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**Intersessional Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the  
Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean  
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# **Report on the intersessional meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean**

### Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

1. The meeting began with an opening ceremony on Tuesday 17 November 2015, featuring comments by Mr. Enrique Lendo Fuentes, who chaired the meeting on behalf of the Government of Mexico and of the Chair of the Nineteenth Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

2. He welcomed the participants, wishing them a productive meeting that would result in timely recommendations for the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, to be hosted by Colombia in 2016. After providing a brief summary of the meetings and activities, that have contributed to the positioning of the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) in global fora, supported by UNEP, he mentioned that the following are the main objectives of the meeting:

- To follow up on the decisions adopted by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean at its last meeting.
- To review the recommendations resulting from the meetings of the various working groups in the intersessional period: updating of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (better known by the acronym ILAC), the Network of Government Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production, the Regional Intergovernmental Network on Atmospheric Pollution, and the Environmental Training Network, among others.
- To formulate proposals on new decisions to be considered and, as appropriate, adopted by the twentieth meeting of the Forum.
- To discuss the preparations and issues to be addressed at the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) on 23-27 May 2016, including the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECP) (15-19 February 2016).

3. After this, Mr. Elliott Harris, Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations, Regional Director and Representative a.i., of the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, indicated that the XIX Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held in Los Cabos in March 2014, adopted important decisions, which were shared during the first UNEA. He commented that the meeting was being held during a historic moment: a little over a year of the adoption of the Samoa Pathway; over a year after the first UNEA, just two months after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and two weeks away from the Climate Change Conference in Paris. He stressed that the importance of the leadership of the region in climate change and the results of COP21 could begin a change in the path with a new global agreement to keep climate change at a manageable level. He considered that there are various multilateral forums; that represent future opportunities for the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), for which cooperation is key:

- Achieving a binding agreement in Paris, in the framework of the Climate Change COP-21-UNFCCC.
- The COP-13 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to be held next year in Mexico.
- Negotiation of the regional agreement on the application of Principle 10.

- The UNEA-2 to be held in May 2016, with a special meaning for the Latin American and the Caribbean region that will Chair it.
  - The regional implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
4. Additionally, he noted that in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the role of the Ministries of Environment is key in promoting an integrated approach ensuring that the links between the three dimensions of sustainable development are recognized and considered in the decision making processes. Latin America and the Caribbean are in the position to provide important contributions to the global agenda.

#### Agenda item 2: Organization of work

5. Ms. Mara Murillo, Deputy Regional Director of UNEP's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, speaking in her capacity as Secretariat of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean welcomed the participants and presented the programme of work, indicating that the preliminary items in the agenda remain unchanged, only with some changes in the order for the discussion. UNEP's regulations were accepted *mutatis mutandi*, and the agenda and programme of work were approved with the proposed amendments.

#### Agenda item 3: Follow-up on decisions of the XIX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

6. Beginning with the first agenda item, the Secretariat presented the progress report on implementation of the decisions, with reference to document UNEP/LAC-IC.1.2015/3, and citing the activities implemented as follow-up to the decisions of the XIX Meeting of the Forum, emphasizing the role of the countries of the region in their implementation and the political dialogue and the facilitating role provided by UNEP and other agencies members of the Interagency Technical Committee.

7. The floor was opened for remarks by the delegates. The countries indicated that the progress report should have elements on the progress made in the region on the different topics, which would facilitate a political discussion during the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers and other spaces for multilateral dialogue and decision making. They also suggested preparing an executive report easy to read containing key information on results obtained during the period in question.

8. The representative of Peru suggested that this report should be a political summary of the relevant topics for the region, using an electronic platform to facilitate the compilation of the document.

9. Ecuador suggested a document with more detail that would articulate and complement actions that have been under implementation in the framework of other regional organizations.

10. Mr. Elliott Harris indicated that the reports should be prepared in a way that would identify national experiences, highlighting that all regions are facing the same global challenges.

**11.** The Chair of the meeting coincided with the comments and added that a concrete report reflecting the progress at regional and subregional level in priority areas should be prepared for the Ministers, and requested UNEP to identify areas of common interest.

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

**12.** Ms. Mara Murillo summarized the results of the meeting on the updating of ILAC that was held in Mexico on 5 and 6 October 2015. She mentioned that based on the discussions of that meeting, the secretariat prepared the first draft of the ILAC update for comments from the countries. The representatives of the countries then offered their comments addressing the substantial aspects of the contents of the document, as well as the work methodology to agree on the final document that will be presented to the XX Meeting of the Forum in March 2016.

**13.** The representatives of Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Chile, and the Dominican Republic suggested the preparation of a roadmap with detail on the tasks to be undertaken for the presentation of the results of the implementation of the ILAC to the XX Meeting of the Forum.

**14.** The representative of Chile indicated that clarity is needed on the steps to be taken and on timeframes, with details on subjects of common interest for a regional cooperation agenda. He proposed to revisit this topic again before the end of the meeting to agree on the next steps so that an ILAC document of greater scope that the modalities for implementation can be produced.

**15.** The representatives of Colombia, Ecuador and Mexico stated that they considered it important to integrate the new 2030 Agenda and the SDGs to produce a more complete vision. They also support the inclusion of the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) position, and to prioritize the region's positions, in order to have a cohesive voice vis-à-vis other regional groups in the international arena.

**16.** The Chair reiterated the importance of focusing the targets on the scope of SDGs, taking account of the fact that it is a regional agenda and it must be implemented contributing, to the recently agreed international agenda, considering the particularities and issues of specific interest to the region. As an implementation mechanism, he suggested strengthening South-South cooperation and making a more specific proposal that incorporates other stakeholders. He suggested that the Secretariat conduct a new revision of ILAC, reflecting the contributions expressed during the meeting, and defining a roadmap and steps to be taken.

### **3.2 Environmental Education Network for Sustainable Development**

**17.** The Colombian delegation introduced the session, emphasizing on the importance that the Colombian government attributes to environmental education. This theme is one of the key objectives of the country's national development plan. UNEP, through Ms. Isabel Martínez, Programme Officer responsible for the Environmental Training Network, provided supplementary information, with a presentation on the progress registered in each of the operational aspects of the Decision 2 of the XIX Meeting of the Forum.

