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

Quito, Ecuador
31 January – 3 February, 2012

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Final Report of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

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Background

- 1.** In recent years, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have continued with their comprehensive efforts to reverse the trends of environmental deterioration, raise the living conditions of their populations and stimulate economic growth in the framework of sustainability. The progress accomplished by the countries of the region in these spheres is reflected in the indicators and reports on the fulfilment of the targets set forth in the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) and of the Millennium Development Goals.
- 2.** The documents prepared by the Secretariat, including "Review of Experiences: Modalities of Dialogue and Implementation of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean", as well as the evaluations carried out by the countries, have served as inputs for the deliberations of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment, with a view to formulating strategies to strengthen the Forum of Ministers as the region prepares for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20.

Objectives of the meeting

- 3.** In view of the background set out in the preceding paragraphs, the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers was convened in order to fulfil the following objectives:
 - a) Carry out an assessment of the Forum of Ministers and its tools;
 - b) Exchange information and experiences on implementing the Rio 1992 agreements and deliberate on new, emerging and priority issues for the region and other issues on the road to the Rio+20 Conference, and within that context:
 - Make progress on mapping out a process that will ensure the transformation of the development model towards a new economic paradigm, promote a regional economic strategy that is inclusive, sustainable, democratic and respectful of the limits of nature and construct a new metric for development, ahead of Rio+20;
 - Ensure a renewed regional policy arrangement centred on sustainable development;
 - Promote the forging of a new governance for sustainability to strengthen institutional frameworks for sustainable development at all levels that includes an ethics and governability agreement, and global redistribution and funding mechanisms;
 - c) Boost the construction of a new international and regional Financial Architecture for sustainable development, that improves the articulation of scales, as well as global and regional governance, and that supports policies to strengthen food, energy, climate, health, natural resource, and knowledge sovereignty as part of a new participatory institutional framework of developing countries.

Attendance

4. The Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean was attended by 82 government representatives from 31 countries of the region, as well as 6 attendees from 5 programmes, secretariats and conventions of the United Nations system, 9 representatives from 6 intergovernmental agencies, 3 representatives from 3 Non-Governmental Organizations, and 2 special invitees. The list of participants of this meeting is available as **Annex V** to this document.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

5. The Ministerial segment of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum began with an opening ceremony on Thursday 2 of February 2012 at 9:15 a.m. with words from the Minister of the Environment of Ecuador, Mrs. Marcela Aguiñaga, who provided a summary of the progress of the Meeting of High Level Experts. She stressed the importance of achieving a regional vision and consensus prior to arriving to the Rio+20 Conference. With the purpose of building this joint position, she indicated that the principal objectives suggested for this forum are: to assess the role of the forum, exchange information and experiences and discuss the emerging problems and priorities of for the region with a view to Rio+20. Emphasis was given to the need to make radical changes that orient sustainable development with a new focus that considers nature and traditional cultures as sources of information.

6. The Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Achim Steiner, thanked Ecuador for its hospitality as host country. He stressed the historic opportunity presented by the upcoming United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development, Rio+20 and the important contributions of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean throughout the last 27 years. He highlighted a series of examples and significant developments in the region towards sustainable environment and development and stressed the depth and urgency of the challenges faced. He highlighted that the Rio+20 Conference offers both a challenge and an opportunity under its two principal themes; Green Economy and an institutional framework for sustainable development. He concluded by emphasizing that Rio+20 provides the potential to finally fulfil the promises made by the previous generation to present and future generations, and in this way provide a clear and certain path towards a sustainable century.

7. The Minister for Coordination of Heritage, Mrs. Maria Fernanda Espinoza, reiterated that it is a privilege and honour to host the participants in Ecuador, and thanked them for the progress made during the technical segment. She referred to three reasons that underline the importance of this Forum: a) provide follow-up to the recommendation of the Caracas Declaration and its Action Plan and begin to develop the institutionalization of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC); b) provide a vision and platform for common action in the Region to face the environmental problems and sustainable development; c) create a common platform for the region on the road to the Rio+20 Conference and develop a new regional development paradigm. She stressed that this meeting of Ministers

of the Environment of the Region is an appropriate setting for an in-depth debate and the construction a regional agenda for the sovereignty of life.

8. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Integration of Ecuador, Mr. Ricardo Patiño, reiterated the welcome to this forum and highlighted that this meeting is the first Forum of Ministers after the establishment of the political mechanism of CELAC. He stressed that only together will the sovereignty of each country be maintained in order to walk together with their unique identities and strengths to achieve sustainable development. He highlighted that in spite of the achievements on the subject of the environment over the last forty years, the challenges that are faced are urgent and deep and there is no time to lose. He noted the importance of needing greater commitments from developed countries, especially in order to face climate change. He proposed building a new paradigm for sustainable development for the region, and insisted that a new multilateralism is required to face the global environmental challenges and in particular, climate change.

Agenda item 2: Organization of the meeting

9. The Vice-Minister of the National Authority of the Environment of Panama, Mr. Silvano Vergara, during his intervention as Chairman of the previous Meeting of the Forum, pointed out that the Eighteenth meeting of the Forum of Ministers should be taken as a model to advance with new development paradigms that strengthen the institutionalization of sustainable development and arrive to Rio+20 with a solid proposal. He mentioned that this meeting should promote governance so that sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean is strengthened and perpetuated.

10. With the proposal of Panama, Mrs. Marcela Aguiñaga, Minister of the Environment of Ecuador, was unanimously elected as Chair of the Meeting and assumed the leadership of the Forum tasks.

2.1. Adoption of the rules of procedure of the meeting

11. The Ministers adopted *mutatis mutandi*, the Regulation of the Council of Administration of UNEP to govern the procedures of the meeting.

2.2. Election of the Bureau

12. In accordance with the practices established in previous meetings, the Chair proposed that the Board of Directors maintain the membership adopted during the Preliminary Meeting of Senior Experts. The proposal was approved by the participants and was constituted as follows:

Chair:	Ecuador
Vice-Chair:	Argentina
	Honduras
	Mexico
	Jamaica

Dominican Republic

Uruguay

Rapporteur:

Peru

2.3. Approval of the agenda and programme of sessions of the meeting

13. The Chairman of the meeting offered the floor to the Regional Director and Representative of UNEP, Ms. Margarita Astrálaga. The representative of UNEP explained the agenda of the event during the two days of the Segment for Ministers.

14. The Ministers considered Provisional Agenda¹, The Noted Provisional Agenda and the Calendar of Sessions² proposed and they were adopted after including a modification proposed by Venezuela to include point 5.1 for the revision of agreements of the Caracas Action Plan.

Agenda item 3: Message from the Regional Consultation Meeting Representatives of the main civil society groups

15. The representative of the major groups of civil society, Mrs. Cecilia Iglesias, read the recommendations that arose from the regional consultation meeting that took place on 3 September 2011 in Santiago Chile.

16. Mrs. Iglesias welcomed the debate regarding the evaluation of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean. She made reference to decision 13 of the XVI Forum of Ministers recommending that the governments and UNEP continue to broaden and deepen the representative participation of the Major Groups. She proposed that UNEP needs to be strengthened with financial and other resources. With regards to the Green Economy, she recognized that civil society has diverging opinions, but that despite these differences, they support a low carbon economy. She asked the government representatives and the rest of participants for ambitious, joint and long-term efforts. She also highlighted the importance of environmental education.

17. The meeting applauded the recommendations and there were no additional comments.

¹ See document "Provisional Agenda" (UNEP/LAC- IG.XVIII/1).

² See document "Noted Provisional Agenda" (UNEP/LAC- IG.XVIII/2).

Agenda item 4: Follow-up to the Seventeenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, including the Evaluation, strengthening and governance of the Forum of Ministers of Environment

18. Under this agenda item, the Ministers examined the recommendations of the High-Level Experts as they relate to the review of experiences of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment and its instruments, aimed towards the adoption of strategies to strengthen and promote its role as a regional political body, as a contribution to strengthening the environmental pillar in Governance for sustainable development at all levels.

19. The Chairman gave the floor to Mrs. Margarita Astrálaga, Regional Director and Representative of UNEP, who presented the principal conclusions and recommendations of document UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XVIII/3.

20. The Chairman invited the representative of the Chairmanship of CELAC, Ms. María del Carmen de las Heras, to address the participants. He underlined that this Forum is a lively vision of the position of CELAC in the regional and global environmental governance. He also valued the learning process of the Forum of Ministers and called to build synergies with forums dealing with similar topics. He welcomed Ecuador's proposal that this Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment act as the first meeting of ministers of the environment of CELAC.

21. Various countries of the region agreed on the importance of the Forum of Ministers, however they considered that, after thirty years of work it is necessary to renew and modernize it as a function of the current needs and challenges that the region faces, as well as of the Rio+20 Conference and its results.

22. Venezuela expressed that, in compliance with the mandate of the Presidents relating to CELAC's creation, this meeting should follow-up on the Ministerial Declaration of the Environment of Caracas of April 2011 and requested that said document be distributed to the delegates.

23. The representative of Bolivia stated that the document presented by the Secretariat was very important and crucial for the discussion and called attention to some of the paragraphs that opened the debate about the Forum's role, the development of the metrics of sustainable development indicators, the coordination with the Interagency Technical Committee, and how to identify development priorities, which should be identified by the countries.

24. Brazil advocated that the subject be discussed, recognizing that the forum offers the setting for regional political dialogue on the environment. Likewise it recommended that the forum's discussions and results have an impact on national agendas. Furthermore, the forum must be renewed in the framework of global processes. The analysis of ILAC's experience was considered valuable and the country expressed that it would be pleased if an evaluation of the work groups were

developed to review their functions, operating methods and support that might be received by the ITC.

25. A group of countries including Nicaragua and Argentina expressed their support regarding the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, being also considered as the First meeting of Ministers of Environment of CELAC.

26. Bahamas expressed that it supported the creation of CELAC, however as far as the present meeting is concerned, it needed to consult with its capital about the proposal for the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean constitute the First meeting of Ministers of the Environment of CELAC.

27. Peru welcomed the opportunity of CELAC and the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment to join forces, appreciating the coincidence that the Eighteenth meeting of the Forum was already planned for the time in which CELAC should convene a meeting of ministers of the environment in preparation for the Rio+20 Conference. He highlighted the importance of learning lessons and sharing experiences in order to prioritize policies, and build common visions to position environmental issues at a global, national, local and transversal level. It suggested for CELAC to recognise the close to 30 years of experience of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment, and for a working group of the Forum to identify the needs for the environmental institutionalization of CELAC.

