEP sponsored the participation of professors from important universities of the Caribbean in the Education Workshop on Climate Change for Sustainable Development, held from May 13th to 15th at UWI (Mona campus).

40. Bahamas raised the question if the network is considering to develop and implement innovative means of education. In addition, if the emerging threats and issues such as mercury are being sufficiently addressed and if it encourages appropriation by the population. As an example, it was proposed, the use of comics as a tool for educators, this is a mechanism to present complicated issues in a simple understandable format.

41. The Secretariat agreed on the proposal and stressed this is the reason why it is so important for the Forum to approve this proposal. In the absence of objections, the President welcomed the proposal.

3.4 Working Group of ILAC Environmental Indicators

42. Mexico gave a brief presentation on the Working Group on Environmental Indicators (WGEI), highlighting progress made on indicators work under the six priority themes originally included in the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), and introducing the proposal of the Working Group on Environmental Indicators to the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XIX/4.Rev.2).

43. The importance of updated, accurate, relevant and useful information for assessment, policy development and citizen participation is recognized. The value of regional networks, cooperation and knowledge transfer and the harmonization of criteria for management of environmental information is also recognized. Decision 5 of the XVIII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers urged that the experience of WGEI should be applied to initiatives in follow up to Rio+20.

44. The WGEI results were highlighted in the presentation and recommendations of the working group were mentioned. A brief overview of the proposed 2014-15 Work Plan was presented, as presented in document UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XIX/4.Rev.2. A number of countries thanked Mexico for the presentation.

45. Bahamas expressed its concern that some indicators were being analyzed in different ways from their intended purpose. As an example he presented the use of per capita income as a factor influencing the Global Environment Facility (GEF) allocation, this means that countries with high biodiversity and vulnerability, and higher capacity to execute projects, could nevertheless receive a reduced funding allocation.

46. Peru agreed with the concern expressed by Bahamas. It was important for WGEI to consider how to include emerging needs. With respect to environmental education, he noted that 11 countries in the region were taking part in the Programme for Assessment of Education Quality; In order to link environmental indicators with the agendas of Ministries of Education. It was important to demonstrate, for instance, how environmental education could support general educational objectives such as improving the quality of reading and mathematics. Peru had reviewed their national environmental indicators in 2009 and were about to prepare a new report on the state of the environment in the country. WGEI work to revise indicators and develop new methodologies could be very useful in support of this group, and he invited WGEI members to exchange experiences with the national team in Peru.

47. Dominica expressed the view that despite previous discussion of the need to include SIDS and support South-South cooperation, these discussions remained theoretical. Given the capacity gaps in Caribbean SIDS, he asked for information on the practical support that could be obtained through WGEI.

48. UNEP responded that in addition to South-South cooperation (e.g., support by Mexico for some national reports); UNEP was supporting a number of Caribbean SIDS with initiatives to strengthen management of their environmental information under the GEF cross-cutting capacity development portfolio. During the meeting

held in November 2013 in Panama on “Strengthening regional networks on national capacities on environment information”, a half-day session had been organized focusing on Caribbean SIDS, at which experts from governments and international organizations had supported a partnership initiative to strengthen environmental data and information in the Caribbean. Among other things, these initiatives could focus on developing management systems that can use already existing information at the national and regional level, streamline data collection and develop stronger links with its use to support decision making in different areas.

49. Jamaica supported the importance of the work on data and indicators, highlighting national data gaps that many countries faced. The delegate also asked how ILAC work could assist countries in ensuring their national reports were better reflected in global reporting processes such as the Global Environment Outlook.

50. The Chair agreed that this was an important issue, stating that although WGEI had been developed in connection with ILAC, its established network of experts could potentially assist countries with a range of issues with respect to data and indicators.

51. Ecuador informed that it is part of the working group of environmental indicators and the Ministry of Environment is working since 2010 in the “Environmental Information System” (SUIA for its initials in Spanish) as a tool for management and dissemination of environmental information, which enables the country to know the state of the environment and their natural resources as well as the changes that occur, covering different areas: research, education, statistics, consolidation and validation of geographic data, to systematize the institutional processes of the Ministry of Environment. She stressed that it is appropriate to review the objectives of the ILAC in the light of the development of the Post 2015 agenda and in this sense, it is necessary that the new agenda includes objectives, indicators and specific deadlines to provide measures that will ensure compliance, including new, additional and predictable financial resources, the development of technology transfer, and capacity building in developing countries.

