



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement    Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente  
Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде    برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة  
联合国环境规划署



---

**Intersessional Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of  
Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean**

**Mexico City, Mexico  
17-19 November 2015**

**Distribution:  
Limited**

**UNEP/LAC—IC.12015/6.Rev1  
Original: Spanish**

**Draft Report**

**Meeting on the Review of the Latin  
American and Caribbean Initiative for  
Sustainable Development (ILAC)  
5-6 October 2015. Mexico City, Mexico.**

## Opening

1. The meeting was opened by Mr. Enrique Lendo, Coordinator of International Affairs at Mexico's Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources, who welcomed attendees and thanked the delegates of 17 countries of the region for their participation, as well as UNEP for its support to the Chair of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment, held at Los Cabos, Mexico, in March 2015.
2. After noting the importance of ILAC, the work involved in its implementation, and the progress achieved with regard to indicators at both the regional and national levels, Mr. Lendo highlighted the timeliness of this meeting, coming just after the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
3. Mr. Lendo referred to the next meeting of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, and the possible inclusion of short-lived climate pollutants, in line with the approach to the issue taken at the last meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.
4. Turning to the meeting of the Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biodiversity, he underlined that the mainstreaming of biodiversity in the agricultural, fishing, tourism, and forestry sectors will be promoted as a main issue. He concluded with a summary of the meeting's objectives, namely:
  - i. To examine progress on the implementation of ILAC;
  - ii. To make recommendations on updating ILAC, for consideration at the Intersessional meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment in November, and in preparation for the next meeting of the Forum which will be held in Colombia in 2016.
5. UNEP's Deputy Regional Director thanked Mexico for organizing the meeting, and reiterated UNEP's support as the Secretariat of the Forum of Ministers and to this meeting, in particular, to facilitate the countries' consideration and discussion of the priorities of the region's environmental agenda, in the context of the 2030 Agenda.
6. She explained that the main purpose of the Meeting of Experts is to update ILAC, taking into account the discussions at the High-Level Experts Meeting, and to identify priority issues at the intersessional meeting of the Forum of Ministers, with the support of the Secretariat, as well as to report on progress achieved at the Nineteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers.

## Agenda item 1. Follow-up to the Declaration of Los Cabos and Decision 1 of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

7. The Secretariat gave a presentation detailing the components of Decision 1 and the Declaration of Los Cabos, in which the Ministers agreed on updating ILAC. To Chile's question regarding whether there had been any evaluation of ILAC implementation, the Secretariat indicated that a report on implementation is produced every two years and that there have been reviews and discussions in the working group on ILAC indicators.

## Agenda item 2. The Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development: implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean

8. The Secretariat gave a detailed presentation on the ILAC components, with special attention to its objectives and indicative purposes. The participants shared some initial thoughts, in particular relating to the opportunities for synergies in an integrated approach to sustainable development.

## Agenda item 3. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

9. The Secretariat gave a presentation on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the General Assembly, including the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and underlined its links with the environmental agenda.

10. The participants expressed their appreciation for the Secretariat's presentation and its analysis regarding the integration of environmental sustainability in the goals and targets.

## Agenda item 4. Review of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development

11. The meeting's participants agreed on the importance and relevance of ILAC, as well as on the fact that it had played a pioneering role in recognizing and promoting the integration of the pillars of sustainable development. There was general agreement on the importance of ILAC as an instrument to promote policy dialogue and regional cooperation, with a view to integrating environmental sustainability in the sustainable development of the region.

12. Some countries indicated that the issues included in ILAC and in regional documents should now include the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the frame of reference, and that the exercise of setting priorities at the regional level, though complex, should serve to promote regional cooperation. Some delegates suggested that, as a region, it would be possible to create an action plan with clear timeframes and a focus on specific areas, subject to availability of resources, major opportunities, and South-South cooperation.