28. Ecuador stressed that the region should assert its priorities internationally and position itself squarely in the framework of environmental governance while paying attention to the issues that will be discussed at the Rio+20 Conference.

29. Argentina recognized the three decades of existence of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment that have, for example, helped to strengthen environmental institutions in the countries of the region. It endorsed the proposal that the Eighteenth Forum of Ministers also serve as the first meeting of the ministers of environment of CELAC. It recognized that the environmental agenda is no longer secondary in developing and developed nations. On the latter, it indicated that the environmental agenda of developed nations may be an obstacle to the development of other countries.

30. Panama echoed the call for unity in Latin America and the Caribbean made by the chancellor of Ecuador. Likewise he highlighted the importance of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment and the political and historical weight that the Declaration of Quito will carry.

31. Paraguay expressed that we are facing a historical opportunity; also that development paradigms are determined by socio-environmental challenges. It also valued the political institutionalization and integration that CELAC provides. It congratulated and supported the proposal of Ecuador that the Eighteenth Forum of

Ministers of the Environment be the first meeting of ministers of the environment of CELAC.

32. Nicaragua recalled the celebration of world wetlands' day and celebrated the fact it coincides with the First meeting of the Ministers of Environment of CELAC; he advocated that we consider environment and development with a humanitarian approach and respect for mother earth.

33. Colombia agreed that the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean be strengthened and renewed, and not substituted by the Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of CELAC. It also proposed that work groups be established for the preparation leading up to Rio+20, in coordination with the Troika of CELAC.

34. Finally the Presidency thanked all of the interventions, considering them all constructive. Subsequently, she stressed that the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, supported by UNEP, requires strengthening. She clarified that at no time had it been proposed that this forum be substituted by the Meeting of Ministers of CELAC. She added that both should provide vigorous, prevailing settings.

Agenda item 5: Recommendations of the Preparatory Meeting of High-Level Experts

35. Under this agenda item, recommendations resulting from the deliberations of the Preparatory Meeting of High Level Experts³ which met prior to the Ministerial Segment were submitted for consideration by the Forum of Ministers.

36. The rapporteur presented the Final Report of the Preparatory Meeting of High Level Experts, indicating that the text up until paragraph 89, and with the support of Ecuador and the Dominican Republic noted that decisions 1 to 7 were agreed by the Group of Experts, which were then adopted by the Ministers and Heads of Delegation.

37. Since the proposals regarding the decisions on Land-locked Countries and Small Island Developing States, were not sufficiently agreed upon during the Meeting of High Level Experts, it was agreed to present them to the Ministers and Heads of Delegation for their consideration. In the case of the decision on Small Island Developing States, El Salvador requested to also include the countries of Central America, considering their high vulnerability to climate change and that they have suffered a significant increase in the incidence of natural disasters. The

³ See document "Final report of the Preparatory Meeting of Experts of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, 31 January to 1 February, Quito, Ecuador" UNEP/LAC-IWGW.XVIII/10

Chairman proposed to discuss this decision in a Contact Group, with the aim of presenting an agreed text to the plenary.

38. The Chairman submitted the Final Report of the Preparatory Meeting of High-level Experts that began from paragraph 90. There were no comments and it was adopted by the plenary.

Agenda item 6: United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), including the Evaluation, strengthening and governance of the Forum of Ministers of Environment

39. Under this agenda item, the Chairman invited the Ministers to analyze and evaluate in a general manner the lessons learned since 1992; the topics established in the Rio+20 agenda; and the priority and emerging themes in the region.

6.1. Regional vision of sustainable development in the framework of multiple crises

40. In this agenda item, Mr. Carlos de Miguel, Environmental Affairs Officer, Division for Sustainable Development and Human Settlements, Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), delivered a presentation on the current status of sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to diagnose the progress and outstanding issues and recognize the challenges the region faces in the current context. He noted that given that this was a general presentation, many specificities of the region could not be detailed.

41. The analysis conducted by ECLAC in 1992 explained that the region of Latin America and the Caribbean experienced a low rate of economic growth, high inflation and high foreign debt. On the contrary, the region has been experiencing a relatively high level of growth during the past decade. However, this growth is not homogeneous in all sub-regions and shows signs of slowing. In the past 20 years, the region has made important advances, including a decrease in the poverty rate from 48.4% to 31.4%, and the human development index has grown in the three sub-regions due to productive development policies and stable employment. This underlines the fundamental role of the state. Moreover, progress is shown in the percentage of population with access to drinking water and electricity for mainly urban populations.

42. In environmental terms, significant progress has been made in terms of controlling deforestation, especially in the Amazon, while emissions of substances that deplete the ozone layer have also steadily declined, reflecting progress of the Montreal Protocol. In this sense, the environmental pillar has been strengthened through improved legislation and institutions. However, the analysis conducted by ECLAC also indicates that the population living in poverty was higher in 1980 than it was in 2010 (although it is significantly lower with respect to percentage of the total population), and that the region remains the most unequal in the world in terms of income, and very unequal in quality of educational among different social

classes and between rural and urban populations. Additionally, emissions of greenhouse gases in the region have increased steadily since 1990.

43. The recommendations made by ECLAC cover issues such as environmental statistics. According to Mr. Carlos de Miguel, they require greater attention in investment. Similarly, an outstanding issue would be wealth assessment, taking into account the value of the environment and degradation. In many countries, legislation to facilitate the implementation of Principle 10 of Rio Declaration is not yet developed or hard of implementation. Additionally, the analysis highlights that international cooperation was not enough because in 2010 the official development assistance from developed countries reached 0.32% of gross national income, which represents less than half of the committed target.

44. After the presentation delivered by ECLAC, the representative of Bolivia expressed concern about the widening gap in the region between rich and poor, particularly with regards to access to food resources. He also noted that food security and sovereignty is a historical challenge, as is the redistribution of income generated by the natural resources of the countries of the region towards the neediest populations. In addition, he highlighted the need for a clearer understanding of the term "green economy", and that this be harmonized in political and technical documents.

45. Argentina supported the intervention of Bolivia regarding the need to give greater clarity to the definition of Green Economy. The representative of this country mentioned that it is not recommended to promote a Green Economy involving structural adjustment, noting that this was one of the factors that increased social and economic inequity in the past. In addition, Argentina requested the opportunity to read the contributions to the preparatory process for Rio+20 that were prepared by the Council of Ministers of Mercosur at a meeting held in Montevideo, Uruguay in November 2011. This document was circulated by the Secretariat for the information of the Ministers and Heads of Delegation, and it appears as **Annex IV** to this report.

46. Ecuador stressed the need for a proposal to the Rio+20 Conference that includes the recognition of the rights of nature and ancestral vision of nature conservation.

***6.2. Institutional framework for sustainable development and
6.3 Regional vision of the environmental pillar on sustainable
development and innovative experiences***

47. The Chairman invited the Minister of Environment of Brazil to speak, who emphasized the importance and opportunity provided by the present moment. She reviewed some priority issues for the region, which include gender issues, food security and sustainable production. Also, she underlined the threats posed by climate change and biodiversity conservation, as well as the need to develop an appropriate institutional framework to enhance sustainable development. Finally she emphasized the importance of the social component and job creation, especially

for young people, and the fact that Rio+20 gives the opportunity to discuss the future, while taking into consideration the emergencies of the present.

48. The Minister of Heritage of Ecuador thanked the Brazilian Minister for her speech, emphasizing that it was an appropriate introduction for the session. She continued by presenting different ideas regarding key aspects for the region, such as climate change, biodiversity, poverty and South-North transfer of resources. He continued with a summary of possible regional approaches to Rio+20, including the re-launching of the sustainability agenda and the transformation of the economy, and finally he gave some proposals for Rio+20, such as the promotion of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Nature, the establishment of a new international economical order and progress towards an institutional framework for sustainable development, that has a financially consistent mechanism. Regarding the green economy, he suggested that it should not be considered as an alternative concept, but as a tool to advance towards sustainable development, taking into consideration the specificities and views of each country. He also emphasized the need to develop a new, more holistic metric for sustainable development.

49. Colombia emphasized that the Region faces big challenges as well as a unique opportunity in the lead-up to Rio+20. In this context, the Minister shared his country's proposal to the Forum relating to the organization of objectives for sustainable development. The proposal aims to achieve a consensus on a number of objectives of universal application, such as national and voluntary implementation which would not contradict the Millennium objectives but rather they will transcend through time. Finally he proposed to start working on specific matters, such as food security, water resources and sustainable cities, and he expressed his desire that this proposal be welcomed by the Forum.

50. Costa Rica informed the Forum about some innovative initiatives that have been promoted in the country, such as the establishment of payment for ecosystem service mechanisms. Costa Rica highlighted that Rio+20 is an opportunity to see models that work and advance in South-South cooperation. Costa Rica emphasized the importance of consultation processes and the participation of different actors. Costa Rica also informed that they have evaluated this development model, and rejected mining and oil options. Costa Rica also mentioned the importance of public-private partnerships to achieve sustainable development. Costa Rica questioned how to assure that sustainable development will not be seen as contrary to economic development. Finally Costa Rica emphasized the need for joint Forums between Ministers of the Environment and Ministers of Finance, given that this collaboration is a central challenge for sustainable development.

51. The Chairman invited the Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Achim Steiner, to make some comments on the issues being discussed. Mr. Steiner suggested that the issue of environmental governance has reached a mature state of debate. However, he mentioned that a number of countries have noted that the platform for debate is weak and becoming increasingly unwieldy. He described two options that have emerged, one involving incremental progress, and the other a transformative and fundamental redesign. He noted that many countries have indicated that status quo is not an acceptable option, but there is a lack of consensus of what the

alternative would look like and its implications. He also highlighted that the efforts in this region to define and strengthen national and regional environmental governance have parallels at the global level, and that these efforts at these different levels can learn from each other. Mr. Steiner then suggested that we are at the stage where the environment is not a secondary or tertiary issue in the development debate, and that it is important to continue to articulate the environment in a way that is relevant to economic indices, which are often the main decision making consideration. He suggested that the concept of Green Economy be debated before, during and after Rio+20, and clarified that it is not about monetising nature, but it is a debate about the value of nature for sustainable development.

52. In order to enrich the discussion, the Chairman invited Mr. Falconí, The Minister of Planning and Development of Ecuador, to address the forum.

