

Update of the Latin American Initiative for Sustainable Development

I. Background

1. The Rio Conference of 1992 was convened once it was recognized that patterns of production and consumption, especially in developed countries, had reached unsustainable levels, jeopardizing important ecosystems, species and their sustainability, as well as the stability of environmental goods and services. This had an adverse effect not only on the continuity of productive activities but also on the quality of life itself and the Conference was intended to demonstrate how this situation could be reversed to the benefit of all.
2. The Barbados Programme of Action, adopted by the 1994 United Nations Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the first post-UNCED Conference, clearly outlines the key issues to be addressed in pursuit of sustainable development of Small Islands Developing States (SIDS). During the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in Apia on 1 to 4 September 2014, the document titled SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway)", which constitutes a basis for action on the agreed priority areas and that would result in stepping up international cooperation and action to face the unique and particular vulnerabilities of SIDS and ensure its sustainable development, was adopted.
3. Ten years after Rio-92, the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean recognised that significant progress has been made in some areas, especially in building awareness and in the entry into force of national and international legal norms. Nevertheless, they also recognised there are still important challenges to be met in the region, although new imperatives have emerged to make sustainable development a reality and to bring about needed changes in present development models. In this sense, they highlighted the importance of reversing tendencies of degradation of both the natural and urban environments and, in particular, to take vigorous steps to eradicate poverty and inequity –together with the impact they cause- that so afflict the countries of the region.
4. The initiative recognizes the importance of sub-regional and regional processes to promote sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean, within the framework of the Platform for Action on the Road to Johannesburg 2002, approved in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in October 2001. Launching a Latin American and Caribbean Initiative is justified by the need to give a practical direction to the process of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and to reflect the region's unique characteristics, visions and goals, while being particularly cognizant of the validity of the principle of States' common but differentiated responsibilities.
5. Almost 15 years after its adoption, the framework of ILAC has allowed the identification of programmes and projects, integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions, and transforming, on the basis of an ethical foundation, sustainable development into a strategic

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priority in Latin America and the Caribbean. In light of recent developments at the global and regional level, the Ministers decided to update the ILAC.

6. Through the ILAC, actions at national and regional level and cooperation to address environmental problems of the region have been promoted. Likewise, the mobilisation of resources for cooperation, including South-South cooperation, for the implementation of projects to strengthen the capacities of the institutions responsible for the environment and other stakeholders to promote the integration of environmental sustainability into policies and programmes, have also been promoted.

7. The results of the implementation of ILAC are in the reports submitted every two years to the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean. Some examples of the accomplishments are:

- The establishment of networks of experts on ILAC priority subjects, such as the network of ILAC environmental indicators, which has identified indicators to measure progress in its implementation, as well as common methodologies; the Council of Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production, which was key for the approval of the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Conference on Sustainable Development, 2012, and that actively participates in its implementation; the Intergovernmental Network on Atmospheric Pollution, whose work led to the adoption and implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on Atmospheric Pollution; the Environmental Training Network through which an active community of practice has been consolidated among education units of Ministries of Environment, resulting in the exchange of experiences on policies and programmes on environmental education at national and local level as well as increased cooperation between universities and ministries of environment in the development of environmental indicators of universities.
- The promotion of the interests and priorities of the region in international discussions and negotiations such as the development of an international regime for access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from it, reflected in the Nagoya Protocol; the meetings of climate change negotiators, which have allowed the region to better understand their concerns and building common positions, as best as possible.
- The adoption of concrete actions through the cooperation of developed countries, multilateral and regional organizations, including financing, and by strengthening South-South cooperation. South-South cooperation has been promoted through networks of experts and the implementation of joint projects at the regional and subregional levels, and the development of technical studies and evaluations for informed decision-making on environmental policies, such as assessments on the environmental situation at regional, subregional or local levels, and others on emerging and priority issues for the region.

8. Twenty years after the adoption of Agenda 21, the document "The Future We Want" was approved within the framework of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio + 20. On 25 September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity, it also seeks to strengthen universal peace and access to justice.