52. Paraguay noted that work on environmental indicators and, more generally, follow up to Rio+20, needed to give special attention to the special situation and capacity constraints of landlocked developing countries.

53. Mexico made two general comments in response to the previous interventions. Firstly, environmental indicators are not the solution for every problem, they only provided information and their value depended on how they were used. The delegate also stated that indicators needed be accompanied with state of environment reports and analyses to provide a more complete picture, and that the ILAC indicators were best incorporated in a broader national environmental information system incorporating various aspects. Secondly, the work in the WGEI on ILAC indicators needed to be given greater visibility in national governments, with indicators included in national systems of environmental indicators (perhaps with a separate section on ILAC indicators as in Mexico), and incorporated in state of the environment reports, Millennium Development Goals reports, and similar products.

54. The Chair thanked Mexico for leading the Working Group on Environmental Indicators, and emphasized that strengthening indicators and objective information would allow countries in the region to track the actual progress made in improving the state of the environment.

3.5. Report of the seventh meeting of the Regional Council of experts on sustainable production and consumption

55. The representative of Peru presented a summary of the main results of the Seventh Regional meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean on sustainable consumption and production (CPS), held in Lima, in June, 2013. Based on the resolution of Rio+20 which adopted the ten-year framework of Programs on Consumption and Sustainable Production, the meeting of experts agreed to send for consideration of the Forum of Ministers the following proposals:

- a. Reiterate the commitment of the region to support the implementation of the ten-year framework 10YFP and maintain a leading role for its support.
- b. Commit to support and facilitate the role of the national coordinators of the CPS to act as focal points at the national level by the Secretariat and the Board of the 10YFP, who in turn should share, inform, identify and promote inter-ministerial cooperation with different stakeholders at the national level.
- c. Confirm the support and interest of the region to participate in the five initial programs: information to the consumer; sustainable lifestyles and education; sustainable public procurement; building and sustainable construction; and sustainable tourism including eco-tourism.
- d. Consider an additional program within the 10YFP of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), being one of the priorities of the region according to the previous meetings of Ministers.
- e. Suggest additional programs for the 10YFP in the field of sustainable management of waste and food producing systems ensuring food security.
- f. Call upon the Governments of the region to apply for technical and financial support in order to integrate the objectives of CPS in the design and implementation of national policies, plans and strategies for sustainable development.
- g. Supporting the inclusion of CPS in the Development Agenda post 2015, with the aim of developing a baseline that incorporate civil society and private sector, confirming the need to identify indicators in this area.
- h. Finally, the meeting of experts in CPS puts for consideration and approval of the Forum of Ministers the terms of reference to define the functioning of the Regional Council of Government Experts on sustainable production and consumption.

56. Then countries commented on the issue. Chile requested to include a message that highlights the importance of food security, in particular with respect to the amount of food that is wasted.

57. Colombia stressed the importance of the relationship between food security and waste management, as well as the product life cycle. On the other hand emphasizes once again the importance of including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), an important sector, that shows gaps to address environmental problems. To conclude his speech the delegate identifies the need to generate additional initiatives in specific SCP issues at the regional level, including the definition of specific regional indicators.

58. Argentina asked how the regional proposals were received in the framework of the Global meeting on 10YPF. The secretariat reported that the proposal had a positive reception and a platform is being generated to work with SMEs. The representative of Brazil ratified this and he offered to share its experience with the countries concerned.

3.6 Proposal of Action Plan on air pollution in Latin America and the Caribbean

59. The Chair mentioned that the document UNE/LAC.IGWG.XIX7 has been prepared which is the draft of the Regional Plan of Action for intergovernmental cooperation in the field of air pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean.