53. Mr. Falconí, described a vision of an ecological economy that highlighted the need to recognize that the economy forms part of a larger system, governed not only by the laws of supply and demand, but also by physical laws. He stressed the need to link environmental phenomenon with social ones; and that economic growth, modernization and technological change are means (and not ends) for development. Likewise, he highlighted the concept of Good Living that Ecuador defends, which means living with dignity and considering cultural values in harmony with nature, which is referred to as Sumak-Kawsay in the Constitution of Ecuador.

54. The Minister suggested that it is possible to build a Green Economy if there is a change in the paradigm of the concept of sustainability. He explained that there is a need for mutual responsibility and coordinated positions at the regional level for the protection of the environment. He also stressed that the productive growth and international commerce must consider compensation for damage and contingencies, and that environmental debt is the responsibility of companies as well as governments. The Minister highlighted the policies and strategies that Ecuador has advanced towards an ecological economy, stressing the need of new metrics that incorporate physical indicators and the flow of materials and energy. Finally, he underlined requirement to establish concrete mechanisms for national, regional and global institutionalization that address the environmental dilemma. He insisted that the region must act within the framework of a new economic order that has the programmatic principals of redistribution of wealth, democratization of the means of production and urgent change in production, consumption and commercialization.

55. In reference to the initial draft document, Bolivia indicated that considered it to be unbalanced in collecting the visions of the countries. With respect to the green economy, it mentioned that its conceptualization is not clear. He highlighted that a new vision for development should be adopted that is not based on the markets but on rights. Bolivia also insisted that the economic and financial architecture must be redesigned. Bolivia's full contribution is appears as **Annex III** to this document.

56. Ecuador mentioned that the Green Economy cannot be considered as an alternative concept to sustained development, nor can it be considered without modifying production and consumption models that endorse protectionism for

commerce. In terms of institutionalization, Ecuador agreed with the Executive Director of UNEP that national governments cannot be disassociated from regional platform. Ecuador suggested that international agencies must at the service of the priorities established by Nations and that if roles are not clearly defined, governance will weaken.

57. Argentina requested that the position of MERCOSUR and Chile be considered with respect to the green economy. The related document was circulated by the Secretariat.

58. Chile, in reference to Rio+20, advocated a successful conference covering common but differentiated responsibilities. Chile also favoured a regional agreement, balanced among the three pillars, and highlighted the importance of oceans for food self-sufficiency.

59. Peru highlighted that there are still many differences in opinion and that the challenge is to achieve a consensus. With respect to the Zero Draft, he mentioned that it was possible to discuss this issue until 29 February (items 3 and 4).

60. The Chairman invited the Contact Group for the Quito Declaration to present its progress.

61. The co-facilitator of Dominican Republic informed about the progress made on the content of the declaration.

62. The contact group for the decision on SIDS reported it had reached an agreement between the Central American Integration System (known as SICA for its acronym in Spanish) countries and the Small Island Development States of the Caribbean to approve this Decision, and create a new decision on Central American and Caribbean nations. Bahamas requested support for this decision, presented by Nicaragua, which reflects the common interests of these countries.

63. El Salvador expressed satisfaction for the celebration of a SICA-CARICOM Summit. El Salvador noted that the advancement of a common voice between the Caribbean and Central America is important for the future.

64. Bolivia supported the SICA-CARICOM agreement with specific amendments. Nicaragua, Panama and El Salvador conveyed agreement with Bolivia's suggestion.

65. The Presidency put forth for consideration the revised Decisions 8 and 10, which were unanimously adopted.

6.4. Emerging issues

66. The Chairman opened the Meeting of the Forum on February 3 indicating that, according to the agenda, the next issue to be discussed was agenda item 6.4. on Emerging Issues for Rio+20 and agenda item 7 of the 12th Special Session of the Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme. But first, the Chairman requested the

meeting to allow a presentation by the Minister of Environment of this Brazil, Mrs. Izabella Texeira concerning objectives, content and logistic aspects of the Rio+20 Conference.

67. The presentation began with the description of the main objectives of the Conference as well as issues that, according to the UN General Assembly Resolution 64/236 (2009) are: green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and the institutional framework of sustainable development. Later, she presented a joint vision of the agenda of the Conference, stressing the efforts of Brazil to strengthen the dialogue between civil society and the high level segment. She continued by explaining the expectations regarding results for the Conference which are: a final declaration based on the initial draft zero (known as the "zero draft") which was circulated by the Secretariat of this Conference; recommendations of the civil society; a commitments platform to register sustainable development commitments by governments, organisations and other actors; and national processes as a legacy from the Rio+20 Conference in each country. Furthermore she highlighted the significance of the conference noting that this is not a conference on the environment but on sustainable development in the middle of a deep economic crisis. She emphasised that, in this context, the conference is a setting to discuss new development models.

68. The Chairman appreciated Brazil's presentation and subsequently made reference to working document UNEP/LAC-IG.XVIII/5 and gave the floor to UNEP's Executive Director, Mr. Achim Steiner, who briefly explained the processes by which the 10 environmental emerging issues for Latin America and the Caribbean were identified. He explained that these processes were the "foresight process" and GEO-5 lead by UNEP. He mentioned that through these consultative processes which are scientifically-based, the experts try to determine what approaches to apply, actions needs, whom to act with, amongst other. Mr. Achim Steiner passed the floor on to Ms. Graciela Metternicht from UNEP/ROLAC to make a comprehensive presentation on emerging issues.

69. The presentation mentioned the ten most relevant issues for Latin America and the Caribbean which are covered the following five categories: 1) Cross-cutting issues; 2) Food, Land and Biodiversity issues; 3) Freshwater and Marine issues; 4) Climate Change and; 5) Energy, Technology and Waste. The table below summarizes the 10 emerging issues:

i. Cross-Cutting Issues
1. Aligning governance to the challenges of global sustainability
2. Broken bridges: Reconnecting science and policy
3. Social tipping points? Catalysing rapid and transformative change in human behaviour for the environment
ii. Food, Land and Biodiversity issues
4. New challenges for ensuring food safety and food security for the nine billion projected for 2050
5. The need for novel governance arrangements to promote sustainable land management

iii. Freshwater and marine issues
6. The new challenges to water availability require that this resource be used efficiently
7. The potential collapse of oceanic systems requires integrated ocean governance
iv. Climate change
8. The need to take action in the face of signs of climate change which manifest as increased frequency of extreme weather events
v. Energy, Technology, and Waste Issues
9. Accelerating the implementation of renewable energy systems
10. Greater risk than necessary? The need for modern arrangements to minimising risks from new technologies and chemicals

70. The Chairman opened the floor to the countries to discuss their view points with respect to emerging issues on the way to Rio+20.

71. The countries highlighted the relevance of the Rio+20 Conference, and expressed different views, depending on their specific circumstances. Several issues were raised, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, technology transfer, intellectual property rights, the impact of marine invasive species, which is of crucial importance for ensuring food safety in small island developing states, monitoring and measurement of emissions, food self-sufficiency, access to information, animal well-being, integrated ocean governance, forests, cultural diversity, poverty reduction, rights of the poor and of developing nations with their own sustainability agendas, bio-knowledge for conservation, development regimes in harmony with nature, and sustainable cities.

72. With respect to cross-cutting issues, Colombia indicated the importance of setting clear goals on the way to Rio+20 and suggested that the sustainable development goals that refer to the three pillars of sustainable development should, adjust to multiple national realities, be non-mandatory, and should respect cultural diversity.

73. With respect to the emerging issues document, Bolivia commented on the importance of considering other areas such as forests (that cover not only biodiversity, but also community interactions), poverty eradication and the states' right to development, among others.

74. Ecuador suggested further emphasising and strengthening regional policy and the consideration of bio-knowledge, the sustainable use of terrestrial and marine biodiversity and equitable benefit-sharing, a change of focus in development advocating for developing in harmony with nature, planning and land zoning which considers climate change adaptation measures, among others.

75. In this context, Panama invited the countries to identify a single cross-cutting issue that could serve as a common issue that the whole region could focus on.

76. Haiti and El Salvador stressed the importance of disasters as an emerging issue and a strategy to position the issue of adaptation to climate change and the

development of national policies in multiple areas that move beyond the environment.

77. Peru reflected on the meaning of Rio 1992 and indicated that it brought along a new vision, a set of instruments that allowed advances on the understanding of sustainable development, with implementable elements and not only pragmatic ones. For example, he recounted that the Rio Declaration allowed authorities to develop policies that permitted taking actions and making these implementable. He considered that agenda 21 is still valid and that it needs to be complemented with emerging issues. He called for UNEP, the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and other actors to assist rethinking key principles of the Rio Declaration such as the common but differentiated responsibilities, the precautionary principle, participation and access to information, among others.

78. Paraguay suggested incorporating the sustainability of cities as an emerging issue, given the worrying population growth in the region.

Agenda item 7: 12th Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme

79. Under this agenda item UNEP's Executive Director made a presentation on the agenda and preparatory process towards the 12th Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme which will take place 20-22 February, 2012 in Nairobi, Kenya.

80. The Executive Director started by clarifying the fact that UNEP's presentation on emerging issues did not represent a final document, but rather a guide for discussions for the meeting in Nairobi. He reflected upon the role of the Ministries of Environment on sustainable development discussions and stressed the importance of strengthening the discussions around certain key issues including employment, food security, equity, oceans. He encouraged the Latin American and Caribbean region to link their agenda to that of other regions like Africa or Asia, since Rio+20 will only make sense if it's focused on a common agenda. He also said that another important issue will be the reflection on the last 40 years of environmental governance.

81. With respect to the green economy, he indicated that although there are disagreements due to the wide range of interpretations, the Forum of Ministers of Environment the Latin America and the Caribbean region should bring a message that helps situate the green economy within the global agenda, moving beyond the differences in viewpoints.

82. Finally, he kindly invited countries to participate in the Nairobi meeting, taking into account that it provides the last opportunity for the Ministers of Environment to debate at a global level in preparation towards the Rio+20 Conference.

83. Uruguay reflected upon the words of UNEP's Executive Director, mentioning that multilateral environmental discussions in recent years would not look the way they do, were it not for China's economic growth. He stressed the importance of defining sustainable consumption and production systems. He highlighted the need for a common ground of understanding with respect to issues of sustainable

development. With regards to emerging issues, he indicated he agreed with the presentation given by UNEP.