**18.** The meeting supported the results obtained, to date, in implementing the decision. Various delegates also underlined the importance of environmental education and the

participation of young people, as well as of society as a whole. Comments were also made on the programmes and actions implemented by the ministries, and on those implemented in collaboration with ministries of education as well as with numerous other public and private sector stakeholders.

**19.** Many countries of the English speaking Caribbean also expressed their interest in joining the network. Some of them also shared their experiences about environmental education. In addition, the delegates pointed to environmental education as an example of an area of work that has no other niche in regional forums.

**20.** The delegate of the Dominican Republic mentioned that the next meeting of the Environmental Training Network will be held in 2016 in her country; she invited all to participate, indicating the need for ILAC to be brought up to date, for national assessments to be conducted and to incorporate environmental education as a tool for environmental management.

**21.** The representative of Dominica commented that it is encouraging to hear of all the activities that have been and are being carried out in the context of the network, and stated that the issue is of great importance in this country. He spoke of the efforts that are carried out, integrating components of education, tourism, and sustainable development in the schools. He requested more information on the network, and reported that there is also a Caribbean Youth Environment Network that could join the Environmental Training Network.

**22.** The Permanent Representative of Colombia before UNEP, Ambassador María Eugenia Correa, in representation of GRULAC pointed out the importance of including the gender approach, and spoke of rural women, urban women, and protecting natural resources.

**23.** The representative of Barbados called on the Caribbean countries to involve themselves in this environmental education movement, also mentioning that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) could be a good partner for cooperation with the Environmental Education Network.

**24.** The Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines noted that the Caribbean countries are particularly in need of support for technology transfer, in order to reach the objectives of Decision 2, with special emphasis on education programmes regarding sustainable consumption and production.

**25.** Representing UNEP, Mr. Elliot Harris said that we must move from environmental education with a partial approach toward education that includes the three pillars for development and life.

### 3.3 Small Island Developing States

**26.** The representative of Dominica, Mr. Jahisiah Benoit, detailed the progress on the implementation of the decision by the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), outlining the elements that have paved the path of the SIDS in the region, beginning with the Barbados Programme of Action. He stressed the urgency of finding a solution to the great challenges confronting SIDS, and spoke of the need to adopt concrete measures to address their vulnerability, including to climate change, by creating an effective institutionalized platform for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Samoa Pathway. Finally, he posed the

question of what modalities of cooperation are needed for the Forum to be able to support the sustainability of SIDS.

**27.** The Chair of the Forum reiterated that, pursuant to the Forum’s decision, it is a priority for the region to provide support to SIDS, particularly in the framework of the Samoa Pathway, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The representative of El Salvador indicated that politically important developments in this period are the result of the Samoa conference and the SDGs. He stated that the question being discussed is important and that it should receive attention at the Forum, so that there can be a review of the actions that have been taken and that are yielding positive results.

**28.** Brazil mentioned that one of the roles of the Forum is to promote the exchange of experiences and to strengthen the region’s position in global meetings, and that beyond posing that question, it is necessary to review what is incorporated in ILAC, suggesting the promotion of opportunities for sharing experiences.

**29.** The importance of South-South cooperation and of promoting bilateral or triangular cooperation activities, e.g., through the Mesoamerican Strategy for Environmental Sustainability, was emphasized by Colombia. She also noted that the Forum should provide guidelines on how the region can advance in providing support to SIDS.

**30.** The Ambassador of Colombia in Nairobi representing GRULAC asked whether there was any prioritized country-by-country assessment to determine how SIDS can be supported, emphasizing the need to promote South-South cooperation.

**31.** The representative of Barbados reported that various actions are in progress in the United Nations System in response to the decision, and mentioned that it would be important to include this contribution of the agencies in a matrix that already exists, that shows all of the actions that the agencies are implementing in SIDS. He called on SIDS to become more involved and take a proactive role in different organizations and institutions, in efforts to strengthen and advance implementation of the Samoa Pathway.

**32.** Priority-setting for SIDS is complicated by their small populations and the wide range and intensity of the problems confronting them, which are comparable to those of much larger countries. One of the challenges of having a small population is the limited representation of SIDS in international forums. This limits the ability to advocate for addressing the needs of these states. In this connection, the representative of Jamaica stated that the Forum of Ministers and UNEP have an important role in disseminating the needs of SIDS.

**33.** Mr. Mark Griffith, senior UNEP official, explained that SIDS should be considered as a collective entity. He added that the international community has not managed to see them this way, and that this is the way to deal with the subregion, to create inter- and intra-regional collaboration.

**34.** The Chair of the meeting reported that the Forum ratified Decision 5 on SIDS at Los Cabos and that it is necessary to identify actions for its implementation. In summary, he stated that three areas of opportunity present themselves: first, at the political level, in the form of support and backing through international forums such as UNEA-2, supporting the inclusion in the Medium-Term Strategy and the PoW of the relevant elements of the Samoa Pathway; second, through ILAC, where efforts are underway to identify new areas of cooperation; third, in the form of feedback through the Secretariat, in order to share information, and boosting technical and financial cooperation actions of cooperation from the different agencies.

**35.** For the Secretariat, Ms. Mara Murillo added that the previously mentioned Clearinghouse Mechanism (CHM) which was created as a result of decision 1, can be a channel to identify and promote cooperation for SIDS, since it is fed with information provided by the countries. She also mentioned that the networks that exist in the framework of the Forum, such as the one for atmospheric pollution, sustainable consumption and production, and environmental indicators, among others, have demonstrated to be a source of support for other countries’.

**36.** Finally, as a successful example of South-South cooperation in the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic pointed to the Caribbean Biological Corridor. In this project through mechanisms for exchange of information and experiences, progress has been made in the management of basins and coastal areas. She also urged any Caribbean country interested to join since the project has served as an effective instrument for technology transfer and for work with both government and civil society.