13. Several countries highlighted climate change and pollution as priority areas that should be included in ILAC, and emphasised the importance of having a regional roadmap on these issues to contribute to enable countries to meet the SDGs.

14. The participants also agreed on the importance of continuing and strengthening work on the indicators at the regional level, and on promoting the adequate and efficient integration of environmental information systems in the national information systems.

15. With regard to ILAC operational guidelines, it was proposed that they be revised in light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this connection, it was emphasized that, in addition to being an instrument for evaluating progress in different areas, ILAC is a valuable tool for the SDGs in establishing a regional approach, and it was proposed that, in updating it, an analysis of these interrelations should be encouraged.

16. A number of delegates highlighted the need to recognize the various regional forums that deal with the environmental agenda, emphasizing the need to avoid a duplication of efforts. In this connection, the process of updating ILAC should involve identifying identify areas where a regional approach may be more beneficial in practical terms, considering existing resources and opportunities.

17. Some delegates commented on the experience of working at the national level, where ILAC has provided a valuable contribution to the comprehensive approach, particularly in the development of indicators and, above all, in providing an approach based on the region's particular circumstances and needs. As a result, the set of ILAC indicators has facilitated progress on agreed roadmaps and methodologies, and national capacities have been strengthened. In regard to the recommendations, ILAC and its work methodology should be maintained, deepening the regional and subregional approach, so as to respond to the particular conditions of the region and its subregions. It was proposed that Sustainable Production and Consumption should be made a cross-cutting thematic area.

18. Emphasis was given to the importance of taking into account the Samoa Pathway, which emerged from the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), when discussing the updating of ILAC. Some Caribbean countries commented on the importance of having ILAC devote greater attention to the SIDS.

19. There was agreement that governance of the sustainable development agenda in the region is a complex issue, due to the existence of multiple forums. Sustainable development should accordingly be viewed as going beyond environmental issues, while bearing in mind that these issues are essential to achieving sustainable development. Given these realities, it is crucial to encourage the environmental sector to provide substantive contributions to sustainable development.

20. Some participants suggested focusing on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Samoa Pathway, and on having ILAC focused on how regional cooperation should be carried out to support their implementation.

21. In summary, there was consensus concerning ILAC's continuing importance. It is a tool for mainstreaming, and should more fully integrate the Caribbean countries in its operational work. It was also deemed critical to underline what ILAC has achieved, and participants recognized that maintaining its importance requires outreach work, based on the essence of the regionally agreed policy document.

22. Some participants stated that the 2030 Agenda provides a framework in which ILAC could help to define cooperation priorities, in order to attain the sustainable development goals. Accordingly, ILAC should send a clear policy message based on the priorities that are needed for more efficient cooperation.

23. Finally, based on the 2030 Agenda, ILAC has the ability to contribute to the ministers' dialogue with their counterparts in the region, sharing their experiences and defining priorities for the region, with a view to taking joint action in the areas they defined.

24. In order to move forward in revising ILAC, the participants agreed not to rewrite it, but rather to select the most important sections of ILAC and gather observations from the countries on each section. This would be a practical approach to utilizing ILAC as a framework for action, contributing to the changes that the region needs in a way that is complementary to other regional initiatives and efforts. A number of countries suggested including the dimension of governance and of the means of implementation to the regional agenda.

25. At the suggestion of the meeting's Chair, the participants decided to gather in working groups to consider the various sections of ILAC.