84. Mexico shared its perspective on Rio+20, mentioning that the environmental theme has been relatively isolated from the analysis of current problems. He indicated that the environment is now seen as a transversal theme for sustainable development, and therefore global environmental institutionalism should reflect this reality. With respect to the Green Economy, he suggested that we must recognize the limits of the market and he highlighted that environmental economic valuation goes beyond existing instruments. He finally stated that it is important that countries have sovereign access to a range of sustainable development instruments, such as the green economy.

85. Paraguay highlighted the need to proceed with a review of multilateralism and environmental governance. As suggested by Uruguay, he recommended that sustainable production and consumption be on the agenda in Nairobi, which would allow progress to be made on Green Economy issues. Paraguay is very interested in this matter due to the current crisis with capitalism that has generated a predatory system.

86. El Salvador highlighted that the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and equity are being eroded. He stressed that during the meeting there had been very little discussion about climate change, despite it currently being a crucial issue.

87. Peru specified that a clear proposal with lessons learned about governability is necessary and suggested the re-launching of certain principles of sustainable development of Rio 92.

88. Argentina agreed with the proposal of Peru and El Salvador, reaffirming that the subject of climate change had not been adequately discussed during the meeting.

89. The Chairman invited the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to share, according to its request, a specific proposal regarding the mandate that was received when CELAC was launched. Specifically, Venezuela requested that the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum take a recess and that the First Meeting of Ministers of CELAC be realized, and once this finished, the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum could re-start. The motion was approved by a large number of countries and was finally approved.

Agenda item 8: Review and approval of the draft Final Report of the Eighteenth Meeting and approval of the Quito Declaration

90. The Eighteenth meeting of the Forum reconvened to continue with its agenda. Thus, under this agenda item, participants reviewed the draft Final Report, presented by the Rapporteur, including the decisions of the meeting. The Rapporteur received proposals of amendments to the report from various delegations with respect to their own interventions. The Secretariat was given a vote of confidence to finalise the report.

91. After a long-lasting discussion the Quito Declaration was unanimously approved.

Agenda item 9: Other issues

92. Under this agenda item the representative of Colombia requested the floor to submit to the consideration of the meeting the following:

- Propose a decision to congratulate the Government and People of Ecuador for the successful conduction of the joint meetings of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean that took place 31 January-3 February 2012 and the First Meeting of Ministers of Environment of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) that took place 3 February 2012 and, for the splendid hospitality and;
- The offer from his government to host the next meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment in Colombia.

93. Both proposals from Colombia were unanimously agreed.

94. Finally, Nicaragua requested the floor to read a message from President Daniel Ortega.

Agenda item 10: Closure of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

95. The Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean was closed by Mrs. Marcela Aguiñaga, Minister of the Environment of Ecuador on Friday, 3 February, 2012 at 10:30 p.m.

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Annexes

Annex I

Quito Declaration

In the city of San Francisco of Quito, Republic of Ecuador, on 3 February 2012, We, Ministers of Environment and Heads of Delegation, in this Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, which hosted the First Meeting of Ministers of Environment of the Latin American and the Caribbean Community of States, -CELAC-,

Acknowledging the lessons learned and experiences related to the institutional arrangements of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean during the last 30 years;

Considering that the Pro-tempore Presidency of CELAC requested the organisation of the First Meeting of the Ministers of the Environment of the CELAC, in relation to the mandate of the Caracas Plan of Action of 3 December 2011, we decide to "Convene a Meeting of Ministers of the environmental area, before the Rio +20 Summit, to monitor the follow-up of the agreements of the Caracas Declaration of the Ministers of the Environment and contribute to the success of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20), whose high-level segment will take place from 20 to 22 June 2012";

Acknowledging that the agreements and commitments established in the Río 92 Declaration, Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Action Plan are fully in effect, and the need to strengthen their implementation in the upcoming Río+20 Conference;

Committed to the success of the Rio+20 Conference and having as an objective to promote sustainable development focusing on poverty eradication and social inclusion;

Conscious of the importance of renewing political commitment on sustainable development at the highest level in the Rio +20 Conference, we welcome the proposal of the possible adoption of sustainable development goals to proceed with the design of new development models, made within the framework of the discussions for Rio+20, considering that this can become an important tool to focus on goals that ensure integration and complementarity of the three dimensions of sustainable development;

Desirous that Rio +20 contributes to reduce the implementation gap of the internationally agreed environmental goals in regards to sustainable development, existing to date;

Affirming that the rights of people and states to development imply the recognition of the rights of population to overcome poverty, the elimination of conditions that generate inequity and social exclusion, the exercise of the rights in harmony with nature, respecting Mother Earth, and the rights of indigenous people and local communities, under the principles of Agenda 21 and other relevant instruments, and the need that these rights be implemented in a context of complementarity in an integral and interdependent manner;

Affirming that in the framework of the multiple crises faced by humanity, new alternative visions and proposals to development in harmony with nature have emerged from the Latin American and Caribbean region, which allow the region to contribute to the international community's renewed efforts towards sustainable development;

Taking note of the Declaration of the Ministers of Environment of MERCOSUR plus Chile and the Ministers of Environment of ALBA and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the member countries of ACTO in the preparatory process towards Rio+20;

Noting that the current situation in relation to sustainable development requires reforms in the regional and global institutional framework; and the respective cooperation mechanisms must be strengthened;

Reaffirming the principles of Rio 92, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the sovereign right of states over their natural resources;

Affirming that access to technological innovation of developing countries is fundamental to advance in the different dimensions of sustainable development and, to that effect, it is necessary to remove barriers, and the mechanisms which promote it should be strengthened for this purpose;

Affirming that the coordination and exchange of information and tools for the sustainable management of chemicals and hazardous waste; as well as the definition of long term financial mechanisms is required for effective implementation;

Highlighting the importance of strengthening environmental education and training in the region, ensuring transversality through mechanisms developed by the Latin-American and Caribbean countries, and establish in the Forum follow-up and evaluation mechanisms of the commitments assumed by each of the countries;

Reaffirming the importance that multilateral environmental agreements have for each of the States, especially those related to climate change, biological diversity, desertification and drought;

Reaffirming the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the respective capacities; and the validity of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and all its principles;

Taking into account the need for adaptation by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and their particular vulnerability to climate change, and above all indigenous communities, the poor and marginalized communities;

That the Latin American and Caribbean countries need new, additional, sufficient and non conditional financial resources, based on the principle of common and differentiated responsibilities, to face the mitigation and, especially, adaptation needs, to avoid and remedy damages and losses caused by climate change;

Declare

- 1.** That the Eighteenth Forum Ministers of Environment welcomed the First Meeting of Ministers of Environment of CELAC, in response to the Caracas Action Plan of CELAC of December 2011.
- 2.** That a regional proposal should be developed to strengthen the governance and the institutional framework of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 3.** That the results achieved during the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and during the First Meeting of Ministers of Environment of the Latin American and the Caribbean Community of States, -CELAC, have to serve the purpose of providing a regional vision with the aim of becoming one of the central bases and platforms for the negotiation towards Rio+20.
- 4.** That the Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of CELAC, as a mechanism of political consultation, shall be strengthened so that the region can build a vision of integration for sustainable development.
- 5.** In order to accomplish the purposes, objectives and goals of sustainable development, the scope of the following rights, among others, should be taken into account, in an integral, complementary and interdependent manner: the rights of people and states to development, which implies the recognition of the rights of populations to overcome poverty, the elimination of conditions that generate inequity and social exclusion, the exercise of the rights in harmony with nature, respecting Mother Earth, and the rights of indigenous people and local communities, under the principles of Agenda 21 and other relevant instruments.
- 6.** That regional financial mechanisms and structures should be strengthened and/or created to guarantee the provision of resources to support the countries of the region in the implementation of activities for sustainable development.
- 7.** To urge compliance with the historical commitment of developed countries to allocate 0.7% of GDP to official development assistance.
- 8.** To urge developed countries to increase their financial commitments to address mitigation and adaptation for countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, with new, additional, sufficient and non-conditional funds, based on the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities.
- 9.** That we urge developed countries to meet and increase their commitments in favour of Latin American and Caribbean countries for adaptation, capacity development and technology transfer according to the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change and its corresponding instruments.
- 10.** That we urge developed countries to comply with their mitigation commitments under the Kyoto Protocol; and to define and comply with more ambitious Greenhouse Gas emissions reduction goals and clear commitment periods under compliance mechanisms.
- 11.** That it would be useful that, during the preparatory process for Rio + 20, topics related to the sustainable development objectives should be defined, within the framework of the proposals of new development models, taking into account the characteristics of universal scope and national implementation, integration and complementarity, keeping as a reference the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), without prejudice to their implementation, and the process of formulation of sustainable development goals be identified after Rio + 20.

- 12.** Our solid commitment to continue our efforts at all levels in order to progress in the transition towards sustainable development, as this represents the adequate strategy to reach objectives of social welfare, economic growth, environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources in a harmonious way, as well as the development of strategies to avoid hidden trade restrictions.
- 13.** That, within the elements of building a common vision to achieve sustainable development, the recognition of the limits of nature, its importance for life and the promotion of a harmonious relationship with nature, the promotion of all human and collective rights, intergenerational justice and solidarity, social and economic inclusion, should be promoted respecting the cultural and social diversity of the communities, peoples and nations.
- 14.** That, commitments should be made for the full implementation of the rights of access to information, participation and environmental justice, as stated in Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, understanding them as indispensable pre-requisites for the construction of a citizenship committed to sustainable development.
- 15.** That regional cooperation should be increased in the areas of education, technological professional training, knowledge transfer of science and clean technology, and revalorization of traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and communities, highlighting the ancestral knowledge.
- 16.** That a joint position should be promoted to create enabling mechanisms for technology transfer and capacity building for the benefit of developing countries that allow greater dissemination of those technologies, adapted to their national realities, and which can make the difference in the reduction of environmental impact and contribute to sustainable development.
- 17.** That, to achieve sustainable development, respect for the biophysical limits and vital cycles of nature should be promoted, as well as poverty eradication, reduction of the gap between rich and poor, ensuring social inclusion as essential goal to attain sustainable development within the framework of a more supportive and inclusive economic order.
- 18.** That, in the framework of the Rio+20 Conference, a universal declaration of the rights of nature should be discussed as an instrument to achieve good living.
- 19.** That, in the framework of adoption of a regional environmental agenda, South-South cooperation will be strengthened for an effective articulation of the pillars of sustainable development in a balanced, comprehensive and global manner, with the preparation of integral tools to support planning.
- 20.** That, in the future institutional framework for sustainable development, the roles and mandates of the United Nations bodies should be revised in order for them to effectively interact in a coherent, coordinated and cooperative way without overlapping similar agendas, functions and problems.
- 21.** That we support the strengthening of the environmental pillar through an institutional framework that guarantees technical, financial and scientific capacity to be the catalyst for international cooperation on environmental issues and sustainable development.
- 22.** That, the cooperation for the development of regional strategies, based on national realities, should be promoted to generate synergies among the conventions and multilateral agreements, as well as experiences exchange and support to innovative public policies initiatives.

