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**Review of Experiences:  
Modalities for Dialogue and  
Implementation of the  
Forum of Ministers of the Environment of  
Latin America and the Caribbean**

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## Abbreviations

CAAAM	Andean Committee of Environmental Authorities
CALC	Summit of Latin America and the Caribbean on Integration and Development
CAN	Andean Community of Nations
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
COTED	Council for Trade and Economic Development
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FME	Forum of Ministers of the Environment
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group Forum of Ministers of the Environment
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IEA	Integrated Environmental Assessment
ILAC	Latin America and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development
ITC	Inter-Agency Technical Committee
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PANACEA	Andean-Amazonian Plan for Communication and Environmental Education
PLACEA	Latin American and Caribbean Programme on Environmental Education
ROLAC	Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SICA	Central American Integration System
SIDS	Small Island Developing State
SIREA	Regional Environmental Statistics System for Latin America and the Caribbean
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

## **Executive summary**

- 1.** This document presents a review of the experiences of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and its instruments. The reflection contained herein is based on the findings of a review of documentation on the Forum, as well as on consultations with ministers of the environment of the Region, other representatives of participating governments and the staff of organisations that make up the Interagency Technical Committee (ITC), regarding the Forum's potential new orientation and tools.
- 2.** The document aims to enrich the discussion that will take place during the Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 3.** This review exercise contains, firstly, a brief analysis of the current situation of the Forum, followed by proposals to increase the Forum's relevance to and impact on the environmental and development agenda at the national, regional and global levels. This discussion is followed by an examination of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) as an instrument for political dialogue and cooperation, along with a number of preliminary ideas for its future positioning. In addition, some comments on the Regional Action Plan are also presented. Based on the region's experiences with these instruments, some options for future activities of the Forum are presented.
- 4.** As a complement to these reflections, this document discusses the ITC's role in the context of the changing regional dynamics and the future outlook of the Forum, making specific recommendations for the type of support the Committee could provide in future, taking into account that each agency has a defined mandate and an established decision-making body.
- 5.** The proposals arising from the exercise are therefore based on the idea that new perspectives for the operation of the Forum are required. These should maintain a balance between dialogue and action, at the national, subregional and regional levels, and should be rooted in discussions on emerging issues and decisions which materialise into work programmes that deliver results for the region.
- 6.** The idea of reorienting the Forum and placing greater emphasis on emerging issues that affect the work of the region's Ministries of the Environment has been a recurring idea arising from the consultations that have been carried out to date. Overall, the findings of the review suggest that, in order to remain relevant, the Forum must renew its linkages with global processes and influence national ones. A key question in this regard is how it can more effectively position itself as a space for dialogue and/or consensus-building within the region, as well as for the promotion of regional cooperation and cooperation with other regions.
- 7.** Another important aspect of the reflection on how to maintain the relevance of the Forum is the renewal of its commitment to delivering results. From the point of view of the implementation of its decisions, the paramount challenge and the main question is how to ensure that the joint commitments made on environmental sustainability and sustainable development, and reflected in Forum mechanisms are included in the national programmes of the governments of the region and are

supported by the international cooperation agencies, as well as the financing requests and work programmes formulated at the national level and agreed with international cooperation agencies and multilateral banks.

## **Introduction**

**8.** This document presents a review of the experiences of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (FME) and its instruments. The reflection contained herein is based on the findings of a review of documentation on the operation of the Forum and its decisions, as well as on consultations with ministers of the environment of the Region, other representatives of participating governments and the staff of organisations that make up the Interagency Technical Committee (ITC), regarding the Forum's orientation and instruments.

**9.** The assessment exercise that led to this reflection is rooted in the efforts undertaken by the FME and the ITC in recent years, with a view to shaping and promoting the evolution of the Forum and its instruments, aiming to make them more responsive to the priorities of the countries, orient them toward the facilitation of high-level political dialogue on the environmental challenges faced by the region and ultimately increase the impact of the Forum on the development agenda at all levels; global, regional and national. This deliberation is, in turn, inspired by the Region's changing political, economic and institutional trends as well as by the effects of these transformations on the capacities and needs of the Forum's members.

**10.** Thus, as the Forum enters its third decade of work, the question arises as to how it can provide greater benefits to its Member States and increase the Region's impact on the environmental and development agenda. Also canvassed is a discussion of strategies for orienting the support and activities of the ITC towards an outlook more attuned to addressing the emerging needs of countries and to allowing them to fulfil their role of supporting the Forum in addressing cutting-edge issues.

**11.** Eight years after the adoption of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), and in light of the upcoming Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in June 2012, known as Rio+20, there is also an opportunity to engage in a dialogue on how to utilize the lessons learned from the implementation and results of ILAC in the new phase of activities, in line with the renewal of commitments related to the 2002 Summit on Sustainable Development, including the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, of which ILAC is an integral part.

**12.** This document aims to enrich the discussion that will take place within the framework of the 18th Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held from January 31 to February 3, 2012

## **Context**

### **The Forum of Ministers and its instruments**

**13.** The Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean was established in 1985, as a result of intergovernmental consultations held regularly by the highest environmental authorities in Latin America and the Caribbean. In the seventeen meetings held thus far, the Forum has emerged as the Region's most representative intergovernmental high-level political gathering on environmental matters, reaching a broad consensus on policies and responses at the regional level (UNEP ROLAC, 2011).

**14.** From the outset, the Forum has been held up as a space with great potential to contribute to the process of closing the gaps between regional and global environmental agendas (UNEP ROLAC, 2011). Over time, the Forum's importance as a platform for dialogue that makes it possible to enhance the participation of the countries of Latin America and Caribbean in international conferences and other multilateral agreements has also been increasingly highlighted (see Annex 1 for more information on the functions of the Forum of Ministers).

**15.** The work of the Forum is supported by the ITC, whose main functions are (i) to offer technical and operational guidance, and (ii) to facilitate the mobilisation of funding for the implementation of the Forum's regional agenda (see Annex 2 for more information on the ITC and its mandate). The ITC is currently composed of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). UNEP acts as the coordinating agency of the ITC and Secretariat of the Forum.

**16.** Adopted in 2002, the ILAC is currently the main tool of the Forum of Ministers in the search for responses to environmental challenges faced by the region. The ILAC provides a framework of priority areas and specific activities aimed at integrating the environment perspective approach in the social, economic and institutional sectors (see Annex 3: Summary of ILAC). The Initiative is therefore made up of guiding regional targets and indicative actions in key areas of environmental management and sustainable development. ILAC's implementation mechanisms are primarily regional programmes and projects that:

- Are consistent with countries' specific characteristics;
- Promote fulfilment of the agreements of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992;
- Further the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (2002), of which ILAC is an integral part, as well as the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

**17.** With the support of the ITC, the ILAC is implemented by the activities of respective governments, through:

- The Regional Action Plan (RAP): a biennial-cycle logical matrix primarily based on the priority lines of ILAC, which establishes regional priorities,



strategies, lines of action, projects, agencies involved and resources, among other elements.

- Working groups: groups composed of member countries of the Forum. They meet under the coordination of a country so as to delineate certain facets of the RAP.

## **Objectives and Scope**

**18.** The review of experiences has the following specific objectives, in relation to which the present document provides preliminary recommendations:

- To propose strategies for increasing the impact of the Forum of Ministers on the environmental and development agenda at all levels (national, subregional, regional and international);
- To prepare a brief assessment of ILAC from the standpoint of its implementation and outcomes, with a view to drawing lessons learned;
- To submit proposals for the design of a potential new phase of ILAC, based on the assessment conducted as well as comments received through interviews and surveys;
- To prepare proposals on the possible role of the ITC in the potential new phase of ILAC and on the future format of the Forum, taking into account that each ITC agency has a defined mandate and an established decision-making mechanism;
- To formulate proposals on the potential role of the ITC in promoting dialogue between environmental and other ministries, in order to contribute to strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development by bolstering the environmental pillar and increasing its integration.

**19.** The exercise consisted of reviewing documents related to the Forum of Ministers and its instruments, such as previous evaluation reports, reports on the implementation of the RAP prepared every two years and reports and other outputs of the meetings of the Forum and its bodies. ILAC and the Forum's connection to national priorities was studied through a mapping of the web pages of the region's national ministries, secretariats and entities that focus on the environment, in order to determine the degree to which the issues addressed in national policies and instruments are consistent with those covered by ILAC. The examination of these documents was complemented with telephone surveys and interviews with ministers of the environment of the Region, other representatives of participating governments and the staff of organisations that make up the ITC (see Annex 4: Questionnaire used for the consultations).

**20.** This review exercise contains, firstly, a brief analysis of the current situation of the Forum, followed by proposals to raise the Forum's relevance and impact regarding the environmental and development agenda at the national, regional and global levels.

**21.** This discussion is followed by an examination of ILAC as an instrument that guides the implementation of activities at the national level, with cooperation as its cornerstone. The discussion is accompanied by a preliminary list of ideas for the future positioning of the ILAC. In addition, some comments on the Regional Action

Plan are also presented. Based on the Region's experiences with these instruments, some options for future activities of the Forum are presented.

**22.** As a complement to these reflections, this document discusses the role of the ITC in the context of the changing regional dynamics and the future outlook of the Forum, making specific recommendations the kind of support that the Committee could provide in future.