### 3.4 Cooperation on chemicals and waste

**37.** A presentation with two sections was provided on this subject. Mr. Jordi Pon, UNEP Regional Chemicals and Waste Coordinator, began by presenting the activities on chemicals and waste carried out by several of the region’s countries, within the framework of the *Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management* (SAICM), Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention, and management of wastes. Following this, the representative of Jamaica, Ms. Gillian Guthrie, spoke about developments on the global on chemicals and waste agenda, highlighting the leadership role that the region has played in this area. In this sense, she suggested that in order to strengthen the work at regional level, it would be important to take advantage of the existing SAICM focal points in the region, to establish a network or to adapt an existing network to provide greater coherence and to carry out specific work that is of common interest, which could lead to a cooperation programme in this area. She also proposed to include the issue of chemicals in other areas that could be complementary such as environmental education.

**38.** To further enrich this agenda item, Mr. Carlos Sánchez Gasca, from Mexico, gave a presentation on the Mexico’s National Policy on Municipal Solid Waste, as well as on triangular cooperation with the Dominican Republic.

**39.** The Chair of the meeting noted that there are many opportunities in the region to achieve common positions on this topic, but that there are also challenges and particularities to national implementation. He then opened the meeting up for comments by the countries. Argentina shared its experience with Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), in reference to point 13 of Los Cabos Declaration, informing about the federal Ministry of the Environment’s creation of the National Observatory for the Management of MSW, an online portal that supports waste management. He encouraged the strengthening of this area in the regional agenda for the next meeting of the Forum, and offered possibilities for regional cooperation, including sharing experiences by experts from Argentina with other countries.

**40.** Colombia proposed this topic to be discussed within the framework of the Forum, so that the leadership that the region has shown at international level is also reflected at regional level by promoting the effective implementation of the agreements in this area. In this sense, the Forum can serve as a space for political dialogue to raise the relevance of this issue in the regional agenda while fostering cooperation.

**41.** The representative of Brazil described what the ministers decided in Los Cabos, and detailed the report, which is a model worthy of analysis. He suggested that the report, when addressing waste, should indicate whether it is referring to solid waste or hazardous waste. In relation to Mercosur, he said that it was the first region to present a chemicals management program, and that Brazil has also undertaken activities in this area.

**42.** A number of countries, including Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, and Venezuela, supported the proposal to create a regional network on chemicals, taking into account that this approach has proved successfully in dealing with other environmental issues. It was mentioned that the network could be used to strengthen regional cooperation, facilitate exchange of experiences and provide policy and action recommendations in the framework of the Forum of Ministers.

**43.** Some countries mentioned potential priority topics in the region, such as extended producer responsibility (Ecuador), or waste to energy (Honduras).

**44.** After the countries' comments, the Chair of the meeting summarized what had been said and closed discussion on this agenda item.

### 3.5 Plan of Action on Atmospheric Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean

**45.** Ms. Ana Patricia Martínez, of Mexico made a presentation on the progress made in the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on Atmospheric Pollution, describing the various activities, courses, workshops, and webinars, as well as the programme of the regional network, the draft guidelines for national plans on atmospheric pollution, the regional cooperation actions, the online platform, and other regional activities.

**46.** After the presentation, the plenary meeting was opened for comments by the participants. Brazil mentioned that the webinar that it led was going to assist SIDS in developing pollutant inventories.

**47.** The representative of Jamaica commented that the progress made through the network and the Plan of Action on Atmospheric Pollution in the region has been impressive. She also requested information on the the fuel efficiency initiative that is being implemented with support from Chile and UNEP, and how this was related to the network.

**48.** Honduras emphasized the positive results being obtained by working through networks, as in the case of atmospheric pollution – a process that should be replicated for other issues, even at the national level.

**49.** With regard to the efficient fuel programme, UNEP Secretariat mentioned that through the Global Fuel Economy Initiative, support is provided to countries to improve the quality of their fuels and vehicles, with the objective of reducing the emissions and improving air quality. She also mentioned that the Climate and Clean Air Coalition is an additional important source of experience and cooperation, and invited countries to consider possible membership to that coalition.

### 3.6 ILAC Environmental Indicators

**50.** Mr. Arturo Flores, of Mexico, as the Chair of the Working Group on ILAC Environmental Indicators (WGEI) spoke about the progress that have been made under this decision, highlighting



the achievements and good level of participation and contribution to the activities in the framework of this group.

**51.** As part of his presentation, he indicated that most of the members of the WGEI are experts on data and information, and therefore they are a group that supports the other working areas of the Forum of Ministers; in this context he emphasized that the WGEI does not define priorities regarding indicators and statistics, but through these it provides support to the implementation of the other topics identified as priorities for the sustainable development of the region.

**52.** He also highlighted the role the WGEI has had in strengthening the environmental information systems in the region, and the capacity building and South-South cooperation activities that have been implemented.

**53.** Mr. Flores said the biggest challenge for the WGEI relates to contributing to the harmonization of the work of ILAC indicators with the indicators to be agreed in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He also mentioned the opportunity to develop indicators that respond to specific needs, either at the subregional or thematic level.

**54.** As an important point, he spoke about the possibility of feeding the agreed indicators, using data and information sources available at the regional level, such as data from remote sensors. In this context he suggested to explore partnerships of the WGEI with initiatives such as the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) or GeoSUR.

**55.** Finally, Mr. Flores reiterated the importance of strengthening capacity building activities at regional level.

**56.** Mr. Juan Bello, Regional Early Warning Coordinator for UNEP, indicated that it is important to articulate the work on indicators with the countries' statistical agencies. He referred to the importance of focusing the work of the WGEI and the harmonization of the environmental indicators in the region, with a tendency towards more efficient schemes of easy implementation by the countries. He explained that the indicators could help in monitoring the state and trends of the environment in the region.

**57.** Jamaica stressed the importance of having indicators and targets, so as to measure progress, and coincided on the fact that it is necessary for statistical agencies to be involved. She requested support for developing useful and comparable indicators in the region. She also considered the importance of developing national statistics in the Caribbean countries with the Samoa Pathway as reference.

**58.** Honduras requested for the proposal of the WGEI working group to be circulated to discuss with the experts of each country in order to contribute to its formulation and implementation

**59.** The Chair suggested finalizing this through a Decision and by asking the Group to undertake specific work. He also suggested producing reports for the discussions that the Ministers will have before the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers.