60. Mr. Victor Hugo Paramo, from the National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change (INECC) of Mexico, made a presentation of the Regional Action Plan. In this presentation, he mentioned the hard work done in the preparation of the draft of the Regional Action Plan, including several meetings to discuss its contents. The draft is a guide to advance plans at national and regional levels to improve air quality with an approach to take advantage of co-benefits of short-lived climate pollutants.

61. The draft of the Regional Action Plan contains a section with background on the Intergovernmental Network of Air Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean and the foundations for regional cooperation. The Regional Action Plan proposed three objectives: a main target, regional targets and specific goals by country. The Plan sets the priority pollutants, which are present in the majority of cities in the region, and that have important health implications. These are: particulate material, black carbon, ozone troposphere, oxides of nitrogen, hydrocarbons — including volatile organic compounds-sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide and toxic compounds from the air.

62. The draft Plan proposes recommendations for sectorial actions in those sectors identified as more important. These are transport, production of bricks and ceramic, use of biomass for cooking and for heating, thermoelectric power plants and industrial facilities, extraction and processing of hydrocarbons, solid waste management, management of treated wastewater and agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry.

63. The Plan proposes medium-term targets with specific indicators agreed on working groups, to demonstrate compliance on implementation. These goals are set for four and eight years. Mr. Páramo stressed that each country must comply with

the commitments made though this is not a binding document. He presented the key elements of the draft and actions for consideration of the Ministers.

64. The Chair congratulated the reporter and other actors involved in the development of the proposal, and opened the floor for comments. The representative of Paraguay also congratulated the working group for the presentation, simple but eloquent and asked whether forest fires and grasslands were being considered in the Regional Action Plan.

65. The representative of INECC confirmed that effectively these fires were considered in the proposal including alternatives to reduce such practices. These events produced significant amounts of particles and black carbon, with effects on the health of the population and contribution to global warming.

66. Chile highlighted the synergies between climate change and air pollution, the latter of a local nature, and requested that co-benefits be realized. The delegate requested that this be reflected in the proposal to the Ministers. Brazil also congratulated the working team and indicated that the country had launched initiatives in air quality control. Brazil intends to help, and share national experiences with, other countries. In General, Brazil agrees with the content of the draft Plan, but made some concrete suggestions for modifications in the text.

67. The representative of Guatemala considered that it would be appropriate to include an estimate of the costs of the actions included in the plan, and Jamaica indicated that it would be appropriate to include the link with health, in the same manner as the link with climate change has been made, and suggested reviewing the work done by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on the subject.

68. The representative of Guyana requested the issue of Sahara dust to be included in the Regional Plan of action, and urges the Presidency to decide on if there is a consensus on such a request. The Chair indicated that while the countries have already provided their views during the process of regional consultation, which has lasted for six years, there is still flexibility to incorporate new issues, and suggested the inclusion of this new item for consideration. The representative of the INECC added that the dust of the Sahara is a problem of long-range transport of contaminants, and that despite the fact that this is a phenomenon already studied, it is a subject that merits a more profound investigation to determine how much of that dust contributes to levels of pollutants in the region and to assess its relevance in regards to actions arising from the PAR.

69. Bahamas indicated that the problem of dust from the Sahara is a common problem for the countries in the Caribbean and suggests an assessment of what studies have already been done and what remains to be studied.

70. To conclude the session, Mr. Pablo Artaxo made a presentation on the regional assessment of short-lived contaminants that will take place. He explained what are the short-lived contaminants and their impacts on health, global warming and ecosystems. It stressed their importance for both outdoors and indoors settings. He mentioned some of the potential measures for their reduction, indicated that the study will determine the most effective measures and requested the participation of all countries for the success of the initiative. He said that countries will be getting letters soon for the nomination of focal points.

3.7 Small Island Development States

71. The representative of Jamaica made a presentation on the International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the International Year of SIDS. The process leading to the convening of the Third International Conference on SIDS was outlined. These included, inter alia, the national and regional preparatory processes, and the inter-regional and global preparatory process. Specific reference was made to the Outcome Document of the SIDS Inter-regional meeting entitled “Small Island Developing States Integrating and Enabling Cooperation Framework for the Barbados Programme of Action and Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation.” This document, it was stressed will inform the main input for the Zero draft for the Global Preparatory Process.