**23.** Lastly, the main points of the discussion and analysis are summarised in a concise list of recommendations.

### **Analysis of the current situation of the Forum of Ministers**

**24.** During its long history, the FME has stood out for its achievements in channelling regional efforts towards agreements and activities that have contributed significantly to progress on the issue of the environment and sustainable development in the Region, most notably through the adoption of ILAC and the formulation of regional targets for advancing towards sustainability as well as devising a monitoring-indicator system (UNEP ROLAC, 2011).

**25.** In recent years, the Region has advanced in implementing ILAC and developed valuable experiences to ensure that the RAP serves as an instrument for focusing on regional priorities, advancing towards environmental sustainability as set forth in MDG 7, and implementing the Bali Strategic Plan (UNEP, 2001).

**26.** As the Forum prepares to begin its third decade of work, its bodies have undertaken a process of dialogue on the challenges faced by the Forum in its efforts to promote sustainable development.

**27.** The main concern expressed in the consultations is that, to remain relevant, the Forum needs to renew its engagement with the political process. A key question, then, is how the FME can more effectively position itself as a body for dialogue or agreement on positions for the region, since there are a broad range of bodies and forums that currently facilitate dialogue among ministers of the environment in Latin America and the Caribbean. These include the Ibero-American Forum of Ministers of the Environment, the Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of the Summit of Latin America and the Caribbean on Integration and Development (CALC), the Council of Ministers of the Environment of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development, the Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of MERCOSUR, the meetings of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) on the Environment and the Andean Council of Ministers of the Environment and Sustainable Development and the Andean Committee of Environmental Authorities —the latter two of which belong to the Andean Community of Nations. However, given that the FME is the only space with such a long track record in which the 33 countries of the region meet, the consultations suggest that it should embark on an ongoing effort to enhance the quality of the regional dialogue and the ties that unite the environmental and sustainable development agenda of the different subregions and groups of countries represented in the Forum's membership. The topic of how to reach a consensus of regional positions ahead of upcoming supraregional negotiation processes is therefore highly important.

**28.** Another important aspect of the reflection on how to maintain the relevance of the Forum has to do with the renewal of its commitment to deliver results. From the standpoint of the implementation of its decisions, the greatest challenge and the most important question is how to ensure that common commitments on environmental sustainability and sustainable development that are expressed in the mechanisms of the Forum are reflected in the programmatic considerations of the governments of the region and of cooperation agencies, as well as in the agreements, funding requests and work programmes formulated at the national level and presented to cooperation agencies and multilateral banks.

**29.** The following two sections discuss proposals on how to address these challenges related to the positioning of the FME as a body that provides greater impact in terms of: (1) increasing the weight of the Forum as a platform for political dialogue and consensus-based positions, and; (2) adopting a crosscutting approach to environmental issues at the national level and harmonising country positions.

## **The future outlook**

### **The Forum as an instrument of political dialogue and consensus-based positions**

**30.** The consultations examined the Forum as a regional platform for dialogue, and the findings suggest that it should be strengthened as a regional space for consensus-building vis-à-vis supraregional forums and spaces. By acting jointly, that is, as a regional bloc, the ministers of the environment could do much to raise the profile of the environmental ministries in general. In attaining consensus and positions on emerging and priority issues, Latin America and the Caribbean would have more significant opportunities to impact policymaking in a significant way. It is also important that the FME be able to integrate its decisions into the framework of the global environmental and sustainable development paradigm.

**31.** In addition, the Forum can play a leadership role within the framework of environmental governance, supporting the harmonisation of national, regional and global agendas by forging a two-way link between the different levels. This would require systematising the compilation and summarisation of proposals that are raised from the national to the regional and then to the global level, and at the same time, drawing up political guidelines to adapt the results of supraregional processes to the conditions that obtain in Latin American and the Caribbean.

**32.** Consensus-based positions on priority areas for action in the region could also be taken to the decision-making entities of cooperation agencies and multilateral banks. Proposals submitted could aim to link national, regional and global processes. Inputs of this nature could be an integral part of a broader effort to attain a higher level of political importance for the Forum and the regional perspective in the mechanisms through which decisions are made and work programmes formulated; both at the national level and within the framework of the work programmes of multilateral agencies, as well as in the process of advocating in favour of making these mechanisms more representative.

**33.** Consensus-based positions reached in the Forum could thus be brought before a range of important negotiation platforms for the region. Processes that are of concern to the Region, such as the meetings of the Commission on Sustainable Development or multilateral agreements on the environment and sustainable development, could be monitored to facilitate this endeavour. The identification of the processes in which the Region hopes to have greater influence and impact would make it possible to adjust calendars and allow the Forum, as appropriate, to meet, agree on positions and examine topics of importance in greater depth, in order for the countries to expeditiously prepare for such international meetings or decide on their positions in advance. Such monitoring could be carried out by the Intersessional Committee. Forum Meetings aimed at facilitating preparation for other processes might be called as ministerial-level meetings per se of the FME, intersessional meetings or meetings of experts, as permitted by the level of the process, applicable time frames and available resources.

**34.** However, the FME should approach such efforts realistically, acknowledging that the region has a diversity of agendas, as evinced by the interests expressed by the different subregional groups. The focus of the Forum in seeking to arrive at such consensus positions could therefore be on transcending differences and identifying common elements to serve as the core of agreements, such as sustainable development, poverty reduction and inequality, Cooperation and dialogue to this effect could be modelled after the positive experiences the region has already had, such as the negotiations on a regime to govern access to genetic resources and the distribution of benefits. As mentioned above, a related option would be to focus on preparing for negotiation processes that will allow the countries to engage in a deeper discussion and the building of common positions and proposals.

**35.** There should also be acknowledgement of the fact that supraregional bodies have varying dynamics and most are primarily under the charge of entities that are independent from the ministries of the environment. At times, the entities have greater political and budgetary clout at the national level (such as ministries of foreign affairs, finance, energy, development, planning, among others). Therefore, in order for the ministries of the environment to be able to exercise a more prominent role in coordinating positions, there should be a renewal of efforts to increase their capacity to drive joint work and dialogue with other entities, such as the secretariats of the different environmental conventions and subregional bodies including CARICOM, MERCOSUR and the Central American Integration System (SICA).

**36.** The political foundations for such an effort have already been laid through Decision 1 of the 13th Meeting of the Forum, on Strengthening of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Regional Strategic Action Plan (2002-2005), which would allow for a renewal and reinvigoration of the commitments listed therein.

**37.** Another important line of action for raising the profile of the Forum as a platform for dialogue is maintaining a space for discussion on groundbreaking topics and innovative approaches, through which linkages and areas of common interest for cooperation can be identified. For example, the formulation of frameworks for

policy action at the level of ecosystems shared between adjacent nations, or in larger areas covering several countries, could be explored. If carried out, such a measure could help to constructively implement the ecosystems approach, which is fundamental for natural resource management. The Forum could also be consolidated as a space for identifying positive experiences and work methodologies and discussing public policy as the basis for initiating South-South cooperation agreements, with the agencies of the ITC serving as the catalyst for this process.

**38.** In addition, it might be possible to promote a process aimed at creating agendas for sustainable development and mainstreaming environmental issues with groups of ministers from other sectors through inter-sectoral meetings of ministers, such as those bringing together ministers of environment and ministers of health or energy, among others.

### **Mainstreaming environmental issues at the national level and harmonising country positions**

**39.** The implementation of Forum decisions and their inclusion in national agendas, as well as the harmonisation of country positions, are key elements for the Forum to attain better outcomes and to increase its policy impact. To attain this objective, the Forum should undertake a multidimensional effort to make significant progress in mainstreaming environmental issues at the national level and reaching consensus-based agreements on country positions, both internally and vis-à-vis different international bodies.

**40.** Today, the growing interest in issues related to sustainability, such as energy efficiency or climate change sometimes leads to discussions in which these issues are addressed in a one-dimensional manner, with the unintended result that the complexity of sustainability and concerns of an environmental nature are overlooked. At the same time, achieving sustainable development requires broadening the scope of these topics so as to ensure that they will encompass social and economic dimensions as well as all of the development sectors. The consultations demonstrate an acknowledgment of the importance of striving to raise the profile of environmental work and transcending its traditional niches, articulating the links that bind the three pillars of sustainable development. This means that it is necessary to support processes to facilitate joint efforts between the ministries of the environment and those of other sectors, in order to encourage interministerial coordination.

**41.** In a way, the idea is to support the ministers in the search for innovative ways of managing the environmental portfolio and promoting intersectoral work. One relevant proposal calls for the agenda of the Forum to include an open discussion in which ministers address the progress of the environmental and sustainable development agenda in their respective countries, exploring the advances they have made and the obstacles they have encountered, as well as ways of more effectively putting the environmental portfolio to work in advancing towards sustainable development.

**42.** This discussion could be the basis of a process to better enable the ministries of the environment and other entities to promote the mainstreaming of environmental issues at every level and in all sectors, thus making it easier to shed

light on the environmental implications of decisions taken in other sectors and the consequences for development of environmental management that is inadequate. This type of effort to strengthen the environmental pillar is considered the missing component for full progress towards sustainable development.