### **3.7 Regional Council of Government Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production**

**60.** To develop this point, Ms. Edda Fernandez of Mexico made a presentation on the progress of this decision. She spoke on the revision and updating of the regional strategy on sustainable

consumption and production (SCP), which has already integrated the relevant ODS. This regional strategy was developed through public consultations in the region, reflecting the nine priorities of the region on SCP, and is accompanied by its Action Plan 2015-2016. Both the strategy and action plan were approved at the Eighth Meeting of the Regional Council of Experts on SCP, held in Panama, May 2015. She also mentioned, that the region maintained its leadership in the "First International Meeting of the 10YFP" (which was held in New York in May, 2015), presenting the recommendations for action to accelerate the implementation of the Ten Year Framework.

**61.** Ms. Edda Fernandez also mentioned that Brazil is the first country in the region to contribute to the Trust Fund, with a generous donation of USD 1,000,000. She highlighted some important progress in the implementation of programmes such as the "Sustainable public procurement" project in 7 countries with the support of UNEP-SPPEL, as well as progress in promoting "Eco-innovation" for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and the development and implementation of national strategies on SCP in more than 10 countries in the region. She also highlighted the progress with the initiative "SCP for SIDS within the 10YFP" and the initial priorities in the areas of integrated waste management, tourism and sustainable lifestyles. Finally she mentioned some recommendations to strengthen the implementation of SCP, such as strengthening the National Focal Points and the Focal Points of Major Groups, motivate and increase participation of the national focal points, ensure that national and regional priorities are reflected in the 10YFP programmes to speed up its implementation, include and submit the Ten Year Framework and the Regional Strategy on the agendas of different national, regional and multilateral fora, promote South-South cooperation and mainstreaming of SCP, support and jointly develop the Regional mobilization strategy for financing and contribute to the Trust Fund of the 10YFP.

**62.** The Resource Efficiency Regional Coordinator from UNEP, Ms. Adriana Zacarias, mentioned the development of national programmes and monitoring through roundtables that are held with UNEP's support and stressed that it is an efficient tool that does not require many resources and it is very beneficial for countries. She invited the countries concerned to show interest in this topic. She also highlighted the synergies that already exist with other Decisions of the Forum, such as the Environmental Training Network for Sustainable Development, the Decision on Chemicals and Waste and the Decision related to SIDS. She mentioned the global SCP portal in which each country must participate by providing more information. Finally, she mentioned that more efforts are needed to integrate the work on SCP in the work of other ministries and industry sector. Good examples already exist in the region working with ministries; as well as with the private sector.

**63.** Countries stressed that a direct link should be established between SCP and ILAC highlighting that the relation between thematic contents would promote greater results. They also stressed the need to actively involve the private sector, through strengthening and visibility of the work on sustainable industrial manufacturing processes and support for Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) to benefit from the SCP approach and support for the role and expertise of Centers for Cleaner Production (CP) in the region.

**64.** Costa Rica noted that there should be a common language for all, one that is simple and understandable to citizens outside the environmental sector. In addition, synergies should be identified to obtain resources in connection with other, closely aligned objectives.

**65.** Barbados expressed appreciation for the work of UNEP and of the Council on this issue. He called for a follow-up to the Caribbean SIDS meeting held in January 2015 where SCP priorities

were addressed. Regarding the recently completed 10YFP survey and given the extensive nature of SCP, he expressed the need to establish criteria to assist in evaluating SCP policies and practices. Along these lines, Ecuador highlighted the organization of the I National Dialogue held at the end of October 2015.

**66.** The UNEP Deputy Regional Director added that it is important to mainstream this issue in the sustainability agenda, and to involve all sectors, given that often it is not a matter of using more resources, but rather of allocating them differently.

**67.** Ms. Fernández suggested identifying specific actions for tangible results in the short term. There are strategies that have been implemented without the necessary communication and visibility to demonstrate the benefits of SCP.

### 3.8 Regional initiative on Rio Principio 10

**68.** The presentation on Principle 10 was given by Ms. Andrea Brusco, UNEP Regional Coordinator of Environmental Law, who presented a summary of the main actions taken to implement the decision, including the symposium on Principle 10 held in Nairobi, and Resolution 13 of UNEA-1, promoting this issue. She detailed the joint work between UNEP and ECLAC for the implementation of regional and subregional activities of creation and strengthening of capacities for the implementation of Principle 10 and the Bali Guidelines on the issuance of national legislation on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters. Additionally she mentioned that during the first quarter of 2016, UNEP will publish the Guide for the implementation of the Bali Guidelines.

**69.** With regard to the process of negotiation of a regional instrument, Ms. Karina Martínez, of ECLAC's Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division, took the floor, explaining that this initiative has been supported by 20 countries in the region, and presented a summary on the important meetings held towards finalizing the negotiations of a regional instrument for the implementation of Principle 10 at the end of 2016. She informed that six publications have been produced, in addition to monthly bulletins, including a publication on the ECLAC website.

**70.** The representative of Chile, who serves as Co-Chair of the negotiating committee for a regional instrument, called for the countries to join and participate actively in this process. He recalled the declarations on this issue adopted in the multilateral setting, and pointing out that the negotiations are expected to conclude in 2016. He also emphasized the relevance of integrating this topic into ILAC.

**71.** The comments of the different representatives of the countries coincide agreed in the fact that the implementation of Principle 10 on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters is topic of importance for the region and, as one of the core topics of governance, it must be included in the ILAC. They also highlighted the interagency work undertaken by UNEP and ECLAC, as a good practice that can be replicated in other topics such as the support to the region in the implementation of Agenda 2030.

**72.** After recognizing the progress in the negotiation process of a regional instrument for which ECLAC is the Secretariat, the representative of Jamaica stressed the importance to conduct this process in accordance with the rules of the United Nations to ensure the inclusiveness of all

countries of the region as well as with regard the definition of public participation. She also underlined the importance of sub regional level discussions, the link of Principle 10 with environmental education and the need for judges and prosecutors to be engaged on access to justice in environmental matters.

**73.** Regarding the modalities for public participation in the regional negotiation process, the representative of El Salvador recognized that there are persistent challenges, adding that a new round of consultations would be relevant to align the rules of procedure.

**74.** The representative of Barbados emphasized the importance of the national implementation of Principle 10, the opportunities of South-South cooperation for capacity building, the creation of a repository of good practices and its dissemination as well as technical assistance at national level for the interested countries.