- 23.** That we encourage the Rio+20 Conference to consider, in the context of food security and agricultural development, the excessive volatility of food prices and the speculation in the commodities markets, as an emerging issue and a factor that threatens the goal of poverty eradication in developing countries.
- 24.** That we urge developed countries to end the volatility in commodity prices at a global level and the definition of respective prices, caused by financial speculation and regardless of environmental and social considerations, which compromises compliance with sustainable development to which the Latin American and Caribbean countries are committed to.
- 25.** That one of the main objectives of the Rio+20 Conference is to agree on a renewed vision of, and commitment to, sustainable development for poverty eradication and the promotion of social inclusion and equity and that, therefore, this will be an indisputable opportunity to orient our efforts towards the construction of a new international economic order that is more fair, equitable and inclusive, and that overcomes the wear, discredit and limitations of the current development model.
- 26.** That we should continue to strengthen and enrich the work of the ILAC on indicators of sustainable development, gathering them, as a complement to the Millennium Development Goals, as inputs to the development of the sustainable development goals to be defined in Rio + 20.
- 27.** That we recognize the vulnerability of landlocked countries and, honouring the solidarity and the responsibilities in ensuring the right to maximum development of the potentials of these countries, we express the need to make them visible including a specific mention to them in the documents produced by the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment and the First Meeting of Ministers of Environment of the CELAC.
- 28.** That the Forum of Ministers adopts the working group established during the First Meeting of the Ministers of the Environment of CELAC as a response to article 1 of the Decision 1 approved in the Eighteenth Forum of Ministers of the Environment, and modifying its composition.
- 29.** That we request to the Presidency of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of LAC to communicate to the Secretariat of Rio+20 and the Pro Tempore Presidency of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States the results of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of the Ministers of Environment LAC and the First Meeting of Ministers of Environment of CELAC.
- 30.** That we recognize the excellent work of the Minister of Environment and the Minister Coordinator of Heritage and thank the people and the Government of Ecuador for their hospitality, leadership and contribution to host the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the First Meeting of Ministers of Environment of the Latin American and the Caribbean Community of States, -CELAC.
- 31.** That we thank the United Nations Environment Programme for its support to the organisation of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Annex II Decisions

The Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Governments present at the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Quito, Ecuador, from 31 January to 3 February, 2012, taking into account the recommendations of the Preparatory Meeting of Experts and the deliberations of this Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, adopted the following decisions:

Decision 1 Governance of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

Recognizing the progress made in building a common regional vision and action, as well as highlighting the urgent need for improvements in the organization and functioning of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, to ensure their role as a regional forum for dialogue and effective presence in the political process and increase the integration and mainstreaming in public policies,

Reaffirming the regional consensus on the value of the Forum as an instrument of political coordination in Latin America and the Caribbean,

Noting the 2012 Caracas Action Plan of the Latin American and Caribbean Community of States (CELAC for its initials in Spanish), which indicates the formation of a working group to address environmental issues in the region highlight the need to coordinate efforts with the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to strengthen cooperation, promote the coordination and complementarity of public policy on environmental issues, as well as the creation and implementation of plans, regional plans, policies and common priority areas for sustainable development.

Considering the lessons and experiences related to the institutional development of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, accumulated over the last 30 years, and the exchange of views on the options presented in document UNEP / LAC-GWG -XVIII/4.

DECIDE

1. For the Forum of Ministers to provide for the creation of a working group, consisting of the board of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to strengthen cooperation, coordination and complementarity of public policy on environment, and for the generation and implementation of common regional policies and plans in priority

areas for sustainable development in order to develop a process in consultation with all countries of the region and in close coordination with the *troika* of CELAC.

2. To give priority to the political dialogue, in order for the region to have more elements to face emerging challenges of the global environmental agenda, in defence of the sovereignty over our natural heritage towards achieving sustainable development. The necessary measures are adopted to this end, to strengthen the presence of the Forum of Ministers in global environmental policy processes.

3. The proposed measures to strengthen the Forum of Ministers of Environment of LAC, referred to in the document UNEP/LAC-IGWG-XVIII/4 will be reviewed in consultation with member countries, by the Intersessional Committee of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, according to the results of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 2012 (Rio + 20).

4. To establish an additional mechanism of the Forum, the use of communication technologies available for dialogue and the adoption of agreements, facilitate the convening of virtual meetings, which would allow for timely and coherent attention to the agenda of sustainable regional development.

5. To report to Ministers of the Environment on the proposal for the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean to also be the First Meeting of Ministers of Environment of the CELAC.

Decision 2

Environmental Education for Sustainable Development

Considering the need to broaden and strengthen the mechanisms of operation of the Environmental Training Network, in particular for its contributions to the implementation of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC in Spanish) through a significant effort in environmental training and education, as well as in decision-making and allocation of resources;

Recognising the Latin American and Caribbean Programme for Environmental Education (PLACEA in Spanish) and the Andean Amazonian Communication and Environmental Education Plan (PANACEA in Spanish);

Taking into account the actions taken by various governments of the Region in the framework of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014, in particular the strengthening of environmental public policies and strategies in various countries of the Region;

Noting the Global Universities Partnership for Environment and Sustainability (GUPES) led by UNEP which aims to promote the integration of environmental and sustainability considerations in teaching, research, community participation and universities' management, as well as increase and improve student participation in activities aimed at sustainable development within and outside universities;

Taking note that it is imperative to build bridges between policy makers and environmental training and research centres to boost local environmental policies with the support of the academy;

Emphasising that, regarding virtual training means, more effort is needed for their development, outreach, establishment, and use in order to reach out to more social sectors and also to provide more varied forms of teaching, that are flexible and appropriate for the cultural characteristics of different social actors.

DECIDE

1. To continue and strengthen the activities of the Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean under the following criteria:

- a) To focus on the priority themes of the Latin American and Caribbean Strategy for Sustainable Development;
- b) To seek mutually complementary and mutual support among the activities of the ETN, PLACEA, PANACEA and the activities of the agencies of the Inter Agency Technical Committee of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment;
- c) To foster environmental education through virtual and face to face means and in different languages (Spanish, English, French, Portuguese), including at least one national language;
- d) To promote the integration of environmental subjects and focus on ecosystem management in University and technological institutes' research and teaching in different disciplines, and on knowledge management;
- e) To build alliances with sub-regional organizations, the private sector and community organizations to boost local environmental policies with the support of the academy;
- f) To continue participating and technically assisting the regional Congresses of Environmental Education organized by Latin America and Caribbean countries and to establish an evaluation and monitoring mechanism of commitments made by governments;
- g) To extend the financial trust fund of the Environmental Training Network and pursue payment of contributions by countries;
- h) To embrace once more the proposal for the "establishment of a Consultative Committee of Focal Points that will allow for a more continuous process of consultation and decision-making, including programming and dissemination of activities, and selection of candidates as beneficiaries of the Network's activities. This committee would include, at the same time, representatives of the Interagency Technical Committee of the Forum of Ministers and other agencies that collaborate in a concrete manner." The Committee would meet virtually with the support of electronic tools.

2. To request UNEP to continue supporting the countries, from a technical standpoint, in the implementation of PLACEA and PANACEA.

3. To request UNEP to promote active participation of the universities of the region in the Global University Partnership for Environment and Sustainability (GUPES), from the perspective of the priorities and needs of the region, with focus

around the three pillars of GUPES, namely, education, training and networking and also in initiative such as Mainstreaming Environment in Caribbean Universities (MESCA).

4. To strengthen or to create environmental education and citizenship participation units of the Ministries of Environment, to enable them to have the necessary human and financial resources to meet the objectives.

5. To promote South-South cooperation among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean as a tool for transferring knowledge, best practices and technical resources, among others.

6. To request UNEP to prepare a report on the activities undertaken and the resources used in environmental education in the region over the past three years to December 2011 in the framework of the Environmental Training Network and the level of resources currently available in the Financial Fund Trust. Similarly, to add an explanation of the criteria that, at the time, countries agreed to establish the level of countries' contributions to the Trust Fund. This report shall be distributed to countries no later than forty-five days as of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum.

Decision 3 **Regional Financial Strategy**

Recalling that in decision 16 of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), held in Santo Domingo in 2008, the Ministers decided to request the Interagency Technical Committee (ITC) and Forum Secretariat in coordination with the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, the development of a regional proposal to indicate patterns and actions needed to increase the flow of financial resources to support implementation at the national, subregional and regional level of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD);

Also recalling decision 8 of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), held in Panama City in April 2010, the Ministers decided to welcome the proposal for a Regional Financial Strategy (EFIR for its initials in Spanish) produced by the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, in consultation with the Interagency Technical Committee (ITC) and general guidelines for developing a process that promotes the mobilisation of financial resources to support effective implementation of the UNCCD in a synergistic approach;

Recalling that at the same meeting, the Ministers requested the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD and the Regional Coordination Unit of the UNCCD in consultation with the Regional Executive Committee of the UNCCD, with the support of the Secretariat of the Forum and the ITC, the developing a proposal for operationalisation of the EFIR, to be submitted to the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum, in line with the provisions of the UNCCD Ten-Year Strategy, that establishes financial means, methods of operation, necessary actions and institutional responsibilities;

Recognising that countries must strengthen their efforts to internalise the principles of shared responsibility to combat Land Degradation and Drought (DDTS for its initials in Spanish) and multilateral lending agencies have their own criteria and credit lines and procedures in allocating resources to countries, programs, projects and specific actions that they do not always respond to the policies and plans, and it is therefore desirable to define policies, strategies, actions and resources required to guide and collaborate with these agencies so that their contributions are to a greater extent and properly coordinated to be better utilized by the countries

Bearing in mind what was stated in the XVIII Meeting of the Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) on the importance of synergies between the funds and programs that are linked to Sustainable Land Management SLM issues and its positive impact in mitigating Climate Change;

Taking into account the high level session of the UN General Assembly on Desertification held in New York in 2011, where the international community expressed their concern of land degradation and that strongly recommended that countries work with initiatives related to Sustainable Land Management, also taking into account the approval of UN resolution A/C.2/66/L.72 on the promotion of international consensus as to reduce the excessive price volatility and speculation in commodity markets;

Welcoming the document "*Operational Strategy for the Integrated Financial Regional Strategy (EFIR) to Increase the Flow of Funds to Fight Desertification and Land Degradation in Latin America and the Caribbean*", which was requested by the Forum in Decision 8 of the Seventeenth Meeting in 2010, facilitated by the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD and the Regional Coordination Unit of the UNCCD in consultation with the members of the ITC, also requesting to take into account the comments and contributions submitted by delegations present at the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of LAC.