**43.** The specific topics to be addressed in this agenda should be determined by the ministers in accordance with established priorities, with the understanding that in some cases the mandates of the ministries of the environment require tools to facilitate the intersectoral work needed to promote sustainability.

**44.** Any effort to raise the profile of environmental issues and mainstream them, as well as to further sustainability, should be accompanied by efforts to foster coherence at the national level, since different ministries often take divergent positions on a given issue. In the case of sustainable development, this means that the priorities and positions presented in international spaces for dialogue or negotiation not under the responsibility of ministries of the environment frequently do not always coincide with those on which the environment sector places the greatest importance.

**45.** One instrument that could be revitalised to address this gap is the ministerial sustainable development committees, or a similar type of consensus-based mechanism to allow information to flow and country positions to be formulated. There are also experiences in Ecuador, which has placed the mandate of mainstreaming environmental issues in the portfolio of the Ministry of Heritage Coordination (Ministerio Coordinador del Patrimonio), which views development from a holistic standpoint; México created the Inter-Ministerial Commission on Climate Change, which has responsibility for the formulation and coordination of national climate change policies, including those related to the prevention and mitigation of greenhouse gases; Chile, where a Ministerial Council on Sustainability, chaired by the Minister of Environment and made up of Ministers of agriculture, finance, health, development and reconstruction, energy, public works, transport and housing and urbanism. Another possibility is to work actively with subnational governments to keep them informed of the implications of international agreements and commitments adopted at the national level.

### **Format of the Forum and options for it to function as a platform for dialogue**

**46.** The consultations on the format of the Forum elicited a range of comments: some respondents believe that the current format is appropriate, while others think that there should be more flexibility in determining the duration of the segments and still others feel that the technical segment should be shortened. Accordingly, it is important for a discussion on the matter to take place.

**47.** In spite of the diversity of opinions expressed regarding the format of the forum, one element was echoed in nearly all the responses: the need to emphasise political dialogue as the core element of the Forum and to reduce the amount of time spent reviewing the texts of the Forum's declarations and its written outcomes.

**48.** Some also emphasised the need to focus the work of the Forum on a concrete line of action that is of interest to the region, instead of addressing a wide variety of issues. In this way, the Forum would be able to concentrate its attention and it would be possible to attain greater impact.

**49.** It was also suggested that an in-depth informational segment on one or two public policy topics, trends or options that are highly important for the Region be incorporated into the FME. This segment could be complemented by showcasing one or two positive experiences related to the issue being discussed.

**50.** Regarding the functioning of the Forum, several proposals were made. These are presented here in summarised format as two options, enriched by the analysis given in the preceding sections. These options are submitted for the consideration of the Forum and its bodies in order to enhance the dialogue when it considers the steps to be taken.

**Option 1: Reaching consensus-based positions at every level, with a two-way flow of information**

Under this option, the Forum would become an entity to coordinate positions or preparatory processes for international meetings or negotiations, focusing on specific themes related to the agendas of the processes under consideration. Agreements on these positions would be based on common denominator-type minimums approved by consensus. The preparatory sessions would give the region the opportunity to gain a fuller command of the issues, allowing it to play a more substantive role in negotiations, either at the individual-country level or as a group, as appropriate. The dates of the meetings of the FME would be timed to coincide with or precede the preparatory process of those events at which a contribution is to be made.

For example, the consultations have suggested that consensus-based positions from the regional Forum could be brought forwards to deliberations of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum and in the meetings of the UNEP Administrative Council. In that case, it possible to advocate in favour of strengthening the regional response capacity of UNEP and the assignment of resources for programmatic work at the regional level. The Forum of Ministers would thus become a mechanism to help ensure that deliberations for identifying priority areas and formulating the work programme have a direct line of inputs on actual conditions in the Region.

In general, and given that the in many international negotiations there are other participating actors for whom the environment and development are not the priority, the Forum could become a space for dialogue on the contribution of the environmental agenda to such negotiations, in order to integrate the different perspectives.

**Table 1: Consensus building**

## Option 2: Concentrating on political dialogue focused on the Region

Under this option, the Forum would focus on constituting a sphere for policy discussion disconnected from the implementation of programmes or activities. Its discussions would be centred on topics of importance for the Region and would aim to support the efforts of the ministries of the environment to advocate for the mainstreaming of the environmental perspective and articulating the linkages among the three pillars of sustainable development.

For example, the Working Groups could draft proposals on specific messages for important environmental and sustainable development conventions. These proposals could be adopted by the FME, which would ask the ITC to transmit them to agreement negotiators, such as those of the Latin American and Caribbean Group. They could also formulate proposals with specific messages for other forums (which do not focus on the environment). So that the environmental pillar is integrated with and provides support to, the other two pillars of sustainable development.

The nature of the Forum's decisions would shift and the role of ITC agencies would be to facilitate and strengthening the discussions, providing informational inputs. Hence, the Forum's decisions could be expressed in orientation messages on specific topics. The identification and implementation of new work lines would result from efforts led by the countries and supported by the ITC to seek, identify and allocate economic and technical resources, at the national, regional and global levels, following one or two lines of action on which the Forum would focus during each activity cycle (for example, through the selection of a flagship issue every four years).

**Table 2: Focusing on political dialogue**

### **The ILAC and the RAP in the current context**

**51.** In historic terms, the ILAC represents a major success for the Forum's efforts to boost the participation of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in international conferences and other multilateral environmental agreements. It was the main outcome of the regional preparatory process ahead of the Summit on Sustainable Development held as part of the Forum's work programme in 2001 and 2002. ILAC thus constitutes an important step forward in efforts to introduce the Region's perspective into the instruments of the global agenda (UNEP, 2003).

**52.** At present, ILAC could provide a key space for the Region to continue to play a leading role in articulating the three pillars of sustainable development and a system to measure its progress. In addition, mechanisms for implementing ILAC, such as the RAP and the Working Groups, could be reinvigorated such that they provide greater strategic value.



**53.** Currently, however, the level of use of the system of strategic areas, goals and indicators of ILAC in the Region is questionable. In the eight years since the adoption of ILAC, only eight countries have generated national reports on its implementation, and only ten countries have submitted inputs for the preparation of the assessment on the Initiative's implementation, titled *The Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) Five Years After its Adoption*, (UNEP, 2008). Moreover, only a handful of web pages and environmental and sustainable development policy tools in the Region directly mention the initiative.

**54.** The consultations indicate that the RAP faces its own challenges, in that it contains a large number of diffuse elements, which are not reflected in national work programmes and are not assigned predictable funding. The failure to link the identification of work activities and areas with funding means that the opportunity to implement is lost. For this reason, some activities included in the RAP are reduced to lists of good intentions. In some cases, member states report difficulty in conceptualising how to translate the abstract themes of the RAP into practical activities.

#### **Relevance of the central topics of ILAC and future outlook**

**55.** Based on an examination of documents and on the consultations, it appears that the central topics of ILAC, its targets and indicators continue to be relevant for the Region. To varying degrees, the mapping of the environmental priorities of the countries through policies, strategic plans and other documents published on the Internet indicates that the thematic areas of ILAC are still included in national agendas. Nevertheless, the consultations repeatedly refer to the emergence of a wide variety of topics of value for the Region, which are growing in importance as efforts to interconnect the three pillars of sustainable development move forward.

**56.** Given that the sustainable development perspective has been enriched, as well as the growing need to mainstream environmental themes across all sectors, the renewal of ILAC might focus on contributing to a more structured implementation of the principles and targets of sustainable development through a comprehensive measuring system that unites the social, economic and environmental pillars more solidly. Such a system should be more tightly woven into the global and regional sustainable development agenda and its instruments and more centred on identifying issues of importance.

**57.** The current context represents a good opportunity for reflection and for a discussion on how to reorient the ILAC to further encompass the three pillars of sustainable development, the linkages that bind them and the Region's present concerns, for example, by more thoroughly monitoring issues such as:

- The environmental footprint of different economies or economic activities;
- Urban sustainability;
- Food security;
- Sustainable production and consumption;
- Soil degradation, planning and sustainable land management;
- Protected areas and the inclusion of oceans in them;

- The promotion of regional-cooperation strategies in such areas as climate change, environmental impact of the primary sector and water sector regulation;
- The promotion of regional resource efficiency policies oriented towards the continuity of economic development, improving quality of life and reducing poverty and environmental impact;
- The coordination of regional environmental, economic, trade and development policies, to allow for the development of utilization practices that will increase natural-resource-use efficiency in the short term and lead to sustainable development;
- The availability of and access to information, generating and systematising reliable information on resource use and its economic and environmental implications;
- More specific work on the sustainable management and use of seas and coasts.

**58.** The topic of biological diversity also continues to be highly important, with a growing need to promote the formulation and adoption of new national strategies for biodiversity conservation, in keeping with national development plans — particularly regarding what continues to be the main source of pressure: land use changes and the consequent loss of habitat. Another goal that remains relevant is promoting a fair and equitable distribution of the benefits derived from using the traditional knowledge —associated with genetic resources— of the indigenous and local communities of the Region. The Nagoya Protocol could be used as the starting point for a more-in-depth examination of this issue.