9. Member States of the United Nations adopted a resolution recognising that the greatest challenge in the world today is to eradicate poverty and affirm that there cannot be sustainable development without achieving this. The Agenda proposes 17 Objectives with 169 goals which

are integrated and indivisible which encompass economic, social and environmental spheres. In this regard, States expressed their resolve to protect the planet against degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainable management of natural resources and urgent measures to address climate change, in order to meet the needs of present and future generations; and to ensure that all human beings can enjoy a prosperous and fulfilling life, and because economic, social and technological progress takes place in harmony with nature.

10. In the agreement, it is emphasized that currently the depletion of natural resources and the negative effects of environmental degradation, including desertification, drought, land degradation, freshwater shortages and loss of biodiversity, increase and exacerbate the difficulties faced by humanity. It is also emphasized that climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our time and its adverse effects undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development. It stresses that the survival of many societies and biological support systems of the planet are endangered. But it also highlights that it is a moment that offers immense opportunities, considering that significant progress to address many development problems have been made.

II. ILAC Objectives

11. In light of the results of the implementation of ILAC, as well as the commitments made by the region in the multilateral framework, and changes at regional and global level, the objectives of the Latin American and the Caribbean Initiative are as follows:

- a) To consolidate and continue efforts being made in Latin America and the Caribbean, at different levels of Government and civil society, to incorporate environmental sustainability, through the application of an integrated approach in putting into effect programmes and projects of interest to the region so as to comply with the recommendations of Agenda 21 and in particular the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Samoa Pathway, highlighting the effective implementation and the development of participatory mechanisms;
- b) To develop, in selected areas, cooperation actions based on the political will of States that encourage participation by the private sector and civil society to promote investments that may generate sustainable productive activities and maintain sustainable livelihoods while, at the same time, allowing for the conservation and sustainable use of essential environmental goods and services;
- c) To promote, on a foundation of ethics, the implementation of sustainable development models backed by public policies designed based on the scientific knowledge, that facilitate the development and application of clean technologies, financing sources, human resources capacity-building, institutional strengthening for sustainable development, as well as sustainability indicators to monitor progress in its implementation, taking into account each country's social, economic, environmental and political conditions, or to the needs of sub-regional groups of countries; and
- d) To contribute, within a political framework, to identifying and prioritising financial, technical and institutional mechanisms to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Samoa Pathway, thus facilitating the transfer of, access to and development of technology and knowledge and promoting the adoption of suitable

regulatory frameworks, as well as to contribute to the dialogue in the framework of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

12. This Initiative will also identify suitable topics for harmonization and cooperation with fora of other regions, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Asia and Pacific, among others.

III. Operational Guidelines for the Initiative

13. The operational guidelines of this Initiative are:

- a. To reinforce positions adopted at and consolidated after Rio 1992 to:
 - i. Make progress in the accomplishment of the multilateral commitments, including those under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Samoa Pathway, as well as those reflected in the multilateral environmental agreements and other global agreements, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change agreements, the 10 Year Programme Framework on Sustainable consumption and production, and the Aichi targets, among others.
 - ii. Comply with the commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Doha Declaration so as to ensure access to markets and the availability of funds required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in support of developing countries' efforts;
 - iii. Highlight 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.
 - iv. Ensure the full implementation of Rio Principle 10, regarding access to information and environmental justice, strengthening the participation of relevant non-governmental stakeholders and the transparency in the decision-making processes.
 - v. Contribute to an inclusive and resilient economic growth to face potential global and regional crises, addressing the economic, social and environmental vulnerability of countries of the region which undermines their capacity to achieve sustainable development and economic integration.
 - vi. Move towards a development model that promotes transformational change, including changing the metrics of development and measuring profitability beyond economics and promoting the welfare of people and the planet, consolidating a new ethical practice for sustainable development.
 - vii. Recognise, demonstrate and incorporate the value of ecosystems and their services in public and private investment decision-making processes, prioritizing based on the environmental, social and economic impacts.
 - viii. Establish new and strengthen existing public-private partnerships to promote the technical-scientific progress contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and the implementation of an integrated approach to sustainable development.
 - ix. Promote a participatory and inclusive follow-up and monitoring process of ILAC.
 - x. Fully implement the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities of States, and the respect for the sovereign rights of each country over its natural resources;