**75.** The representative of Mexico, pointed out the importance of public participation in this process, and suggested incorporating environmental education. The definition of this instrument poses a considerable challenge that requires time and proper conditions, to ensure that the realities and conditions of Latin America and the Caribbean are well reflected.

**76.** He further mentioned the importance of having coherence as a region regarding the participation of civil society in different regional and international fora in particular in the definition of the rules for public participation in UNEA. He stated that the process needs to be reflected in the ILAC, to conceptualize participation and to establish lines of action on environmental education and access to justice.

**77.** He added that as UNEP is undertaking efforts with ECLAC to advance the process, UNEP's support is also needed in implementing Agenda 2030. He commented that the challenge is to involve those who are currently not onboard with the environmental issue.

**78.** Colombia noted that the three rights of access need to be considered, particularly access to justice, as opposed to merely encouraging social participation. She recalled that the negotiation of a regional instrument is currently open, and that a consensus on the form of the instrument has not been reached yet and should not be brought to the Forum for negotiation.

**79.** With regard to the involvement of judicial branches in issues related to access to environmental justice, UNEP's representative reported that there is an International Advisory Committee of Judges that include the participation of Chief Justices and magistrates in the countries of the region that promote issues on the rules of law.

### 3.9 Cooperation on climate change

**80.** The Deputy Regional Director of UNEP presented on the issue, summarizing the activities being carried out to define the regional cooperation programme on climate change. She mentioned that such programme seeks to be a framework for South-South and triangular cooperation, in areas of interest to the region. She also pointed out that a number of analyses and technical workshops had been conducted to bring greater integration and provide increased communication of scientific and economic information relevant to climate change, with the objective of establishing a regional platform for the exchange of knowledge and technology

transfer. Additionally she indicated that, within the framework of the Euroclima Project, cooperation has been promoted, and progress has been made on matters relating to legislation on climate change.

**81.** The Chair of the meeting pointed out that there are multiple challenges in bringing about specific actions and lines of cooperation in the framework of the Forum.

**82.** A number of countries commented on the presentation. Peru indicated that one result of the XX Meeting of Ministers could be to have a Regional Platform on Climate Change. Honduras mentioned that the portfolio of projects that are being developed in the region to mobilize resources from the Green Fund could be an element to be considered towards the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers.

**83.** Cuba reiterated their willingness to cooperate with the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on capacity building activities, in particular on early warning and monitoring systems.

**84.** In conclusion, it was agreed to review the Regional Cooperation Programme on Climate Change based on the results of the COP-21 and considering the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, as well as the establishment of a regional platform on climate change.

#### Agenda item 4: Recommendations for the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers

**85.** Under this agenda item the following items on the main recommendations for the next meeting of the Forum were analyzed.

**86.** Regarding ILAC, the following steps were agreed for the updating of ILAC, based on the following elements:

- ILAC could be considered as a tool for sustainable development and an important contribution to advancing Agenda 2030 at the regional level;
- Aligning Agenda 2030 and the Samoa Pathway to reflect the priorities where the Forum, is able e to contribute to the political dialogue and policies, that require regional cooperation,
- Consider the progress/outcomes presented by various working groups and networks during the intersessional meeting.
- Include a section on means of implementation, including South-South cooperation, technology, national resources, private and external resource mobilization, partnerships, among others
- Discuss the order of implementation of the priorities
- Monitoring and evaluation (indicators and data system)

**87.** The following work calendar was agreed:

Date	Action
9 December	Comments and inputs to the draft text sent to the Secretariat
18 December	New draft distributed
18 January – 5 February	18 January – 5 February 4 online discussions (objectives, operational guidelines, priorities , means of implementation)
26 February	Final draft

**88.** The countries provided recommendations and suggestions on issues to be included in updating ILAC. The GRULAC representative cited the importance of the issue of human settlements, which is part of Goal 11 of the SDGs, emphasizing the importance of the sustainability of cities, and suggested that a paragraph on this be included in the ILAC document. The Dominican Republic, for its part, suggested including as priority elements in the regional position a section on means of implementation, South-South cooperation, technology, national resources, mobilization of private and foreign resources, partnerships, etc., and cited the importance of discussing the implementation of priorities.

**89.** Colombia suggested establishing some fundamental points for consideration as regional priorities, including synergies among multilateral agreements, eradication of poverty, patterns of production and consumption, sustainable use of natural capital, and strengthening of infrastructure and populations for climate change resilience.

**90.** The UNEP Secretariat recalled that a document had been prepared analyzing the experiences of the Forum and suggested reviewing the document to see if any adjustments are necessary.

**91.** Regarding Decision 2 on Environmental Training the following was concluded:

- Finalize the accomplishment of the ETN workplan 2014-2016, namely:
  - III International course on Education for Sustainable Development (11 - 29 January 2016, Chile) (par. 1.a)
  - Support the follow-up and monitoring of the commitments from the VII Iberoamerican Congress on Environmental Education (par. 1 b)
  - II Latin American Forum on Universities and Environment and national universities fora (par. 1.c)
  - Training of judges and prosecutors (par. 1.d)

- ETN annual meeting in 2016 in the Dominican Republic, prior to the XX Forum of Ministers of the Environment of LAC (par. 3)
- Resource mobilization strategy and potential alliances (par. 5)
- Identify modalities to expand the network to English-speaking Caribbean countries.
- Promote the engagement of Caribbean Universities in the MESCA (Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in Caribbean Universities) Initiative.
- Take into consideration the gender perspective (with particular emphasis on rural women) and inter-cultural education.
- Develop indicators on the impact of environmental education and stronger link between environmental education and environmental management.
- Explore cooperation with the scientific community to promote research aligned with environmental policies.
- Provide support to national processes to elevate the discussion on environmental education to the society widely.
- Ensure linkages with the new Latin America and Caribbean Initiative on Sustainable Development (ILAC) and various ODS (e.g. sustainable consumption and production; education).
- Support the facilitation of an international environmental film festival based on the experience and cooperation from Mexico.
- Promote further cooperation with UNESCO and, particularly with the Global Programme of Action on Education for Sustainable Development.