**59.** The way in which climate change is addressed could also be reconsidered. Several proposals call for linking the work of ILAC more closely to the topic of risk management in order to enable the Region to better adapt to the impacts of climate change, particularly given that this topic is now being addressed in a large number of forums.

**60.** Another topic that could be addressed is strengthening the formulation and implementation of a regional action plan to reduce air pollution and improve chemicals management. These efforts should go hand in hand with the global and regional promotion of innovative funding mechanisms and clean technology centres, making it possible to develop capacities and facilitate the transfer of technology for climate change mitigation and adaptation actions.

**61.** Another possibility would be reformulating the approach of ILAC to environmental education, particularly the implementation of regional plans and programmes such as the Environmental Training Network, the Latin American and Caribbean Programme on Environmental Education (PLACEA) and the Andean-Amazonian Plan for Communication and Environmental Education (PANACEA).

**62.** When considering this long list of possibilities,, it is important to ensure that the debate surrounding the issue of selecting focus areas be sensitive to the needs of the most vulnerable subregions and countries of the Region, in particular Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

**63.** In addition, participants referred to a desire to harmonise and integrate projects on environmental indicators in the context of the reports on the MDGs, national reports and other processes, for example, through the reactivation of the proposal of the Regional System of Environmental Statistics on Latin America and the Caribbean.

**64.** In order to systematically monitor these topics, the metrics used to gauge sustainable development would have to be renewed. A series of sustainable development goals, modelled after the Millennium Development Goals and setting forth the vision for the future of sustainable development in the Region with the support of a framework of monitoring indicators, could be a step in the right direction (SIREA, by its Spanish acronym).

### **Lessons learned**

**65.** In connection with a possible renewal of ILAC, it should be stressed that the identification of the next steps in selecting new topics should draw on the discussion, mentioned above, on how the agenda of the Forum of Ministers is to be managed in terms of its environmental and sustainability scope, in order to determine whether its principal instruments are to be viewed as frameworks for implementation or rather as channels to promote cooperation. Beyond thematic questions, the major shortcoming currently seen in the ILAC is the lack of a monitoring mechanism that is systematically implemented with standard methodologies, which allow for a comparable measurement of environmental management among the countries, support processes for collecting and analysing data and facilitate the systematic generation of reports intended to be part of the measuring system. Such a mechanism would be highly important for promoting the implementation of ILAC, since, according to the consultations, the lack of monitoring and support is the main reason ILAC has not been used more widely as a reference in planning at the national level.

**66.** Effectively implementing such a system would require a solid mechanism for continuous monitoring, evaluation and reporting regarding progress on environment and sustainable development in the Region, and to provide those mechanisms with predictable financial resources. The first step would be generating comparable data throughout the region, complemented by the capacity to systematically monitor indicators so as to identify areas where progress has been made, as well as areas where renewed efforts are required. This undertaking could be promoted by a strengthened Secretariat that would help member countries implement ILAC and its associated metrics, with a view to reinforcing the links between research and decision-making through the generation of information that allows decision makers to identify strategic areas of action. Another, less ambitious, approach that could be pertinent would be carrying out the continuous monitoring on the basis of reports and other informative inputs that are already generated in the region, drawing on their data to prepare briefs in a format that is suitable for decision-makers.

**67.** Under any of the approaches described above, the biennial Regional Action Plan could focus on promoting progress in two or three specific priority areas, for which work programmes with dedicated financial and human resources would be identified. The focus on specific topics is a key factor for avoiding the formulation of

programmes that, become lists of items, rather than being implemented. A consideration of what is possible in the time frames allotted to regional plans is a key element of this. Such considerations were already expressed in the evaluation presented in 2008 to the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum, entitled Report on the Implementation of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC): Five Years after it was adopted (UNEP, 2008), as well as the Review of the Experience of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee that supports the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean carried out in 2007.

**68.** It is also important to clearly establish parameters for the Forum's work, so as to set forth how to translate the strategic areas into action—a linkage that many now consider weak. The entities responsible for implementation and the channels of communication to be used among these bodies should be identified, as should the ways of facilitating dialogue when there are language barriers.

**69.** ILAC could also incorporate a component that provides technical assistance and facilitation for South-South cooperation, offering a space for support that would help to translate public policy into specific national and local activities and reinforce intersectoral dialogue and the adoption of a mainstreaming approach to environmental issues at every level. The basis for this component would be the operational and normative experience of the agencies of the ITC and the United Nations, as well as the diverse range of experiences, lessons learned and best practices already in place regionally and globally.

**70.** In its second phase ILAC should also inspire a greater sense of ownership and a desire to participate among the countries, by more clearly including their common concerns. In addition, a strengthened ILAC Secretariat could conduct outreach activities such as technical assistance actions and follow-up visits or calls regarding the activities carried out by the countries, especially those that do not participate much in the process, to enhance the commitment to ILAC and support its implementation. To this end, much progress could be made in disseminating information on the ILAC mechanism, in order to make it more widely known, both in the region and globally.

### **Implementation at the national level**

**71.** Several proposals were made regarding the ILAC's implementation at the national level. Firstly, the responses in the consultations reiterated the importance of strengthening the Network of Government Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production beyond the environmental ministries, as well as furthering and supporting actions to promote the coordinated integration of sustainable consumption and production in the economic and social development policies of the countries of the Region. Also mentioned was the option of carrying out exchanges of national experiences with a view to identifying alternatives for moving forward in incorporating environmental and natural resource management into national accounts.

**72.** Another suggestion was that additional mechanisms should be created to more actively support preparing Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEAs) in

regional, subregional and national spheres so as to reflect both ILAC indicators and other specific priority topics.

**73.** In general, all the consultations echoed the call for stepping up South-South cooperation, with the support and facilitation efforts of ITC agencies. One possibility for streamlining this type of cooperation would be to conduct an exercise to map the resources available for the countries to undertake such cooperation schemes. The exercise would identify available human and financial resources, experiences and institutional capacity, among other items.

**74.** Lastly, a proposal was made to establish a peer assessment system on sustainable development, such as that carried out at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

**75.** Another way of supporting national implementation is by utilising linkages between ILAC and other, related mechanisms, such as the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Barbados Programme of Action and the MDGs. This is of vital importance for many countries of the Region, including SIDS, which find it difficult to keep abreast of the multitude of agreements and conventions and are constantly looking for ways to harmonise and align their activities.

## **Rio+20**

**76.** With a eye on Rio+20, the consultations suggest that at this point of the preparatory process the most advantageous approach for the Region would be to discuss, as a bloc, the priority points to be integrated into the outputs of the Summit, given that the event's agenda is centred on political dialogue. As there is still work to be done to reach consensus and positions representing the region's outlook for Rio, Latin America and the Caribbean should focus their efforts on that task in coming months. Therefore, the contribution of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean could emphasise the most important policy issues for the Region, such as an institutional framework for sustainable development and climate change, among others, advocating in favour of a more in-depth discussion, focused on action.

**77.** Regarding the global institutional framework for sustainable development, governments participating at the first regional preparatory meeting for the Rio+20 Summit, held at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, Chile, pointed to the need for such a framework for sustainable development, noting that it should be "efficient and flexible, attaining the effective integration of the three pillars (the economic dimension, the social dimension and the environmental dimension" (ECLAC, 2011). On the basis of that consensus, the region should now focus on framing a proposal that will support and satisfactorily advance the needs of the Region and that is enriched by the Region's experiences thus far with the existing framework.

**78.** With the renewal of the commitment to the Johannesburg Action Plan and Agenda 21, there is a perceived need to begin a dialogue on integration of the environmental theme as a component of the strengthening of the economic and social pillar of sustainable development in order to meet current international commitments. Regarding the Johannesburg Plan and Agenda 21, it is also important to address the issue of monitoring, in order to identify the areas with the highest and lowest levels of progress. Another important action for the Region

would be to conduct a policy review of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technological Support and Capacity Building, in particular by examining the obstacles that the countries and development cooperation agencies face in implementing the Plan.

**79.** The respondents in the consultations concur for the most part that the ILAC review should be carried out after the Rio+20 Summit, so as to make the most of opportunities for the Ministries of Environments to contribute to the implementation of the agreements made at the Summit, to create a better framework for integration with other agreements and to apply a renewed approach.

### **Options for the functioning of implementation instruments**

**80.** Based on the previous discussion, the following two options are submitted to enrich the dialogue of the Forum and its bodies when considering what steps to take.

#### **Option 1: Forging agreements on the basis of priority mapping**

Putting this option into practice would require building a foundation of preparatory technical work prior to the Forum. For example, every four years ITC agencies could conduct an exercise to identify regional priorities based on an assessment of progress vis-à-vis the indicators established for measuring sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean, reports and other publications on the environment and sustainable development already in use in the Region. The agencies would be responsible for submitting the results of this exercise in a simple, unified format that would serve as an informational input for decision makers.

These inputs would then be gathered by a technical task force, which would identify two or three specific strategic areas to be promoted by the Forum. Alternatively, for each biennium, an individual flagship issue representing the central focus of the Forum's activities (for example, climate change, environment and health or urban sustainability) could be chosen. The focus on just a few areas would serve to concentrate resources in an area of strategic importance for the mainstreaming of environmental issues, which could boost the Forum's impact. These areas would be used to formulate a Roadmap of Regional Activities to which predictable amounts of already identified financial resources would be assigned. These proposed agreements would be placed under the consideration of Ministers...