- xi. Reiterate the commitment to the precautionary principle as defined in the Rio Declaration, as a key component of environmental policy, so as to safeguard our natural and social heritage;
- xii. Urge developed countries to fulfil their commitment to allocate 7% of their GDP to ODA, as reiterated in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;
- xiii. Urge developed countries to fulfil their commitment to support Small Island Developing States of the region in the implementation of the Samoa Pathway, and countries of the region to support its implementation through regional cooperation and other means as appropriate.
- xiv. Mobilise resources and assistance, national and from multilateral financial institutions, cooperation and regional and subregional organizations to support programmes and projects identified in the framework of this Initiative.

b) These guidelines will be followed when implementing the programmes and projects intended to face the region's sustainable development challenges, while keeping within an ethical framework by:

- i. Promoting sustainable economic growth within the boundaries of the planet and establishing mechanisms and instruments to confront new sources of instability by fostering internal savings and private capital flows.
- ii. Supporting the implementation of public policies aimed at reducing poverty and social inequality by creating jobs and promoting sustainable development with justice, equity and social inclusion.
- iii. Implementing integrated human health and environment measures to ensure that more recognition is given to the health and well-being of the people of the region, and that those measures are systematically and effectively translated into policies and programmes.
- iv. Underlining the urge to achieve sustainable consumption and production patterns, in particular the growing importance of awareness by consumers and enterprises of how essential it is to apply concepts that imply social and environmental responsibilities.
- v. Developing new sustainable bases of competitiveness for the region's productive structure towards its comprehensive insertion in the world economy. This implies proposing strategies to achieve the effective opening of external markets, above all in developed countries, an essential condition for attaining the objective of sustainable development in the region.
- vi. Creating or strengthening economic, tax and fiscal instruments to promote sustainable development.
- vii. Stimulating the adoption, by governments and the productive sector, of voluntary instruments (certifications, ISO 14000, certification for sustainable tourism, etc.) applicable to the sustainable development process.
- viii. Initiating or continuing environmental or natural resources evaluation processes to make better use of the region's comparative advantages, incorporating indicators relating to environmental liabilities and assets to permit their inclusion in national accounting systems.

- ix. Supporting regional action and sub-regional efforts, in particular those of the Caribbean (SIDS), the Amazon countries (ACTO), the Andean sub-region (CAN), MERCOSUR and Central America (CCAD).
- x. Strengthening regional, sub-regional and national institutions, as well as sub-national mechanisms, to implement, follow up and monitor policies, programmes and projects deriving from this Initiative.
- xi. Formulating strategies to incorporate transfer and develop technologies to be supported by mobilizing and expanding existing financial institutions' resources.
- xii. Enhancing or adjusting existing systems of sustainability indicators that respond to the region's social, economic and political characteristics, or building such systems.
- xiii. Developing South-South cooperation activities that favour the use of developing countries' strengths and opportunities in terms of the sustainable development of the nations in the region.
- xiv. Promoting capacity building through the strengthening of national, sub-regional and regional institutions and the development of human resources.

IV. Action priorities

14. The proposals for action identified in this Initiative form the basis for future activities by the Latin American and Caribbean countries in terms of sustainable development imperatives, also taking into consideration the progress that has already been made. The region recognizes that, to fully achieve these goals, means of implementation and possible partnerships must still be determined. Emphasis is placed on the need for a favourable international scenario which would basically be one of peace and solidarity, enhanced by an effective commitment by developed countries to transfer and adapt technologies, provide new and sufficient additional resources, eliminate inefficient subsidies and provide greater access to their markets, among others.

Guiding Goals and Indicative Purposes

1) Protection and restoration of ecosystems and their biological diversity.