**92.** With regard to Decision 3 on Principle 10, the following was concluded:

- The implementation of Principle 10 on Access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters, is of importance for the region and, as an essential element of Governance, it should be included in the ILAC.
- The interagency work of ECLAC and UNEP in this topic is highlighted as good practice that can be replicated to provide support to the region in other areas such as the follow up of the Agenda 2030.
- Implementation of Principle 10 at national level was highlighted as a crucial issue. The countries of the region have made progress and highlight the importance of South-South cooperation for capacity strengthening, and the creation of a repository of good practices and its dissemination, as well as technical assistance for interested countries.
- It was recognized the ongoing progress in the negotiation of a regional instrument, with ECLAC as technical secretariat, with a call for all countries of the region to join this initiative. The importance of its alignment with UN rules was highlighted, to assure its inclusive nature for all countries of the region, as well as for determining the participation of the public.

- It was highlighted the relationship of the principle 10 process with environmental education as well as the need to involve judges and prosecutors in discussions on access to justice in environmental matters.
- There is a need to consolidate consistent criteria, as a region, with regard to the participation of civil society in different regional and international forums, in particular in the definition of the modalities of participation of the public in the UNEA

**93.** With regard to Decision 4 on Chemicals and Waste the following was concluded:

As the general objective, to upgrade the chemicals and waste agenda, recovering the traditional leadership of the region in this area, and strengthening cooperation actions

- To establish a regional network of experts on chemicals and waste, with the objective of (inter alia):
  - a. Strengthen regional cooperation
  - b. Facilitate exchange of experiences
  - c. Provide recommendations at policy and action level for consideration of the Forum of Ministers
- With the support of the network, to establish a regional plan on cooperation on chemicals and waste, taking into account existing networks and initiatives (e.g. BRS Conventions, SAICM,...), and in agreement with priorities reflected in ILAC
- To use the Forum of Ministers to agree on regional priority issues on chemicals and waste to be raised at relevant international forums, such as UNEA
- To strengthen the area of **waste management** (in broad sense, including municipal solid waste), in synergy with other initiatives (e.g. 10YFP), and considering emerging priority issues such as health impacts.

**94.** Regarding Decision 5 on SIDS it was concluded that:

- The meeting recognized the need for adequate representation of Caribbean SIDS in Nairobi in order to participate effectively in the work of UNEA, and request the Ministers to explore various institutional options for achieving this objective.
- With respect to decision 5.2 the Secretariat informed the meeting that another opportunity would be made available to member states to review and make comments on the Draft UNEP MTS 2018-2021.
- The need was recognized for Caribbean SIDS to increase their participation within the Environmental Training Network including the provision of contributions.
- There should be a clear strategy to integrate SIDS within every organ of the Forum to allow for the exchange of experiences, expertise and best practices.
- Recognize the need for better integration and further elaboration of the SIDS initiative on SCP into the overall institutional and programming framework of the 10YFP on SCP

**95.** With regard to Decision 6 on Environmental Indicators the following was concluded:



- Contribute towards the regionalization of the SDG indicators, and the harmonisation with the Samoa Pathway. This will imply to identify and agree on the objectives and targets most relevant for the region, and as decided by the Forum of Ministers.
- Support all the other groups and areas of work of ILAC in the definition and building of indicators, including implementation and performance indicators
- In case of considered relevant, the WGEI will propose a set of indicators responding to specific thematic areas relevant for the ILAC and as decided by the Forum of Ministers. This set of indicators could also have a geographic scope (for instance, Mesoamerican countries or the Caribbean).
- Collaborate in the production of regional assessments based on indicators. This requires the commitment from the countries in order to document those indicators as decided within the framework of the ILAC.
- Explore and evaluate the feasibility and relevance of using other sources of data and information (e.g., not produced directly by the countries) to produce the indicators. This option is being already considered in the context of the SDGs Indicators, among other because it helps to fast track the indicators work, and allows for better comparability between countries. There are collaboration opportunities with initiatives such as the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and GEO-Sur.
- Strengthen the capacities in the region in relation to expertise and technology transfer. This might imply the organization of workshops, training courses as well as country visits as required. It could also include the transfer of informatics tools and technologies, together with the necessary training. UNEP Live and the NRS could be a good option for those countries that still don't have any platforms in place.
- Consolidate the collaboration with initiatives such as the project "Development and Strengthening of Official Environmental Statistics through a Regional Framework in Latin America and the Caribbean".
- Develop a work plan for the 2016-2017 period including this and other actions as mandated by the *Forum of Ministers*.

**96.** With regard to Decision 7 on Sustainable Consumption and Production, the group welcomed the work and progress on SCP and reaffirmed the commitment of the region on SCP and the 10YFP. Key issues highlighted are:

- The need to engage more actively the private sector: to this end member states highlighted key areas such as: strengthening and highlighting more the work on industrial processes and manufacturing, supporting the regional need to work on SCP benefits for SMEs, supporting the role and technical knowledge of the Cleaner Production Centers in the region and tailoring the SCP approach and benefits to attract the industry/private sector.
- Build and strengthen synergies with other decision of the Forum and the ILAC: important synergies have been identified and built in the areas of indicators, education and waste management. These should be strengthened and replicated. The SCP work is relevant for the new "network on chemical and waste" that the Forum is suggesting. It was also recommended that the *SCP*

Regional Council revise the new version of the ILAC in order to better reflect the progress, synergies and regional priority areas on SCP.

- SCP as cross-cutting issues is relevant to many other ministries, sectors and the Agenda 2030: more efforts are needed in integrating SCP in the work of other ministries and sector and industry. Good examples already exist in the region working with ministries and private sector.
- SCP relevance to SDGs: members highlighted the relevance of SCP as an articulating axis in the application of an integrated approach for the SDGs implement. The 10YFP has developed as well possible SCP indicators to inform the elaboration of SDGs indicators, which could be relevant for the ILAC Group on indicators.
- Funding sources and mobilization of resources: the group welcomed the contribution of Brazil to the 10YFP. It was highlighted the need to identify other funding sources and cooperation mechanisms, including south-south cooperation and strategic partnerships, and make the necessary links to other relevant areas such as green growth.
- Promote South-South cooperation for the implementation of SCP policies and initiatives at regional and sub-regional levels, and acknowledge the importance of cooperation with all Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Note the ongoing work to establish of the “SCP for SIDS Initiative” based on the Samoa Pathway and efforts in the short term to cooperation in the area on sustainable lifestyles and education in Caribbean SIDS.
- Communication and outreach of SCP work: an important priority that needs to reach and involve the “non-converted”, adapt the SCP language to private sector and other ministries is important.
- Identification and increase visibility of SCP best practices in the region: more efforts are needed to increase visibility of SCP, this includes more active participation of the region in the Global SCP Clearinghouse and exchange of experiences to inspire and support the work within the LAC region and in other regions; as well as for strengthening the LAC leadership in the 10YFP implementation
- 10YFP Flagship projects: the region requested more information and regional participation in the flagship projects that the 10YFP Secretariat is developing.
- Include and present the 10YFP and the Regional SCP Strategy in other relevant fora: national, regional and multilateral.