Most of the technical work would be carried out before the meeting of the ministers, with the aim of presenting to the Ministers proposals that are sufficiently developed so as to allow the Meeting of Ministers to focus on the political agreements through which the Roadmap and its work programmes will be put into practice.

However, discussions at the Forum should not consist solely of this type of dialogue centred on intraregional activities. The FME should also reach out to a global audience on current topics, such as environmental governance and Rio+20 at the present juncture. Similarly, the informational inputs gathered by the Forum through the measurement of sustainable development in the Region could be used to

identify a catalogue of priority areas of action to be used as contributions to supraregional decision-making processes, thus helping to ensure that these processes are given more substantial informational tools with which to meet the needs of the Region. In addition, these inputs could be used to develop a longer-term vision (10 to 20 years), the realisation of which would be monitored every four years in the manner proposed herein.

**Advantages:** Uses existing structures and inputs, requires few additional resources (financing to generate informational inputs and for operation of the task force). Would also facilitate greater efficiency and strategic value in programming.

**Disadvantages:** If the focus is not kept on a few areas of strategic impact with allocated financial resources, there is a risk of continuing the pattern of creating lists of items with few results.

### **Table 3: Forging agreements on the basis of priority mapping**

#### **Option 2: Allocating resources for a framework for monitoring indicators and programming**

This scenario is based on promoting the generation of data that can be compared throughout the Region, working towards the implementation of standard methodologies and metrics and drawing on metrics already in use (e.g., the MDGs, ILAC and GEO). The framework could be guided by a series of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)-type priority areas that establish the region's long-term vision for the future in the spheres of environment and sustainable development, as well as monitoring indicators to be used in gauging progress toward this vision.

This effort would be complemented by the identification and assignment of capacities to conduct a systematic monitoring of the indicators, making it possible to identify both areas that show progress and those requiring renewed national and regional efforts. Data collection, analyses and report preparation could be financed through a fund that would benefit the member countries. This undertaking would help reinforce the links between research and decision-making, allowing the member countries to identify strategic areas of action.

Accordingly, the biennial Regional Action Plan or another similar instrument could focus on promoting progress in two or three specific priority areas, for which work programmes with dedicated financial and human resources would be identified.

Here again, the focus on specific topics is a key factor for avoiding the formulation of programmes that, rather than being carried out, become lists of items. The consideration of what is possible within the time frames allotted to regional plans is also a key element for this.

**Advantages:** Would contribute to enhancing and standardising the available information base in the Region. Would also facilitate greater efficiency and strategic value in programming.

**Disadvantages:** Would require a major financial commitment.

**Table 4: Allocation of resources for a monitoring system**

## **The role of the ITC**

### **Mandate and functions of the ITC**

**81.** The ITC was established at the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (1988). Today its main purpose is seen as that of supporting the Forum of Ministers in offering technical and operational guidance and facilitating the mobilisation of funding to implement the Forum's regional agenda (see Annex 2 for more details on the Committee's mandate and functions).

**82.** In the exercise of reviewing ITC experiences carried out in 2007, note was taken of the varying interpretations and of the doubts regarding the Committee's mandate and role (Arensberg, 2007). That review detected one interpretation that perceives the ITC as an entity composed of autonomous institutions working to guide the Forum and acting as facilitators for the coordination and mobilisation of technical and/or financial resources, within the framework of the implementation of activities carried out mainly by the countries. Another position considers the Committee as an entity that is subject to the guidelines of the Forum and that would carry out the activities foreseen under the Forum's implementation instruments. According to the specialised analysis conducted in Review of the Experience of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee that supports the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, it is the first perspective that is most closely aligned with the mandate and functions expressed in the Forum's decisions.

**83.** The consultations conducted as part of this review echo this lack of clarity regarding the ITC's mandate and functions, highlighting it as a central feature to be re-evaluated in order for the Forum to press forward. It is now recognised that the agencies that make up the ITC appear to have little leeway to allocate resources and to include additional activities in their work programmes to support the implementation of specific decisions of the Forum. This is because the institutions' mandates and work programmes are established globally by their governing bodies. That being stated, some respondents express a desire for the agencies to act more vigorously in implementing programmes and projects established by the Forum. In many cases, however, the agencies' hands are tied by mandates and work programmes established by their respective governing bodies, which are not always aligned with regional needs. The situation is made more difficult by changing trends in development cooperation at the global level, as many agencies have declining budgets and mandates that are more inclined to focus on planning and on facilitating development cooperation than on implementation.



**84.** The difficulties that have arisen as a result of this divergence between the expectations, desires and realities of the parties involved presents an obstacle to the implementation of activities formulated by the Forum. This hinders progress on some issues and partially explains why much of what is reported through RAP activities consists of projects and initiatives carried out independently of the Forum.

### **Coordination of ITC member agencies**

**85.** Addressing the concerns described above would require a discussion on the mandate and functions of the ITC as well as on the expectations and constraints that affect its spheres of action and those of the member agencies. Based on this discussion the role of the ITC could be strengthened as a body that facilitates and coordinates programmes and projects led primarily by the countries. The member countries could also refocus the mandate of the ITC, recasting it as an implementation support entity. This would require that the Forum member states engage in a joint advocacy effort, with a firm commitment by the countries themselves to present and promote the consensus attained through FME decisions, in the deliberation processes of the respective governing bodies of the agencies. Hence, the member states would promote the insertion of regional priorities in the work programmes of the ITC agencies, which are formulated by their respective decision-making bodies, as well as in the national development programmes of each country. This process would fit into the strategy proposed above for promoting the Forum as an instrument to integrate the environmental and sustainable development agenda at the national, regional and global level.

**86.** To attain this objective, each country could formulate individual positions on the specific themes identified as priorities. These positions could subsequently be integrated with those of other countries. The proposals could then be united under the umbrella of general proposals to be presented for the consideration of the decision-making bodies of ITC member agencies in a less fragmented manner.

**87.** With this future outlook, it would be possible to initiate a process to promote joint actions on the part of the agencies in response to priorities identified by the Forum and reflected in the RAP or similar instrument to be adopted in future.

### **Contributions by and participation of the ITC**

**88.** At several points during the consultations, concern was expressed over the lack of participation of ITC member agencies in the ministerial segments of the Forum. Although participants accept that in the scope of political discussions agencies are simply observers, they also stressed the importance of the agencies in terms of their capacities, expertise and ties with the countries. Hence, some participants voiced the wish of creating a space for a greater contribution of ITC agencies to the meetings of the ministers, in order to utilise their knowledge capital. The contributions of the ITC could centre on the following points:

- **Supporting the ministers in the process of advocating in favour of mainstreaming environmental issues**, through the organisation of ministerial forums in conjunction with other portfolios, the formulation of experience sheets, presentations given to Forum meetings and short informational events to take advantage of free time during gatherings attended by the ministers and the experts from the ministries;

- **Contributing to developing capacities at the subnational level** regarding commitments undertaken at the regional level;
- **Providing technical assistance for South-South cooperation**, or facilitating such cooperation, for the implementation of mechanisms aimed at promoting sustainable development, such as the sustainable development councils mentioned above or participatory models for environmental management;
- **Providing greater support to the SIDS**, particularly by linking them with the work programmes of the agencies and cultivating closer ties.

**89.** As the Forum seeks to move forward in its joint work with subregional forums in order to enhance its coordinating capacity, ITC agencies should reinforce their links of cooperation with the entities that lead the discussions of the subregional groups and of the specialised secretariats, in order to encourage dialogue with these bodies and strengthen the consistency of the efforts carried out.

### **Composition of the ITC**

**90.** The ITC was originally founded with three members: UNEP, UNDP and IDB. One year after it was created, at its first meeting in Mexico, in December 1999, the World Bank and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean joined. The five institutions share common characteristics (see Annex 5 for more details of their mandates), in addition to being agencies of the United Nations System or of the Inter-American System; they all have mandates linked to providing assistance to countries and contributing to their sustainable development.

**91.** Since then, no other institutions have joined the Committee; although Decision 3 of the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting left open the door for others to do so and criteria have been set forth for incorporating new members (see Annexes 2 and 6).

**92.** The consultations included an inquiry on what organisations could bring an added value to the work of the Forum and the ITC, and the following suggestions were made:

- **The Global Environment Facility:** through greater direct involvement, by virtue of its direct relationship with United Nations agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), UNDP, UNEP, and the World Bank, which are already part of the ITC.
- **The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation:** the environmental impact of agriculture is reflected in various issues, such as climate change, deforestation, the use of genetically modified organisms, soil and water pollution, food security and desertification, to name a few. Within the scope of its work, FAO has examined these topics and developed actions that can be taken to counter them; hence, adding the technical and scientific capacity of FAO to the attributes of the ITC would do much to enrich the substance of its work.
- **United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat):** The work of this agency could make a substantial contribution to strengthening

local capacities focused on addressing urban environmental problems. It should be recalled that worldwide and regional population trends indicate that the urban population now accounts for more than half of the world's inhabitants and it is growing proportionate to the rural population.