DECIDE:

- 1.** To request the UNCCD to continue the implementation process of the EFIR, to take the necessary measures to establish the Technical Management Secretariat for the implementation of the EFIR; and to seek the necessary financial contribution to implement the Multi-Agency Pre-Investment Fund for the operation of the Technical Management Secretariat of the EFIR;
- 2.** To recommend, to the UNCCD, in consultation with the ITC, the development of a work programme for the Technical Management Secretariat with a special attention to the Latin America and the Caribbean Dry lands and conduct the necessary consultations with potential host institutions for the EFIR; taking into account the synergies with climate change adaptation financing mechanisms, with special attention to triggering South – South cooperation processes.
- 3.** To also recommend to the UNCCD and ITC to present the results of these processes at the next meeting of the forum of Ministers, including the work

programme for the Technical Management Secretariat of the EFIR for the generation of additional investment proposals for the countries.

Decision 4
Atmospheric Pollution within the framework of the
Regional Intergovernmental Network

Recognising that atmospheric pollution continues to have a heavy toll in terms of damage to human health, eco-systems and crop yields across the LAC region;

Noting the agreements and conventions related to atmospheric pollution subscribed by the countries of the region and specifying that the present decision focuses on issues which are not covered by those agreements and conventions;

Reaffirming that controlling many of the atmospheric problems requires effective co-operation at the regional and sub-regional scales;

Also reaffirming that the current range of sub-regional initiatives on atmospheric pollution could benefit from a wider framework for regional co-operation and that cost-savings could accrue to all member states from co-operation in monitoring, assessment, emission reduction measures and research on atmospheric pollution;

Noting progress so far in understanding the range and diversity of the region's atmospheric problems from meetings of the Regional Intergovernmental Network on Atmospheric Pollution established by the Forum of Ministers;

Taking into account the Decisions on Atmospheric Pollution during the previous meetings of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment, the request to continue the work of the Regional Intergovernmental Network, and to develop an Action plan on Atmospheric Pollution to provide orientation to the work of the Network,

DECIDE:

1. To continue work on the elaboration of a Regional Action Plan which would provide orientation to the work of the Regional Intergovernmental network, where potential sources of funding are assessed, with the aim of presenting it to the Ministers at the next Meeting of the Forum for consideration of possible approval.

2. To participate in a collective exercise to assemble and review information and resources for monitoring and assessing atmospheric pollution impacts across the countries of the region, as an essential basis for developing the Action Plan, and to provide their inputs of priority subjects and abatement opportunities.

3. To strengthen initiatives targeting the promotion of public transport and non-motorised transport, the production and use of cleaner and more efficient vehicles and fuels.

4. To promote the strengthening of the institutional areas in each country, which are responsible for atmospheric pollution control and to maintain an active participation of these institutions in the regional activities related to this topic.

5. To build regional capacity for the generation of air quality information for national decision-making.

6. To strengthen the public-private dialogue and the role of all sectors involved in the promotion of commitments and actions oriented to reduction of atmospheric pollution for all the priority areas defined, within regional, sub-regional and national planning.

7. To ensure coordination of the initiatives promoted within the framework of the Regional Intergovernmental Network with the activities development in the context of other commitments and agreements assumed by the countries of the region on issues related to atmospheric contamination.

Decision 5 Environmental Indicators

Convinced that one of the most complex challenges that our international community faces is achieving sustainable development in harmony with nature

Reaffirming our commitment to the fight against poverty, the meeting advocates for sustainable development in harmony with nature, based on the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. In this context, we support the Declaration for Harmony with Nature, given the interdependent and complementary systematic interconnection between human beings and natural resources, and that we are united by a genetic code that is based on a sacred union of life in its multiple forms, and therefore, Humanity is part of the community of life, the conscience and intelligence of the Earth, and it advocates for social, ecological, ethic, and moral justice of a new global economic regime;

Recognising the contribution of the indicators of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) to the capacity of the countries to measure their achievements and advancements in social, economic and environmental development, parallel with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), especially MDG 7, which permits the effective application of national development plans;

Recognising that the matrix of indicators of the Working Group for Environmental Indicators requires updating and improvements taking into consideration the reality of peoples and nations in the framework of their visions and sovereignty, adjusting for the framework of Agenda 21.

Recognising the efforts of many countries in the region to systemize environmental information through the creation of entities, inter-institutional coordination and methodological development and the incorporation of technology;

Taking note of the necessity to increase even further the availability, access, regional harmonisation and coordination of environmental data and information for decision making in matters of sustainable development, as well as the periodic updating and monitoring of this data and information;

Understanding the special contribution of geo-referenced and Earth Observation System data for the development and the dissemination of information and environmental indicators;

Underlining the necessity to increase efforts at a regional level, so that all countries have an integrated national system for statistics and environmental indicators, including the Small Developing Island Nations of the Caribbean;

Reaffirming the commitment of the countries in the region to harmonize the methodologies used for the gathering of statistics and environmental indicators under the framework of the Forum;

Taking note of the necessity to have a periodical review of the relevance of the indicators for the regional and sub-regional priorities, and in a coherent manner align the objectives of the ILAC with the concrete objectives of the indicators within them;

Taking into account the inter-institutional cooperation between UNEP and ECLAC, whose main objectives are to strengthen and develop national technical capacities, helping to improve the production and quality of environmental statistics in the country, and promote the dissemination and use of environmental information for the strengthening of decision making and evaluations;

DECIDE:

1. To adopt the recommendations of the Working Group on Environmental Indicators (WGEI resulting from the meeting held the 11 and 12 of October of 2011 in Mexico city;

2. To express satisfaction with the work performed by the WGEI and **support** its continuation, promoting attention to the strengthening of the indicators related with the environmental, social and economic pillars of the ILAC;

3. To accept the action plan of the WGEI in order to continue with the methodological development of environmental indicators harmonised at the regional level, and their adoption by the countries in the region;

4. To analyse, update, modify and reformulate the structure and content of the matrix of indicators in their thematic areas, 24 goals and 38 specific objectives, in accordance with Annex 3 of the document UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XVIII/5.Rev.1;

5. To agree that said process must be guided by a focus on integrated and sustainable development, contemplating the reduction of poverty, food security and sovereignty and harmony with nature, taking into account, among other things, the socio-cultural visions of indigenous peoples and local communities.

6. To build and implement these indicators while respecting the sovereign vision of the development models and paradigms of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

7. To urge the governments to dedicate more human and financial resources to the generation of relevant information for the development of policies to achieve environmental sustainability; strengthening the generation of environmental

information and the creation of offices for environmental statistics in the Ministries of the Environment and other relevant public entities in the region, in agreement with national policies.

8. To promote horizontal and triangular cooperation between countries of the region with the purpose of promoting the development of capabilities and replicate the best practices in the generation of information and management;

9. To promote inter-institutional coordination, the systematisation of the monitoring of the ILAC indicators and capacity building among ministries, geo-spatial and statistical agencies, universities and other relevant institutions, with the purpose of using resources efficiently, avoiding the duplication of efforts and the integration of environmental information as a fundamental element for the development of policies; as well as the strengthening of processes for establishing the national indicators within the framework of the ILAC, at the national and regional level.

10. To promote, in coordination with the "Work Group for Environmental Statistics of the Statistics of the Americas Conference", the creation of capabilities focused on the basic data and indicators to support the processes of evaluation of the state of the environment, through the use of virtual tools, forums and on-line educational seminars.

11. To leverage on WGEI experience on the measurement of sustainable development objectives for developing a regional position to the next "United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development" and the implementation of the initiatives arising from Rio +20;

12. To promote, within the region, in countries and in international forums, the use of ILAC indicators to complement the MDG indicators, to ensure proper measurement of environmental variables, in particular MDG Goal 7, and Sustainable Development Goals that could be approved at Rio +20;

13. To promote the organization of a workshop previous to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be the space in which countries can present and discuss their views and proposals for sustainable development towards the Rio +20 process.

14. To continue supporting the development of integrated environmental assessments (IEA) at regional, sub-regional, national and ecosystem levels, reflecting both the specific areas of environmental priority of the ILAC as well as the identification of data gaps on various topics;

15. To continue to support UNEP's work on Global Environment Outlooks and capacity building for developing countries as a component of the evaluation process, to enhance the construction and application of sustainable development indicators.

16. To request the Inter-Agency Technical Committee, in accordance with their respective mandates, and other regional and sub-regional organisations, to cooperate with the Working Group on Environmental Indicators of the Forum of Ministers of Environment for the strengthening and consolidation of environmental indicators, geo-spatial information and Earth observation systems.