**97.** With regard to Decision 8 on Atmospheric Pollution it was concluded to:

- Recognize the work delivered by the Regional Network during the intersessional period
- Completing the implementation of the work plan 2015-2016 and prepare the corresponding 2016-2018 period
- Strengthen the health component and cooperation with PAHO and the Ministries of Health
- Finalize and disseminate the guidelines for the development of national plans
- Develop cooperation activities to advance on themes such as diagnostics, inventories, monitoring and registries, among others
- Upload information in the community of practice in UNEP-Live
- Continue the training activities in both languages

- Consider other relevant initiatives being implemented in the region such as the Global Fuel Efficiency Initiative and Climate and Clean Air Coalition.
- Dissemination of results of the regional evaluation of SLCPs and definition of cooperation activities
  - Calendar of regional and national activities, open to the participation of experts from other countries
  - Share during the UNEA-2 the work done in the region and promote more support to strengthen actions in the region

**98.** With regard to Decision 9 on Climate Change it was agreed to review the Regional Cooperation Programme on Climate Change based on the results of the COP21 and considering the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, as well as the establishment of a regional platform on climate change.

#### Agenda item 5: Information on preparations for the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers

**99.** For this agenda item, the Environment Minister of Colombia, Gabriel Vallejo, and Mexico's Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Rafael Pacchiano Alamán, joined the meeting.

**100.** Mr. Pacchiano recalled the XIX Forum of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean, and summarized the achievements on the implementation of the decisions in which Mexico has been its Chair. He thanked UNEP for its work as the leading organization at the global level on environmental issues, and pointed to the joint report, reflecting the cooperative efforts of all of the countries. He stressed the importance of continuity and of strengthening this cooperative effort in implementing Agenda 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the results of the COP21 climate change meeting. He also offered full support to Colombia as the host of the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean.

**101.** Next, Minister Gabriel Vallejo took the floor and congratulated Mexico for its work as Chair of the Forum, and reaffirmed the invitation to Cartagena, Colombia, in 2016. He reiterated the need to continue with the agenda that Mexico proposed at the XIX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers. He mentioned that a proposed agenda has been prepared with topics including climate change, biodiversity, and coastal and marine issues, chemicals and waste, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and the preparation for UNEA 2 in May 2016. He invited countries to formulate recommendations on the proposed topics of the agenda, in order to make the meeting a participatory event, and to achieve the best possible results, as well as to provide recommendations on possible panelists.

**102.** The countries confirmed their intention to participate in the meeting. Peru suggested for a presentation to be made on the work of the Intergovernmental Resources Panel, during the meeting of high level experts, which was noted by the government of Colombia.

**103.** Cuba recognized the spirit of cooperation and regional consensus in the works in preparation for the XX Meeting of the Forum, and recommended for future meetings to continue with the same spirit of cooperation and sharing of experiences.

**104.** The representatives of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ecuador, Jamaica, and Dominica thanked the ministers for their remarks and their participation in the meeting, noting that it highlighted the importance of the Forum of Ministers.

#### Agenda item 6: Regional dialogue in preparing for UNEA-2

**105.** For this agenda item, a live videoconference by Skype was conducted with representatives of countries that have permanent representation in before UNEP in Nairobi, in preparation for UNEA-2. The Chair of the meeting welcomed the participants and gave the floor to the representative of Peru as member of the UNEA-1 Bureau.

**106.** The representative from Peru, José González Norris, provided a summary of the activities carried out since the first session of the UNEA in Nairobi, as member of the UNEA-1 Bureau as well as on the preparations for UNEA-2.

**107.** The Colombian Ambassador in Nairobi, Ms. María Eugenia Correa, appreciated the space provided in the meeting to share with the countries of the region information on the debates that have taken place in preparation for UNEA-2, and added that the Cuban Ambassador, participating via Skype, had been a strong supporter for the Caribbean SIDS in Nairobi. She also added the importance of articulating the Forum of Ministers with them in Nairobi to contribute to the construction of regional positions.

**108.** The Ambassador proceeded to read a statement on the common positions of GRULAC in Nairobi regarding UNEA-2 and about the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR). GRULAC Nairobi reiterated its position that there should be assurances that no more than two parallel sessions will be organised per day during the OECPR and that resources should be mobilized to ensure the broadest participation by developing countries.

**109.** With regard to the ministerial session of UNEA, she commented that the GRULAC shares the idea of keeping one subject for the high level session which will allow Ministers to focus on the debate, the implementation of the environmental dimension of the SDGs in the 2030 Agenda. She also underlined the concern on the limited time that Ministers will have to debate on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, and dedicate the same three hours to the topic of health and environment. She emphasized the importance for the ministers to have the necessary space in the meeting to debate on the experiences and good practices regarding the main issue which is the implementation of the environmental dimension of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. She added that note has been taken on the documentation about the Organization and results of the high level segment, prepared by the UNEA Secretariat, but nonetheless, it poses more doubts on the structure of the segment, and therefore the debate must continue on the same before adopting any decisions in this regard. In her opinion any other topic should be addressed in the margins of the high level segment in an informal setting that would not commit ministers to participate nor lead to binding results.

**110.** Looking into the expected results of UNEA-2, she commented that deliberation of the format of the final result should be continued, exploring the basis for an understanding. In this sense, GRULAC has requested more information to the current Chair of UNEA, who has demonstrated a great disposition to carry a process of negotiation with the countries of the different regions and informal, more open, transparent and inclusive consultations.