## **Recommendations**

### **Specific proposals for the Forum of Ministers**

**93.** Decide, following an open discussion, how to direct the Forum's agenda to a better use of the capacity and expertise of the agencies, in light of their mandates and country priorities.

**94.** Promote an increase in the political weight of the Forum in the decision-making structures of the ITC.

**95.** Develop consensus-based proposals on priority areas of action for the region regarding the environment and sustainable development and present them to the decision-making bodies of international cooperation agencies and the multilateral banks. In this way the countries would be able to promote the integration of regional priorities in the work programmes of ITC agencies, which are determined in the decision-making bodies of each agency, as well as in national development programmes.

**96. Initiate a discussion regarding the Forum's agenda and its comparative advantages vis a vis other entities,** with the aim of strengthening it as a space for regional negotiation for the identification of shared concerns, consensus-based positions and preparation for supra-regional negotiation processes, focusing on the most strategic way of addressing environment and sustainable development issues.

**97. Based on a renewed agenda,** identify areas and topics requiring more information, preparation or support in order to move forward with the adoption of a crosscutting approach to environmental themes at the national level;

**98.** Follow up on international processes of interest to the region.

**99.** Meet in preparation for events involving decision-making at the supra-regional level, to agree on regional positions or shared concerns and advance preparatory work, adjusting the meeting calendar of working groups in order to facilitate the delivery of regional inputs to processes of interest to the region. These meetings could serve as a platform for consensus building around issues or to initiate preparation to facilitate and strengthen countries' participation in supra regional processes.

**100. Formulate consensus based positions on regional priority areas or shared concerns,** to be presented to supra-regional multilateral negotiation processes, both on environmental and sustainable development issues and on others, in order to integrate the environmental pillar and allow it to support, and, in turn be supported by, the other two pillars.

**101. Seek agreements based on common denominators,** such as the MDGs, which express a vision for the future with established measurement mechanisms,

but which allow each country the flexibility of forging its own trajectory towards the attainment of goals.

**102. Initiate a political dialogue** with the entities that handle subregional dialogue forums and the secretariats of environmental conventions, in order to foster the formulation of shared positions and/or the identification of shared concerns.

**103. Work to systematise the process of collecting and synthesising proposals** originating in experiences at the national level that can be taken to the regional and global spheres.

**104. Work jointly to formulate political guidelines** aimed at adapting the results of supra-regional negotiation and policy formulation processes to the reality of Latin America and the Caribbean.

**105. Focus the agenda of the Forum on timely topics that are politically important** for the Region, as well as strategic priorities identified through the monitoring of indicators, possibly through an informative segment dedicated to discussing challenges, positive experiences, methodologies and public policies.

**106. Undertake more efforts in South-South Cooperation**, possibly beginning with a mapping of human and financial resources, methodologies and institutional capacities that can be used as a base for a cooperation framework.

**107. Consolidate results-oriented action and the outcomes of the Forum**, orienting its tasks towards the Region's strategic priorities. On the basis of these priorities, focus the outcomes of the FME on specific areas in which progress can be made through given activities promoted by the FME.

**108. Initiate a discussion on the capacities and mandate of the ITC**, in the context of its future contributions to the Forum, keeping in mind that each agency has a defined mandate and an established decision-making mechanism.

**109.** With the support the ITC, work to raise the profile of environmental and sustainable development themes at the national level and to achieve greater consistency in the national positions presented at different international forums, by actively working in favour of strengthening the profile of the ministries of the environment, the adoption of a crosscutting approach to environmental themes and the provision of training at the subnational level regarding commitments acquired through multilateral international environmental agreements.

### **Specific proposals regarding ILAC**

**110. Review ILAC following Rio +20**, taking advantage of the opportunities for Ministries of Environment to contribute to the implementation of the outcomes of the meeting, improve the Initiative's integration with other agreements and apply a renewed focus.

**111. Renew the ILAC agenda**, taking into account the comparative advantages of the Forum and privileging highly significant topics for the Region and adopting a comprehensive vision that will strengthen the interconnection of the three pillars of sustainable development.

**112. Take into account the needs of the most vulnerable subregions and countries** of the Region by renewing the agenda, including, in particular, the SIDS.

**113.** Contribute to the process of defining a new system of measurement to gauge progress on sustainable development.

**114. Establish a framework for monitoring, follow-up and reporting,** possibly through a strengthened ILAC Secretariat. The framework should allow the identification of areas where progress has been made, as well as gaps and obstacles, and should have the backing of a predictable source of funding and the necessary capacity to produce informative inputs necessary for decision-making.

**115. Formulate a roadmap of activities** that focuses on specific strategic areas for which work programmes with dedicated financial and human resources will be identified.

**116. Clearly establish ILAC's parameters for action and those of the Road Map,** so as to specify how to translate strategic areas into action. These parameters should identify the entities responsible for implementation, as well as the channels of communication to be used among them and ways of facilitating dialogue where there are language barriers.

**117.** Undertake outreach activities to foster follow-up of agreements made by Forum member states, promoting cooperation, technical assistance and capacity development.

**118. Disseminate information regarding ILAC,** with the aim of making it a better known mechanism, both at the regional and global level.

**119.** Incorporate into ILAC a technical assistance and facilitation component of South-South cooperation supporting progress on topics identified in national and local action plans.

**120. Establish a connection between ILAC and other, related mechanisms,** such as the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Barbados Programme of Action and the MDGs. This is of vital importance for many countries of the Region, including the SIDS.

**121. Create mechanisms to provide greater support for the preparation of comprehensive EIAs,** at the regional, subregional and national level. These mechanisms should reflect ILAC indicators and other specific priority areas.

**122. Strengthen the network of Government Experts on Sustainable Production and Consumption (SPC),** beyond Ministries of Environment, as well as promoting and supporting activities aimed at the coordinated integration of SCP in economic and social development policies of the countries of the region.

**123. Initiate exchanges of national experiences** with the aim of identifying means of advancing in the integration of environmental and natural resource management in national accounting systems.

**124.** Establish a biennial peer-review system on sustainable development among the countries of the region.

## **Specific proposals regarding the role of ITC**

**125. Increase its involvement in the Forum and its processes**, through a heightened level of participation, promoting joint initiatives with and technical support as far as possible.

**126. Make greater use of the capacities of the agencies** so as to raise the level of discussions of the Forum and address emerging topics that are relevant to the work performed by the ministers nationally and to the challenges faced by the Region.

**127. Support the ministers in the process of advocating in favour of mainstreaming environmental themes**, through experience sheets, presentations given to the Forum meetings, short informational events and the organisations of joint ministerial forums with other portfolios.

**128.** Contribute to developing capacities at the subnational level regarding commitments undertaken at the regional level.

**129. Apply its capacities and influence to support or spearhead the preparation** of reports or other informational inputs that can be presented to the ministers to inform their decisions and agreements on issues of strategic value.

**130. Reinforce the ties of cooperation** between the agencies of the ITC and the entities that coordinate the discussions of the subregional groups (such as CARICOM, MERCOSUR, CAN, etc.) in order to support dialogue with these bodies and enhance coherence.

**131. Provide technical assistance and/or facilitate South-South cooperation**, for the implementation of mechanisms aimed at advancing sustainable development, such as the sustainable development councils or participatory models for environmental management.

**132. Provide greater support to the SIDS**, particularly by linking them with the work programmes of the agencies and cultivating closer ties.

## **Conclusions**

**133.** Through the analysis exercise and the consultations that were conducted, some proposals have been developed with the intention of refocusing the Forum for the achievement of greater results that contribute to sustainable development in the Region, with a view to increasing the impact of the Forum. These proposals are based on the principle that it is necessary to devise new outlooks for the functioning of the Forum that will maintain a balance between dialogue and action, at the national, subregional and regional level. These proposals should be rooted in discussions on leading topics and decisions that will materialise into concrete results for the Region.

**134.** One of the conclusions of the exercise is the need to review the role of the ITC in the context of the implementation of the Forum's decisions, taking into account that each agency has its own decision-making body responsible for determining the work programme and focus areas. In order for the ITC to support countries in the implementation of Forum decisions, it is necessary for the countries themselves to arrive at agreements in that regard, identify the type of support that

is required and establish the position of the Forum within the decision-making bodies of the agencies.

**135.** Similarly, the Forum must be strengthened as a regional body for political dialogue, the coordination of positions and preparation for supraregional processes. This will allow it to bring greater influence to bear on environmental and sustainable development decision-making and policymaking at the global level. To facilitate this process, the Forum should maintain a flexible meeting calendar, allowing its different bodies to meet ahead of important processes for the Region, as dictated by the level required for those processes, available resources and applicable time frames.

**136.** In order to influence the environmental and sustainable development agenda at various levels, these efforts should be accompanied by specific activities to raise the profile of the ministries of the environment at the national level, promote the mainstreaming of environmental issues and sustainable development in all sectors, and promote greater consistency in the positions of the member countries and their governing entities vis-à-vis international entities. These efforts are highly important for achieving a better integration of the three pillars of sustainable development and improving the linkages between the decisions of the Forum and national programmes.