Decision 6 **Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)**

Considering the call of Agenda 21 for action to change unsustainable patterns of consumption and production;

Recognising that the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 identified Sustainable Consumption and Production as an overarching objective of an essential requirement for sustainable development; and called on all stakeholders to *"Encourage and promote the development of a 10-year framework of programmes in support of regional and national initiatives to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production to promote social and economic development within the carrying capacity of ecosystems."*;

Considering the sustainable consumption and production plans and programmes promoted by the countries of the region to achieve progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of Agenda 21;

Considering that sustainable consumption and production is an important tool for mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and to contribute to the reduction of desertification and the conservation of biodiversity;

Recognising the high potential and leadership that the countries of the region have in adopting more sustainable consumption and production patterns, the work of the Council of Government Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in Latin America and the Caribbean as an instance to come to agreement, and to exchange experiences and information on the subject, the results of the previous Regional Meetings of Experts on SCP, and the Decisions on SCP adopted by the Forum of Ministers in its sessions;

Recalling that the priority areas identified by the Forum of Ministers in its Decision 5 in 2010 to focus efforts on common SCP issues in the region are: 1) policies and national action plans on SCP, 2) SCP implementation in Small and Medium Enterprises, 3) sustainable public procurement, 4) sustainable lifestyles;

Recognising the efforts from the United Nations Environment Programme, together with the Andean Development Corporation (CAF) - Development Bank for Latin America, which, following up in the process of implementation of the Regional SCP Strategy and encouraging the continued discussion on the 10 Years Framework of Programmes on SCP, conducted the Sixth Meeting of Government Experts on SCP in Latin America and the Caribbean, "Regional Meeting on Sustainable Consumption and Production and its contribution to Resource Efficiency" in Panama City, Panama, the 24 and 25 of November of 2011;

Recognising the significant participation and valuable contributions made at the Sixth Meeting of Government Experts on SCP by representatives of various Governmental institutions, Sub-regional Organizations, Non Governmental Organizations, the Cleaner Production Centres, academia, business sector, experts in the field, and cooperation agencies and from the United Nations System;

DECIDE:

- 1. To promote** the adoption of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), based on the final text approved during the 19th session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-19).
- 2. To reaffirm** the priority areas, that are common to the countries in the region, recognizing the significant progress achieved in the implementation of activities in each one of them and, at the same time, highlighting the need of additional support to implement, replicate and disseminate successful experiences at national and regional level.
- 3. To mainstream** SCP objectives into the design and implementation of State policies.
- 4. To integrate,** in national development plans, actions that promote and strengthen SCP.
- 5. To urge** inclusive participation of the different social sectors in the formulation, capacity building and implementation of SCP policies, action plans or strategies and foster SCP strategies in all development sectors, according to the national priorities of each country in the region.
- 6. To guarantee** the allocation of national resources, in addition to external financial support, for SCP implementation.
- 7. To internalise** social and environmental costs and opportunities in the formulation of public policies.
- 7. alt. To include** the internalisation of costs produced by environmental and social impacts in public policies.
- 8. To take advantage** of local and national capacities and potential to generate regional synergy with the objective of achieving greater opportunities of supply and demand of sustainable goods and services which contribute to the promotion of SCP patterns.
- 9. To promote** the life cycle approach as an instrument to identify sustainability criteria, as well as transparent information in regards to sustainability attributes and characteristics.
- 10. To support** research, innovation and technological development, with the intention of increasing resource efficiency.
- 11. To ask** for the ratification of the Executive Committee members for the Regional Council of SCP Government Experts for the 2011 – 2013 period.
- 12. To include** the topic of Sustainable Consumption and Production and chapter III of the Implementation Plan of Johannesburg in the agenda for the Nineteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment.
- 13. To recognize** that SCP implementation contribute to the efficient use of natural resources.

Decision 7

Chemicals, Hazardous Wastes and Other Wastes

Aware of the serious adverse effects on human health and the environment that can be derived from the unsound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes;

Considering that the lack of suitable information about the trade, supply chains, and content of hazardous chemicals in products, the levels of harmful substances in the environment, the lack of updated national profiles on chemical substances, as well as inventories of hazardous wastes and polluted sites, and the limited access to hazardous waste treatment technologies, hampers the design of effective policies to reduce exposure risk to the people and the environment;

Highlighting the relevance of the outcomes and decisions adopted at the Conferences of the Parties of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (ODS), as well as the work under Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management;

Acknowledging with gratitude the efforts and leadership played by the Government of Colombia within the framework of the 10th Conference of the Parties of the Basel Convention, which were undoubtedly decisive to achieve historical results, including the adoption measures to strengthen the implementation of the Convention, and the Cartagena Declaration, which provides the Convention of the strength and necessary instruments to move forward in the minimisation, control, and sound management of hazardous wastes and other wastes at international level;

Highlighting the progress of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury, as well as the active participation of the countries of the region during intersessional periods, and highlighting that the next meeting of the INC will be held in the region (Punta del Este, Uruguay, June 2012);

Acknowledging the role as facilitator and the support provided by UNEP to the countries of the region in the preparation and organization of regional meetings on chemicals and wastes, that contributed to the identification of key issues for the region as well as to the adoption of common positions;

Recalling that all the countries in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean are parties to the Montreal Protocol and therefore must comply with the established timetable for the elimination of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS);

Reaffirming the need to increase the technical capacity of the countries of the region, and acknowledging the work developed by the regional centres of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions, as well as the support provided by their hosting countries;

Reiterating the importance of mobilising the necessary financial resources to strengthen global, regional and national efforts, in order to comply with international instruments related to chemicals and hazardous wastes and other wastes;

DECIDE:

- 1. To reaffirm** the willingness to establish effective policies and to apply the measures needed to ensure the environmental sound management of chemicals and wastes, fostering collaboration of public and private actors, considering the differentiated possibilities of each country and the need of an effective transfer of resources and technology;
- 2. To request** UNEP and other ITC agencies, in accordance with their respective mandates, to continue to provide technical support to the countries, including the development of inventories and profiles of hazardous chemicals and wastes; the strengthening of monitoring capacities; and the design of suitable plans and policies.
- 3. To promote** the effective implementation at national, regional and global levels, of the decisions on cooperation and coordination between the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions, in order to facilitate its application and to ensure the rational use of resources.
- 4. To encourage** those countries that have not yet done so to ratify the Ban Amendment to the Basel Convention in accordance with the decisions adopted at the 10th Conference of the Parties of the Basel Convention.
- 5. To maintain and strengthen** the active and coordinated participation of the countries of the region within the framework of intergovernmental negotiations to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury, so that this instrument ensures a balance between the obligations and the provision of means of implementation, and include an effective and long-term financial mechanism to support the countries of the region in the achievement of the objectives of the future instrument.
- 6. To request** UNEP and other agencies to continue providing technical support to the region in the negotiations on mercury, as well as for the development of related projects within the framework of the Global Mercury Partnership, and to express the interest to continue regional consultations during the intersessional periods with the support of donors.
- 7. To welcome** the results and constructive discussions to date within the framework of the Consultative Process on Financing Options for Chemical Substances and Waste, and to express interest in continuing to participate actively in this process, in order to promote an integrated approach to long-term financing contributing to the effective implementation of international instruments.
- 8. To highlight** the importance of the Quick Start Programme (QSP), within the framework of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, as an alternative for accessing financial resources.

9. To encourage those countries that have not yet done so to ratify the amendments of the Montreal Protocol, and to maintain a high level of participation in the negotiations of the Multilateral Fund (MLF) for the Montreal Protocol in order to ensure proper funding for the needs of the countries of the region;

10. To invite UNEP and the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention to continue their support to the regional and subregional centres in Latin America and the Caribbean, to facilitate the fulfilment of its objectives and functions in the field of capacity building and technology transfer.

11. To increase efforts and establish regional mechanisms to prevent and control illegal traffic of hazardous wastes, ODS and chemical substances.

12. To promote the development and implementation of policies, programmes and projects for the integrated management of hazardous wastes and other wastes, including electrical and electronic waste, considering the principle of the "3 Rs" (reduce, reuse, recycle), and in line with the Cartagena Declaration from the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention;

13. To welcome the initiative of UNEP and other agencies to establish a Global Partnership on Waste Management, including the creation of an Information Platform, and to express interest in participating in the assessment of the needs on capacity building, so that priorities of the countries of the region are taken into account.

14. To promote the cooperation and exchange of information between the countries of the region in relation to policies and best practices for the management of chemicals and wastes, in particular as regards to substances of recent inclusion in the different Conventions.

15. To request UNEP to transmit this decision to the Secretariats of the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions, as well as to the Montreal Protocol Secretariat and other relevant bodies.

Decision 8

Landlocked Countries

Emphasising that there are regions in Latin America and the Caribbean that, due to their weather, geographic characteristics and/or biological diversity, are especially vulnerable, as considered in paragraph 18 of the preamble in the text of the Framework Convention on Climate Change of the United Nations.

Considering that the Great American Chaco is approximately 1,14 million km² wide and covers from the farthest areas of the Andean Cordillera in Argentina and Bolivia to the basins of the Paraguay and Paraná rivers in Brazilian and Paraguayan lands. And from north to south from the Izozog in Bolivian lands to Salinas Grandes in Argentina. The region of the Chaco plays a fundamental role in maintaining climate, hydrological, and ecological dynamics in South America. The Chaco registers the highest temperatures at continental level and constitutes the second region with largest forest cover in South America and is characterised by its great rivers and water bodies with high biological and cultural diversity.

Considering that the Amazonia is a region of approximately 6 million km² and that it represents more than half of the tropical rainforests in the world, it constitutes part of the environmental balance of the planet. This region is known as having the most biodiversity in the world housing half of the world's animal species. Despite the importance of this region to the world, it is suffering an accelerated process of habitat reduction, fragmentation, and ecosystem transformation.

DECIDE

1. To recognise that there are regions especially vulnerable to environmental impacts such as the Gran American Chaco, the Amazonia and coastal zones.

2. To invite countries in the region and international organisations to support the fight against climate change, desertification, and deforestation.

3. To recognise that certain conditions such as being landlocked exacerbate the vulnerability of the countries to diverse impacts.

Decision 9 Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Recalling Decision 4 of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers held in Panama in 2003 establishing the Caribbean SIDS Programme,

Further recalling Decision 9 of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers held in Panama in 2010 on Small Island Developing States,

Acknowledging the contribution made by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in formulating the Caribbean SIDS Programme

Noting that a number of successful initiatives have been undertaken within the context of the Caribbean SIDS Programme, including, inter alia, the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management (PISLM); the Caribbean Biological Corridor (CBC), the Change for a Better Environment Project and that Caribbean small Island Developing states have participated in various projects and plans under the Regional Action Plan;

Further noting that since the commencement of the UNEP Medium Term Strategy 2010-2013 (MTS), there is no specific focus on SIDS

Taking into account challenges that have proven to be new and emerging issues for Caribbean SIDS including: non-communicable diseases, energy security, ecosystem services especially those pertaining to REDD+, marine ecosystems including blue carbon as well as the issue of volatile food markets on food prices and security as noted in UN General Assembly Resolution A/C.2/66/L.72

Decides

1. To call for 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 56/165 of 21 January 2011, urging that timely action be taken for the effective implementation of and follow-up to the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing

States, including the further development and operationalisation of concrete projects and programmes; agenda 21

2. To call for urgent and full implementation of Decision 9 of the 17th Meeting of the Forum

3. That any framework which evolves under the theme “Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development” must be designed in a manner so as to provide a clear institutional mechanism, to address, in a concrete and focused manner, the sustainable development of the most vulnerable countries (i.e. SIDS and LDCs), at the global and regional levels. Such a mechanism must provide, inter alia, a context for enhanced UN coherence; the facilitation of adequate and predictable financial resources to facilitate transition to sustainable green economies, given the financial gap which exists on most of these countries as well as commitment to capacity development and technology transfer, underpinned by sound science.