**111.** Regarding the participation of major groups, she indicated that negotiations and informal dialogues are being promoted to achieve an agreement on rules of participation to have the necessary consensus on this topic in OECPR-2.

**112.** With regard to the change of the UNEA cycle, she commented that consensus has not been reached. She added that before a decision is made, there needs to be assurance that there will not be any budgetary implications and that the time of permanence of the members of the Bureau will not be affected during the following period that corresponds to the region.

**113.** Cuba's Ambassador in Nairobi indicated that the remarks of the Colombian Ambassador, on behalf of GRULAC, reflect the regional position. He indicated that the conclusions of the Intersessional Meeting are helpful in completing the revision of ILAC and provide elements to the OECPR, to be held in February 2016.

**114.** In relation to defining issues that will be discussed in UNEA-2, the representative of Mexico requested the reasons for the selection of Health as a main topic for UNEA 2. He stated that poverty should be the meeting's key issue, and added that it is important to know how work with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is proceeding on this issue, and what results are expected. He added that the resolution adopted in the framework of the World Health Organization completely covers the many links that exist between health and environment, and that it is recommended for UNEP to consider how to contribute to its implementation.

**115.** Jamaica indicated that, to date, the Caribbean countries have not had an opportunity to express their views on the agenda discussed by the CPR. She expressed concern over the result of the meetings, particularly with regard to Health and Environment, an area in which the region has been a "champion of the issue."

**116.** With regard to the results of UNEA-2, the representative of Mexico pointed out that it is important to identify and structure a clear and concrete message addressed to other processes, related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, seeking coherence and synergies with other entities in the United Nations System. He added that historically, the region has promoted the strengthening of UNEP's presence in the region to respond to the needs of the countries in a more efficient and prompt manner. In updating the ILAC, this issue should be adequately considered.

**117.** With regard to the participation of stakeholders, he highlighted that if the region is committed to the implementation of Principle 10, such commitment should be reflected in the regional position in subsidiary bodies of UNEP. He proposed the establishment of a working mechanism between our region and the representatives in Nairobi to be duly informed and improve the flow of information, particularly for the countries without representation in Nairobi.

**118.** The Colombian Ambassador in Nairobi emphasized that, as a region, the countries should promote arriving at the meeting of the Forum of Ministers and at UNEA-2 with articulated, defined and consolidated positions.

**119.** The Chair of the Forum suggested for Mexico and Colombia to facilitate the dialogue to identify key proposals to submit at UNEA-2. In this sense, he stated that participants can send their proposals to Mexico and Colombia in order to integrate the proposals of the region before February 2016 to be presented during the OECPR and UNEA-2 meetings, and suggested the Secretariat to integrate the comments. In addition, there were comments on the possibility of working in one or two draft resolutions for UNEA-2: one on strengthening capacities for compiling

and management of information and indicators; and a second one on sustainable consumption and production.

**120.** UNEP's representative informed that an internet page, called "*myUNEA*," had been established to share information and to provide an additional tool for discussion. She indicated that this could be useful to the region's countries and invited all to use it.

**121.** Dominica suggested the inclusion of the Major Groups, to include the participation of other sectors, such as the private sector. The Dominican Republic recommended the inclusion of more measurable goals with regard to forests, in light of the sustainable management and monitoring being carried out by the Caribbean countries. Brazil and the SIDS stated that there should be a clear strategy for strengthening the regional position, so that the countries can exchange information in a timely fashion.

**122.** Mr. Munyaradzi Chenje, of UNEP's Regional Support Office in Nairobi, explained that in December, a new draft of the Medium-term Strategy 2018-2021 and the Programme of Work for the 2016-2018 biennium will be distributed. With regard to the UNEA cycle, he explained the importance of synchronizing it with other relevant processes that UNEA should contribute to.

**123.** Mr. Harris, from UNEP, indicated that UNEA should and can contribute to follow up, monitor, evaluate and revise the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, and also inform the related political processes. He added that the agreements of the High Level Policy Segment should have an important role in these processes.

**124.** Colombia referred to other themes which implications needed to be analyzed deciding whether the expected outcome of the UNEA High Level Segment is through a summary of the Chair or through a document negotiated by the parties; the region should decide who will represent and occupy the Chair of UNEA-2, which corresponds to the region, and consider the implications of the change of the UNEA cycle on the chairing.

**125.** Regarding the election of the next Chair of UNEA-2, the delegates agreed to address this topic during the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, to have enough time for preparation.

**126.** With regard to the decision on SIDS, it was recognized that in order to have adequate representation of the SIDS in the works towards UNEA, it is necessary to explore different alternatives. In this regard, UNEP indicated that there will be opportunity for member states to review and make comments to UNEP's Programme of Work which will be disseminated in December.

**127.** Barbados expressed gratitude to the Chair of the Forum in facilitating the participation of the GRULAC PRs in the Intersessional. He acknowledged the continued support by GRULAC PRs and in particular Cuba in its support for SIDS. Building on UN GA Resolution 69/15, he welcomed the proposed resolution to the upcoming UNEA by the Government of Samoa regarding the implementation of the Samoa Pathway. He asks that the GRULAC PRs support this important resolution and stated Caribbean SIDS stands ready to collaborate on this matter. He emphasized the need for continued cooperation within GRULAC as UNEA 2 approaches in order to formulate solid positions in the interests of the region. Finally, he suggested that the Forum should build on the experience of the Intersessional to find new modalities for deepening the region's formal relationship with the UNEA.

**128.** To finalize this part of the agenda, Mr. José Miguel Fragoso, of SEMARNAT, presented the interactive platform (CHM), mentioned earlier, of the Forum of Ministers, which allows the delegates to exchange information and create discussion forums. It was agreed that UNEP will facilitate the process of exchange of information in preparation for the next OECPR-2 and UNEA-2 meetings.

**Agenda item 7: Review and approval of the meeting's main conclusions**

**129.** Under this agenda item, recommendations discussed in agenda item 4 were adopted.

**Agenda item 8: Other matters**

**130.** No further issues were raised under this agenda item.

**Agenda item 9: Closure of the meeting**

**131.** The participants thanked Mexico for the work in the organization of the meeting as well as the secretariat for its contribution and facilitation services.

**132.** The Chair thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting and thanked his team for all of their work during the event, which concluded at 3:30 p.m.