**137.** The current context is an appropriate moment to review the experiences derived from the instruments through which the Forum promotes the advancement of sustainable development, by utilising the opportunity provided by Rio+20 and the renewal of the commitments undertaken under Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan Action of Implementation. In this sense, the analysis suggests that ILAC could provide a key space for the Region to continue to play a leading role in interconnecting the three pillars of sustainable development and the use of indicators to gauge progress on this front. It is important to stress that various emerging topics are highly important for the region and should be integrated into the potential new phase of activities of ILAC. In addition, the mechanisms for operationalising ILAC, such as the RAP and the working groups, could be reinvigorated such that they provide greater strategic value, either through the systematic mapping of the Region's progress on the environment and sustainable development or with the support of an information system centred on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that set forth the region's future vision. However, any such effort must be accompanied by a system for monitoring, follow-up and reporting applied at national and regional level, allowing the identification of areas that show progress, gaps and obstacles. Such a system should be backed by predictable funding, as well as the necessary capacity to generate informative inputs necessary for decision-making.

**138.** In light of the upcoming Rio+20 Summit, the region seeks to attain a consensus position through which it can achieve results conducive to meeting the needs of the region, especially regarding the creation of a global institutional framework for sustainable development that is efficient and flexible and that effectively integrates its three pillars —the economic dimension, the social dimension and the environmental dimension. It is recommended that following Rio +20, a review of ILAC be undertaken, in order to take advantage of opportunities

for the Ministries of Environment to contribute to the implementation of the Conference outcomes and the application of a fresh perspective.



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## **Annexes**

### **Annex 1: Functions of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean**

The **Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean**, in its capacity as a high-level body, has the following functions (taken from the decisions of the Ninth and Eleventh Meetings of Ministers):

- a) analyse, seek consensus, evaluate and monitor relevant issues related to sustainable development, within its jurisdiction;
- b) to guide and evaluate regional cooperation action on environmental issues within the context of sustainable development;
- c) evaluate, discuss and agree on regional positions on issues pertinent to the international environmental agenda;
- d) consider international financing issues related to implementation of the commitments of Agenda 21 in the region;
- e) assess compliance with agreements and objectives arising from previous ministerial meeting;
- f) approve the four-year action plan, based on the proposal submitted for consideration by the Intersessional Committee;
- f) provide specific mandates to the Intersessional Committee to implement the projects to be executed in the first biennium, and to develop project proposals to be submitted for consideration at the next meeting;
- g) guiding and evaluating the actions of UNEP in Latin America and the Caribbean, on the basis of the terms set forth in resolutions adopted by the Boards of Directors of that organization.

## Annex 2: Functions and Mandate of the ITC

### Mandate of the ITC

#### Eleventh Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, Lima, Peru - 10 to 13 March 1998

#### DECISION 8: PARALLEL MECHANISMS FOR REGIONAL CONSENSUS

**Considering** that the intergovernmental consultations among the maximum environmental authorities of Latin America and the Caribbean, held within the framework of the United Nations, began in 1982 with the secretarial support of UNEP,

**Mindful** that the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean has come to be considered the maximum body of regional environmental consensus,

**Taking into account** that there are other regional forums that examine environmental topics in connection with their agendas and mandates, such as the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO); and that there are other subregional forums directly or indirectly linked to the environmental agenda, such as the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS), the Treaty for Amazonian Co-operation, the Andean Community of Nations, the River Plate Basin Treaty and the Caribbean Environment Programme, among others,

**Affirming** that it is necessary for the Forum of Ministers, as the regional platform at the highest level in environmental matters, to define criteria and co-ordination mechanisms with inter-American bodies to ensure that efforts are not duplicated and that the agendas are complementary and compatible,

### **DECIDE**

**1. To establish** an Inter-Agency Technical Committee under the co-ordination of UNEP as recommended in the document "*Proposal to Strengthen the Forum of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean and to Prepare and Implement a Regional Environmental Action Plan*" (**UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XI/4**). Within this Technical Committee, UNEP will encourage the participation of both the agencies and programmes of the United Nations system and bodies of the Inter-American system, based on the partnerships formed with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), respectively.

**2. To ensure** that the composition of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee is flexible, so as to facilitate the technical co-ordination of the programmes that these organisations carry out in Latin America and the Caribbean and, thereby, to

respond more effectively to the priorities agreed on by the Forum of Ministers. Thus, on the basis of the partnerships already established with UNDP and IDB, other agencies of both the United Nations system and of the inter-American system will join the Committee, in accordance with the subject areas that form the regional environmental plan.

**3. To request** the Chair of the Inter-Sessional Committee of Ministers of the Environment to present agreements reached by the Forum of Ministers at other international forums on environment and sustainable development.

**4. To provide** international and hemispheric sectoral debates with guidance based on the regional environmental plan adopted by the Forum of Ministers.

**Sixteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic- 27th January to 1st February 2008**

**DECISION 3**

**COMPOSITION AND MANDATE OF THE INTER-AGENCY TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

**In the light** of the process of reform of the United Nations, addressing the need to maintain progress in coordinating and supporting efforts to use resources more efficiently and to work together to produce concrete results responding to needs identified by the countries;

**Ratifying** the decisions adopted at the Eleventh Meeting of the Forum of Ministers in Lima, Peru, in March 1998, by means of decision 8 determining the composition and terms of reference of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC);

**DECIDE:**

[...]

**4. To renew** the mandate of the Inter-agency Technical Committee, on the basis of its terms of reference including the following:

- a) To work on a coordinated basis on the preparation, business and monitoring of the meetings of the Forum of Ministers.
- b) To submit alternatives for implementing the Forum's decisions regarding continued progress in the implementation of the ILAC.
- c) To seek technical support for design and development of projects to be implemented as part of the Regional Action Plan.
- d) To conduct activities aimed at identifying possible sources of funding for the projects.

- e) To obtain the agreement and coordinate the actions of the participating agencies and institutions, on the Forum agenda's priority issues.  
To support the performance of specific tasks assigned to the relevant ad-hoc working groups,

### Annex 3: ILAC at a glance

ILAC AREA	PAR PRIORITIES
Climate change <sup>1</sup>	The linkages between climate change and all ILAC areas are recognized (including renewable energy and energy efficiency)
Biodiversity	Increase of the forest area
	Genetic resources- equitable sharing of benefits
Water Management	Watershed management
	Management of marine and coastal areas and
Vulnerability, human settlements and sustainable cities	Vulnerability and risk management
	Waste management
Social issues, including health, inequity and poverty	Health and environment (pollution and chemicals)
Economic issues, including competitiveness, trade and production and consumption patterns (energy)	Sustainable Production and Consumption
Institutional arrangements	Evaluation and indicators
	Environmental education

<sup>1</sup> Added at the Fourteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (held in Panama in 2003)

## **Anexo 4: Questionnaire used for the Review of Experiences**

### **Questionnaire- Review of experiences Modalities for dialogue and action**

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

##### **ILAC**

- 1.** How relevant are the goals proposed in ILAC and the associated regional indicators today?
- 2.** What themes or areas should be considered in the event of a renewal of ILAC?
- 3.** Given the current situation at the regional level and the concept of sustainability, which of the objectives proposed in 2003 should be reformed? Which ones do you think are still relevant?
- 4.** How can the implementation of ILAC be improved at the national level within the region? What instruments or mechanisms could be employed to facilitate implementation at this level and to ensure that ILAC is reflected in national policies and priorities?
- 5.** In light of the upcoming Summit on Sustainable Development, also known as Rio +20, and considering that ILAC is part of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, in your opinion, could a renewed ILAC be part of the region's contribution to the Summit? Or should ILAC be updated after Summit in order to make it a tool for the implementation of agreements reached in Rio de Janeiro?

#### **Impact of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (FME)**

- 6.** Although there are a variety of spaces for dialogue among Ministers of Environment in the region, the FME is the only one in which all 33 Latin American and Caribbean countries meet. In view of this, how do you think that the impact of the Forum's decisions can be improved at the regional and global level within the context of the environmental agenda and that of other development sectors?
- 7.** What role could the FME play in advancing the environmental and sustainable development agenda at the national level? How could it support this agenda at the national level?
- 8.** Do you think that the Forum could serve as a space for regional negotiation to formulate positions towards global forums?
- 9.** How could the FME facilitate dialogue between Ministries of Environment and other Ministers in order to contribute to mainstreaming the environment in other sectors?
- 10.** Do you have any suggestions regarding the duration, structure and format of the FMA? For example, regarding the proportion of time allocated to technical meetings



### **Role of the TIC**

- 11.** What could be the role of the ITC and the agencies that participate in it, taking into account that each agency has a defined mandate and internal decision-making processes?
- 12.** As you know, the ITC is made up of UNDP, UNEP, the World Bank, IDB and ECLAC. Do you think that other global or regional agencies should be invited to participate?
- 13.** How could national positions be better coordinated vis-à-vis the governing bodies of ITC agencies in order to ensure that the messages and recommendations of the Forum are shared?

## **Annex 5: Mandates and governing bodies of ITC agencies**

### **The Interamerican Development Bank- IDB**

Since its establishment in 1959, the IDB has worked to support efforts by Latin America and the Caribbean countries to reduce poverty and inequality. The Agreement Establishing the IDB and the IDB's Board of Governors have given the Bank a series of mandates that govern its activities and operations in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The main mandate emanating from the charter of the Bank is to foster the economic and social development of the IDB's borrowing member countries, both individually and collectively. Currently the overarching objectives of the Bank are reducing poverty and inequality and achieving sustainable growth. Alongside these objectives are two strategic goals: addressing the special needs of the less developed and smaller countries and fostering development through the private sector.