72. The importance of the International Year of SIDS for focusing the international community on the sustainable development of SIDS was underscored.

73. An appeal was made by Caribbean SIDS for the support and cooperation of all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to support both of these processes.

74. Issues were also raised with respect to the implementation of Decision 9 of the XVIII meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean with respect to the “establishment of a SIDS specific sub-programme within the current MTS and future MTS, taking into consideration the specific requirements contained in UNGA Resolution 16/165 of January 2011. The Meeting agreed this issue should be tabled at the meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP at its June 2014 session.

75. The representatives highlighted the importance of the designation of 2014 as the International Year of Small Island Developing States and underlined the importance of strengthening South-South cooperation in the region to support SIDS in their progress towards sustainable development.

3.8 Regional Initiative on the Rio Principle 10

76. This item was introduced by the representative of Chile, who chairs the process initiated by the Declaration on the implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration in Latin America and the Caribbean.

77. He recalled that on the occasion of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20), the government of Chile, with support from countries of CELAC and active participation of civil society, promoted an open statement to all countries of the region to initiate a dialogue for the full implementation of principle 10. The Declaration recognizes that commitment is necessary for the full implementation of access rights and this was the start of a regional process towards the development of an instrument to promote its implementation, with ECLAC as the Secretariat.

78. In November 2012 the First Meeting of Focal Points was held in Santiago de Chile, with participation of civil society and international organizations. At a second

meeting, held in Mexico in March 2013, the Action Plan was agreed and two working groups were established: one on capacity building and cooperation, coordinated by Colombia and Jamaica, and the other on access rights and regional instrument coordinated by Brazil and Costa Rica. At the third meeting in Peru, in October 2013, the Vision of Lima was agreed, identifying principles and values that will be the basis for the regional instrument.

79. In order to advance in interagency work in a coordinated and collaborative manner at regional level for the implementation of the Action Plan, UNEP, UNITAR and ECLAC, with support from regional partners organized during 2013, two sub-regional workshops, in which best practices, gaps and needs for the implementation of the three aspects of Principle 10 in the region were compiled, helping to identify opportunities for cooperation.

80. He also stressed that in less than two years the initiative has grown, with 18 signatory countries up to this date. The initial commitment of Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay, was joined in recent months by Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Trinidad and Tobago and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Recognizing that Principle 10 is a key element in the post-2015 agenda, Chile hopes that other countries will join this process of learning and cooperation for civil rights in these key months and expects the Forum of Ministers to renew its commitment in this area, as it did in its previous meeting in 2012.

81. The Chair expressed appreciation for the detailed presentation, highlighting the dynamism and the substantial progress made by the regional initiative and invited experts to make comments.

82. The representative of Colombia also thanked Chile for the intervention, and stressed the importance of including a wide range of actors coming from areas other than the environment in the process, to ensure that it is broad and inclusive. He also expressed support for this process and to the inclusion of this issue in the Declaration of this forum.

83. After congratulating the intervention of Chile and emphasizing the importance of the item, the representative of Cuba requested clarification of the term "regional instrument."

84. The representative of Peru highlighted the leadership of Chile, the progress made in the Vision of Lima in the orientation for the construction of the instrument, and the particular vitality provided by civil society by participating in this process.

85. Regarding terminology, the representative of Chile said that the meaning of "tool" can be very comprehensive and this year it is expected to reach a consensus on the nature of the concept.

86. The Chairman of the Meeting renewed its congratulations to Chile and the presentation of a draft decision was announced.

Point 4 of the Agenda: conclusions and recommendations for the Ministerial Segment.

87. Under this point of the Agenda, the experts reviewed and approved the recommendations to be put forward to the Forum of Ministers.

Point 5 of the Agenda: Revision and approval of the Draft Report of the meeting and the Los Cabos Declaration.

88. Under this point of the Agenda, the delegations continued the review of the Declaration.

Point 6 of the Agenda: other issues

89. The representatives of countries did not present other issues for discussion.

Point 7 of the Agenda: Closing of the meeting

90. The meeting will be closed on Wednesday 12 March to give way to the inauguration of the Ministerial segment of the meeting.