26. The results of these working groups were as follows:

27. Regarding the section on context:
- i. The section should begin by mentioning the initiative itself, indicating its positive aspects (achievements), including its relevance and timeliness.
  - ii. Update the reference to new international developments (2030 Agenda, Samoa Pathway), but not extensively or with an exhaustive list, but rather in the form of a brief reference focusing on the institutional framework for sustainable development, on strengthening UNEP and UNEA.
  - iii. Include how the perception of the environment, and attention to it as an issue, have evolved, and how the environment has been gaining presence on the public agenda.
  - iv. Reflect changes in the environmental context and in the context of the region's development. As part of the background, it is important to mention the recognition of the environment as an issue in other sectors; accordingly, the role of ILAC in mainstreaming the issue should be emphasized.
  - v. New text to complement the existing text, emerging from the mandate of the ministers, in the framework of the Forum: the general issues are expected to remain in place, changing the approach and promoting mainstreaming much more.
  - vi. ILAC objectives should be more specific.
28. On the operational guidelines:
- i. Reflect and update the multilateral commitments, including those under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Path of Samoa, as well as developments in multilateral and global agreements (climate change, financing for development, year framework of programs on consumption and sustainable production, etc).
  - ii. Reflect the challenges that the countries of the region face as middle-income economies, particularly with regard to access to financing under preferential terms without conditions.
  - iii. Promote the full implementation of Rio Principle 10, regarding access to information and environmental justice.
  - iv. ILAC will contribute to an inclusive economic growth, resilient to global economic instability.
  - v. Be more emphatic of the need of a development model that promotes transformational change, including changing metrics and measuring profitability development beyond economics and promoting the welfare of people and the planet is required.
  - vi. Promote that the value of ecosystems and their services are considered in the decision making processes on public and private investment, prioritizing considering environmental, social and economic impacts.
  - vii. Promote a participatory and inclusive follow-up and monitoring process of ILAC.
  - viii. ILAC has been an example of cooperation required to have greater visibility inside and outside the region.
29. In relation to the priority areas for action, the participants' recommendations were as follows:
- i. Emphasize the comprehensive nature of ILAC and the importance of the issues.

- ii. One of the objectives should be to strengthen capacities, in particular in relation to improving environmental information and indicators.
- iii. With regard to the list of priority areas in a single paragraph, revise the complete text of this section and ensure that there is continuity with the following section. It was also proposed that these be contrasted with the SDGs, and that having a section containing very general, as well as highly specific issues should be avoided.
- iv. Emphasize the environmental dimension as entry point to promote sustainable development and the eradication of poverty.
- v. Group the priorities in more general categories, and explicitly include green growth.
- vi. Develop management indicators for implementing the initiative.
- vii. Analysis of the economic instruments should be strengthened, with consideration given to new approaches such as environmental and ecological economics, as well as the green economy and green growth and the valuation ecosystem services.
- viii. Some possible issues for inclusion in the five priority areas are: climate change (including reference to cooperation for achieving the INDCs), water and soil, oceans, management of water resources, air quality, biodiversity, sustainable cities, access to renewable energy sources and their equitable use, sustainable transportation, management of marine and coastal areas, including fisheries, governance and sustainable production and consumption, scientific research, and information systems (data collection and management).
- ix. Include the gender approach, and stress the importance of participation of civil society groups, including indigenous peoples.
- x. With regard to economic aspects, include the development of methodologies for evaluating investments, so as to maximize economic, environmental, and social profitability, as well as establish standards, for example, in areas such as transportation and building.
- xi. Regarding social aspects, promote integration of the environmental variable in multidimensional poverty indexes, and promote sustainable livelihoods.
- xii. In the institutional area, expand content on training and strengthening capacities of human resources.
- xiii. Focus not only on the issues, but in particular on modalities of regional cooperation for furthering implementation.
- xiv. Promote a holistic approach, and one that stresses intersectoral cooperation and coordination.

### Agenda item 7. Conclusions and next steps

30. The participants requested the Secretariat to prepare the report on the meeting, indicating the main recommendations for progress on updating ILAC.

31. The Secretariat will prepare the report, circulate it to the participants, and upload it to the intersessional meeting web page of the Forum of Ministers, to be held in Mexico City on 17-19 November.

### Agenda item 8. Adjournment

32. The representative of Mexico, Arturo Flores, thanked the delegates for their participation, and the Secretariat for the support it provided.

33. The meeting was adjourned on Tuesday 6 October, at 1:00 pm.