Governance of the IDB is vested in the Board of Governors, which tops the organizational structure of the Bank. Each member country appoints a governor, whose voting power is proportional to the capital in the Bank subscribed by his or her country. Governors are usually ministers of finance, presidents of central banks or other high-ranking officials.

The Board of Governors holds an annual meeting in March or April of each year to review the Bank's operations and make major policy decisions. It may also hold extraordinary meetings on key issues, as listed on the Board of Governors' Resolutions.

The IDB's governors are ultimately responsible for overseeing the Bank's activities and administration, although in practice, they delegate many of those responsibilities to the Board of Executive Directors.

The Board of Executive Directors is responsible for the conduct of the operations of the Bank and for this purpose may exercise all the powers delegated by the Board of Governors. The Board of Directors usually meets once a week and, among other duties, is responsible for approving loan and guarantee proposals, policies, country strategies, the administrative budget, setting interest rates, and making decisions on borrowings and other financial matters.

The Board of Directors is composed of 14 Executive Directors representing 48 member countries and also includes 14 Alternates, who have full power to act when their principals are absent.

Source:

<http://www.iadb.org/en/about-us/about-the-inter-american-development-bank.html>

## **United Nations Development Programme – UNDP**

UNDP is the United Nations' global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. It has a presence on the ground in 177 countries, working with governments and people to help them find their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners. UNDP helps countries to formulate and share responses to the challenges posed by the following issues: Democratic Governance, Poverty Reduction, Crisis Prevention & Recovery, Environment & Energy and HIV/AIDS. Within each of these thematic areas, UNDP strives to encourage the protection of human rights, capacity development and the empowerment of women.

UNDP's network links and coordinates global and national efforts to reach the MDGs, which world leaders pledged at the Millennium Summit in 2000 to achieve.

As part of its mandate, UNDP has a key coordinating role in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). UNDP is helping to reinforce joint action on development in such forums as the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations.

UNDP's Executive Board is comprised of 36 members representing countries from around the world, who serve on the Board on a rotating basis, was created by General Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993. Through a Bureau made up of representatives of the five regional groupings, the Board supervises and supports UNDP's activities, ensuring that the organization remains responsive to the changing needs of countries.

The Board, which also directs the work of UNFPA and UNOPS, was created by General Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993.

The Executive Board is responsible for providing inter-governmental support to and supervision of the activities of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS in accordance with the overall policy guidance of the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council, and the responsibilities set out in the United Nations Charter. It must also be responsive to the needs of programme countries. The Board is under the authority of the Economic and Social Council.

Functions (from GA resolution 48/162):

- To implement the policies formulated by the General Assembly and the coordination and guidance received from the Economic and Social Council;
- To receive information from and give guidance to the head of each fund or programme on the work of each organization;

- To ensure that the activities and operational strategies of each fund or programme are consistent with the overall policy guidance set forth by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with their respective responsibility set out in the United Nations Charter;
- To monitor the performance of the fund or programme;
- To approve programmes, including country programmes, as appropriate;
- To decide on administrative and financial plans and budgets;
- To recommend new initiatives to the Economic and Social Council, and through the Council, to the General Assembly, as necessary;
- To encourage and examine new programme initiatives;
- To submit annual reports to the Economic and Social Council, which could include recommendations, where appropriate, for improvement of field-level coordination.

Source:

[http://www.beta.undp.org/undp/en/home/operations/executive\\_board/information\\_noteontheexecutiveboard.html](http://www.beta.undp.org/undp/en/home/operations/executive_board/information_noteontheexecutiveboard.html)

## **The World Bank**

The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. Its mission is to fight poverty with passion and professionalism for lasting results and to help people help themselves and their environment by providing resources, sharing knowledge, building capacity and forging partnerships in the public and private sectors.

It is not a bank in the common sense; it is made up of two unique development institutions owned by 187 member countries: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA).

Each institution plays a different but collaborative role in advancing the vision of inclusive and sustainable globalization. The IBRD aims to reduce poverty in middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries, while IDA focuses on the world's poorest countries.

Their work is complemented by that of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). Together, these organizations provide low-interest loans, interest-free credits and grants to developing countries for a wide array of purposes that include investments in education, health, public administration, infrastructure, financial and private sector development, agriculture and environmental and natural resource management.

The World Bank is like a cooperative, where its 187 member countries are shareholders. The shareholders are represented by a Board of Governors, who are

the ultimate policy makers at the World Bank. Generally, the governors are member countries' ministers of finance or ministers of development. They meet once a year at the Annual Meetings of the Boards of Governors of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund.

Because the governors only meet annually, they delegate specific duties to 25 Executive Directors, who work on-site at the Bank. The five largest shareholders, France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States appoint an executive director, while other member countries are represented by 20 executive directors.

The President of the World Bank chairs meetings of the Boards of Directors and is responsible for overall management of the Bank. The President is selected by the Board of Executive Directors for a five-year, renewable term.

The Executive Directors make up the Boards of Directors of the World Bank. They normally meet at least twice a week to oversee the Bank's business, including approval of loans and guarantees, new policies, the administrative budget, country assistance strategies and borrowing and financial decisions.

Source: <http://web.worldbank.org/> (About us > Organisation)

## **Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean – ECLAC**

The Economic Commission for Latin America was established by Economic and Social Council resolution 106(VI) of 25 February 1948 and began to function that same year. The scope of the Commission's work was later broadened by resolution 1984/67 of 27 July 1984 to include the countries of the Caribbean, thus inaugurating the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); the Spanish acronym, CEPAL, remains unchanged.

ECLAC is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations, which are under the authority of ECOSOC. The Commissions were founded with the purpose of supporting the economic and social development of their respective regions, coordinating actions directed towards this end, and reinforcing economic ties among countries and with other nations of the world.

In pursuance of its mandate, the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC):

- Provides substantive secretariat services and documentation for the Commission and its subsidiary bodies;
- Undertakes studies, research and other support activities within the terms of reference of the Commission;

- Promotes economic and social development through regional and subregional cooperation and integration;
- Gathers, organizes, interprets and disseminates information and data relating to the economic and social development of the region;
- Provides advisory services to Governments at their request and plans, organizes and executes programmes of technical cooperation;
- Formulates and promotes development cooperation activities and projects of regional and subregional scope commensurate with the needs and priorities of the region and acts as an executing agency for such projects;
- Organizes conferences and intergovernmental and expert group meetings and sponsors training workshops, symposia and seminars;
- Assists in bringing a regional perspective to global problems and forums and introduces global concerns at the regional and subregional levels;
- Coordinates ECLAC activities with those of the major departments and offices at United Nations Headquarters, specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations with a view to avoiding duplication and ensuring complementarity in the exchange of information.

Source: <http://www.eclac.cl/> (About ECLAC)

## **United Nations Environment Programme - UNEP**

UNEP's mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. In accordance with its mandate, UNEP's fundamental objective is to act as the sanctioned defender of the global environment, helping governments to prepare the global environmental agenda and promoting the coherent actualization of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the UN System.

2010 marked the start of a period of new strategic direction for UNEP, with the adoption of its Medium Term Strategy 2010-2013, covering six thematic areas: climate change; disasters and conflicts; ecosystem management; environmental governance; harmful substances and hazardous waste; resource efficiency – sustainable consumption and production.

UNEP's governing body is Governing Council, established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) (Institutional and financial arrangements for international environmental co-operation) of 15 December 1972. Governing Council reports to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council.

The 58 members of the Council are elected by the General Assembly, for four-year terms, taking into account the principle of equitable regional representation. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/242 (Report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements) of 28 July 1999, the Global Ministerial Environment Forum is convened annually to review important and emerging policy

issues in the field of the environment, with the Governing Council constituting the forum either in its regular sessions or special sessions.

Source: <http://www.unep.org/>

## **Annex 6: Criteria for the incorporation of new members to the ITC**

### **Sixteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic- 27th January to 1st February 2008**

#### **DECISION 3 COMPOSITION AND MANDATE OF THE INTER-AGENCY TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

**In the light** of the process of reform of the United Nations, addressing the need to maintain progress in coordinating and supporting efforts to use resources more efficiently and to work together to produce concrete results responding to needs identified by the countries;

**Ratifying** the decisions adopted at the Eleventh Meeting of the Forum of Ministers in Lima, Peru, in March 1998, by means of decision 8 determining the composition and terms of reference of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC);

#### **DECIDE:**

[...]

**2. To ratify** the decision taken at its Eleventh meeting, that it is the responsibility of the Forum of Ministers to review proposals for the addition of further agencies, based on their compliance with the following conditions:

- (a) They offer comparative advantages and would add value as members of the ITC;
- (b) They have experience and skills in the implementation of projects, programmes and other activities related to the priority issues on the Region's environmental agenda and reflected in the ILAC;
- (c) They contribute new, additional resources for the implementation of the ILAC, especially as regards the application of the Regional Action Plan;
- (d) They demonstrate the ability and readiness to cooperate with all the countries represented on the Forum of Ministers.