Decision 10 **Central American and Caribbean Countries**

Welcoming the agreement reached by the 3rd Summit of the Head of States and Government of the Central American Integration System (SICA for its initials in Spanish) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), held in San Salvador in August 2011 as a further step to regional integration on issues of common interest;

Recognising the high vulnerability of both sub-regions;

Acknowledging the interest to intensify efforts and improve collaboration for the definition of common positions in international fora and negotiations, and particularly to promote a common position on Green Economy and on an effective and efficient institutional framework for sustainable development and poverty eradication;

Further acknowledging the contribution made by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to the Caribbean and the support given to the Central American countries in the promotion of the sustainable development agenda;

DECIDE

1. To support the implementation of the Joint Declaration of the 3rd Summit of the Head of States and Government of the Central American Integration System (SICA) and the Caribbean Community, held in San Salvador in August 2011 through:

- a. Strengthening cooperation at the multilateral level within the framework of the preparatory process of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20 to be held in Brazil in 2012 with the objective of providing an assessment of the principles of the Earth Summit Declaration of 1992,
- b. Fostering a discussion and profound analysis on green economy, including the principles of sustainable development, poverty eradication, and

- c. Establishing an efficient and effective institutional framework in both sub-regions

Decision 11

Gratitude to the People and Government of Ecuador

To express deep gratitude and recognition to the People and Government of Ecuador for the generous hospitality provided for the successful delivery of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean held in Quito, Ecuador from 31 January to 3 February 2012, and the First Meeting of the Ministers of Environment of the Latin American and Caribbean Community of States held on 3 February 2012.

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Annex III

Bolivia's contribution to the discussion relating to Agenda item 6: United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), including the Evaluation, strengthening and governance of the Forum of Ministers of Environment

VISION OF DEVELOPMENT

- The vision of development should be based on rights and not on the market, based on full attainment of happiness of the people, towns and population, through the integrated fulfilment of the rights of the towns, the people, the nations and mother earth, in a complementary, inclusive and interdependent manner.
- Sustainable Development should be based on the complementarity of the following rights:
 - Rights of the people and States to development,
 - Rights of poor populations to overcome poverty,
 - Rights of the Mother Earth;
 - Full rights of the indigenous peoples.
- These rights must be exercised in an integrated, interdependent, complementary manner and in a mutually supportive way. This is to say, one right cannot be exercised without the others. One right may not be above the others. These are interdependent rights, whose complete consolidation requires complementary interaction among them.

SOVEREIGNTY

There is no possibility for sustainable development without sovereignty of the people, without the strength of the states to determine their future with the full, transparent and ethical expression of the feeling of their people in their politics and national plans. The first institutional condition for sustainable development is the existence of sovereign capacities to define, plan and execute policies that effectively express the feeling of the people.

NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER

- A new international economic order based on principles of equity, national sovereignty, common interests, harmony with nature, cooperation and solidarity between the States and the people must be configured. This new order must be oriented towards the change in production and

consumption models that are not sustainable, to substantially reduce the gap between rich and poor and between the developed and developing countries.

- It is essential to build new legal and institutional frameworks at the national and international level, in particular in the developed countries in order to have improved regulation and monitoring of the financial sector. The new global, regional and national financial architecture and system must have the following characteristics:

- It should be oriented towards development and not earnings or profits,
- It should be oriented towards eradicating poverty and not to generating more for the rich.
- It should be transparent.
- It should be aligned and harmonised with the sovereign decision of the people and states.
- It should evaluate and execute integral policies with a vision towards the development of rights and not with a vision towards productive commerce.
- It should commit to specific results in reducing the gap between rich and poor.
- It should develop effective efforts to eliminate social exclusion and inequality
- It should promote the full exercise of the rights of mother earth, the right of states to develop, the right of the poor to come out of poverty and the rights of indigenous populations.

ERADICATION OF POVERTY

- The gap between the rich and the poor populations must be drastically reduced allowing the poor to have access to the means, resources and adequate health conditions, housing, education, drinking water, sanitation, communication and energy, among others.
- Adequate means should be created to distribute the wealth generated by our natural resources, the richness generated cannot make the rich richer, we must capture the income from the most prosperous economic and productive activities through taxes and other fiscal measures and distribute them among the population, socializing the riches through adequate means that permit the eradication of poverty, investing these benefits in assignments for education, health, production and to strengthen family economies.

FOOD SECURITY

We affirm that the main challenge for sustainable development in the future is for each country to achieve food security as a dimension to the eradication of poverty as an integral part of the international agenda for development.

It is necessary to advance with an integrated and coordinated focus for food in the framework of "Eat Good to Live Good", which consists in guaranteeing that all countries have capacities, conditions and equality to guarantee the production, access and consumption of adequate food and the means to obtain food in the framework of food sovereignty, respecting the cultural visions of their people, driving the economy of preferably small indigenous of origin and peasant family community producers, in a sustainable, agro-ecological manner in harmony with Mother Earth.

Annex IV

- **Ordinary Meeting of the Ministers of the Environment of MERCOSUR and Chile as an Associate Member (November 2011)**

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE PREPARATORY PROCESS FOR THE RIO+20 SUMMIT

Committed to the success of the Rio+20 Conference with the objective of promoting sustainable development focused on the elimination of poverty.

Taking into account the strengthening of multilateralism and reinforcing South-South cooperation and the ratification of the commitment with the continental integration process as expressed in the MERCOSUR and the UNASUR.

Taking into account the strengthening of the democratic processes and the process of participation.

Looking forward to the contributions that Rio+20 makes to reduce the deficits in the implementation of the commitments assumed at the time at Rio 92 to date, in matters of sustainable development.

With the objective of contributing to an effective participation of the region in the preparatory process of Rio+20, the Ministers of the Environment of MERCOSUR Member States and Chile as an Associate Member take the following guidelines into consideration:

- 1. To address the three pillars of sustainable development: economic growth, social development and environmental protection in a balanced, global, interdependent manner with solidarity.*
- 2. To eradicate poverty and assure social inclusion as essential objectives to obtain sustainable development.*
- 3. To reaffirm the full validity and no negotiability of the commitments assumed in the Declaration of Rio, as well as the results of the key objectives of sustainable development.*
- 4. To assure the fulfilment of the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, the sovereign right of Nations over their natural resources and food self-sufficiency.*
- 5. To avoid "measures of green protectionism" that represent hidden restrictions for the market, particularly against exports of developing countries.*
- 6. To create multilateral international financial frameworks that guarantee the supply of adequate, predictable, additional and sustainable new financial resources to support developing countries in the implementation of their activities supporting sustainable development.*
- 7. To recall the historic commitment from developed countries to dedicate 0.7% of their GDP to official assistance for sustainable development.*

8. *To comply with the commitments for change towards sustainable production and consumption models, guaranteeing the developing countries the transfer and access to technology to developing countries and assuring that property rights support and do not hinder these objectives, within the framework of common but differentiated responsibilities.*

"GREEN ECONOMY"

9. *To consider that the "green economy" should not substitute the concept and principles of sustainable development.*
10. *To understand "green economy" as a programme for sustainable development-a set of initiatives, policies, tools and concrete projects-that contribute to the transformation of economies, eradication of poverty, social inclusion and that does not represent an obstacle for commerce.*
11. *To reaffirm that "green economy" should not become a market tool that privileges commercial aspects of advanced technology over the search for solutions that are adapted to the diverse realities of developing countries.*

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK (GOVERNANCE)

12. *To strengthen already established organisations, organising the different structures of the United Nations so that they relate efficiently and act coherently, in coordination and in cooperation, without forcing their agendas, functions and similar programs.*
13. *To strengthen the ECOSOC as a central forum for the discussion of sustainable development, treating the environmental, economic and social dimensions with equal importance, as well as the national and regional bodies.*

EMERGING MATTERS

14. *To ensure that the Rio+20 results indicate a concrete short and long term future agenda, adequately providing for the needs of developing countries, who live in a world with growing population and need for access to essential social services as water, health, education, energy and sanitation, among others.*
15. *Recognise the need for further progress on initiatives already developed by the countries of MERCOSUR, which may contribute to the implementation of the sustainable development agenda, such as solid waste management, sustainable consumption and production, cleaner production, recycling, and so on, looking for synergies and working together with initiatives that can serve as examples for the region as inspiration for other parts of the world.*

ADDENDUM

To document

**REGULAR MEETING OF MINISTERS OF ENVIRONMENT AND CHILE
MERCOSUR as an associate member**

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RIO+20 PREPARATORY SUMMIT

"Green Economy" (1)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

That Rio+20 reaches a renewed commitment to sustainability with measurable parameters, taking into account the environmental, social and economic dimensions. To do this, we consider it necessary to agree on a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), similar to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

These SDGs should be translated into action and specific targets to focus the discussion on the interests of the region on a broader and more comprehensive way. We propose that both in the preparatory process and in that resulting from Rio+20, key issues are included to measure progress in terms of sustainable development at regional level.

To agree on a short list of key objectives for the Rio+20 preparatory processes. The result for the Rio Conference will consist of two elements. The first, establish an identification/details of the sustainable development goals, which are prioritized, with their goals and deadlines duly developed. The second element will be a mandate for the compatibility between the Sustainable Development Goals and the Millennium Development Goals, if necessary.

The coordinated and convergent management of both processes, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Millennium Development Goals, will make it possible to reflect national realities, their differences and priorities at national levels. These may be a useful tool to guide public policies of the States. In addition, the SDGs can play an important role in identifying gaps and needs in countries (e.g., in terms of means of implementation, institutional strengthening and increase in the capacity of reception of new technologies). The Sustainable Development Goals internationally defined as the Millennium Goals will be used to compare results and identify opportunities for cooperation, including South-South.

Member States of MERCOSUR and their associates propose the following topics:

- *Food, water, energy and climate security*

Sustainable consumption and production, with focus on the role of women;

- *Sustainable Cities;*

(1) *The term "green economy" has been quoted since there isn't a consensus with the scope and content it expresses. Likewise it is not the Spanish translation of the document adopted at the UN General Assembly in October 2010. Thus, we understand that instead of furthering the discussion about its definition it is necessary for each country to define what its main objectives and goals of sustainable development are and how they would be achieved. That is why we propose in its place the SDG.*

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Annex V List of Participants

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