- ✓ Effective conservation of key ecosystems such as *forests, mangroves and drylands*.
 - i. Guarantee the sustainable management of key ecosystems in the region, ensuring the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in line with obligations under international agreements.
 - ii. By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, and restore degraded forests and increase afforestation and reforestation globally.
- ✓ *Territory included in protected areas.*
 - i. Significantly increase the territory in the region under protected area regimes and, when defining them, include buffer zones and biological corridors, and with effective management plans in place.
- ✓ *Genetic resources - Equitable sharing of benefits.*

- i. Adopt regulatory frameworks for access to genetic resources, as well as for fair and equitable sharing of the benefits derived from their use, compatible with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol.
- ✓ *Marine biodiversity*
 - i. Ensure the conservation and proper use of the Caribbean Basin Countries' marine resources with particular emphasis on marine and coastal ecosystems.

2) Water resources management

- ✓ Access to clean and safe water
 - i. Improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, reducing the proportion of untreated wastewater to bodies of surface water and groundwater, as well as to coastal zones, and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.
 - ii. Substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater.
 - iii. Implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate and supporting the participation of local communities.
- ✓ *Watershed management.*
 - i. Improve and strengthen institutional arrangements for the integrated management of water basins and aquifers, among other measures, by establishing water basin committees with the participation of all subnational levels of government, civil society, the private sector and all involved stakeholders.
- ✓ *Management of marine and coastal areas and their resources.*
 - i. Implement national and regional action plans to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, and adopt measures for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans. ii) Prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds.
 - ii. Adopt a holistic and integrated approach to the management of marine ecosystems, through the development of a comprehensive strategy for its protection and management.
 - iii. By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information.

3) Vulnerability, human settlements and sustainable cities

- ✓ *Land-use planning.*
 - i. Implement land-use planning policies and plans from a sustainable development approach.
 - ii. Incorporate risk management instruments in land-use planning.
- ✓ *Sustainable, Resilient and inclusive Cities*

- i. Substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and resilience to disasters.
 - ii. Implement programmes to ensure access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all.
- ✓ *Air pollution.*
- i. Regulate the pollutant emission sources to reduce the concentration in the air of polluting emissions.
- ✓ *Solid wastes.*
- i. Reduce significantly waste generation through policies for prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.
 - ii. Implement integrated management of wastes (domestic and industrial), including appropriate treatment and final disposal.
- ✓ *Vulnerability to anthropogenic disasters and those caused by natural phenomena.*
- i. Implement and strengthen regional risk management cooperation mechanisms to lessen the impact of anthropogenic disasters and those caused by natural phenomena, including setting up a regional early warning system and forming immediate response groups.
 - ii. Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.
- ✓ *Vulnerability and risk management*
- i. Refine and apply vulnerability indicators
 - ii. Incorporate indicators into national development plans.

4) Social issues, including health, inequity and poverty

- ✓ *Health and environment.*
- i. Implement policies and plans to reduce environmental risks that cause damage to health, in particular those transmitted by water, vectors, air pollution and exposure to chemical substances.
 - ii. By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil.
 - iii. Increase the proportion of green and healthy areas per inhabitant.
- ✓ *Environment and job creation.*
- i. Promote the formulation and implementation of sustainable development projects and programmes that will help to create jobs and avoid migration and displacement.
- ✓ *Poverty and inequity.*
- i. Integrate environment in the multidimensional poverty indexes.
 - ii. Create sustainable livelihoods by developing micro-enterprises; and,

- iii. Formulate and implement strategies for women, youth, indigenous peoples, people of African descent, migrants, disabled and other minority groups of the region in accordance with human rights and fundamental freedoms.

5) Economic issues, including competitiveness, trade and production and consumption patterns

- ✓ 10 Year Programme Framework on Sustainable Consumption and Production
 - i. Participate in the development and implementation of the SCP programmes, considering the region's priorities.
 - ii. Develop and implement regional, subregional and national SCP strategies.
 - iii. Consolidate and strengthen the regional network of Cleaner Production and Resources Efficiency Centres.
 - iv. Incorporate the concept of cleaner production in a significant number of the main industries, with emphasis on small and medium-sized enterprises.
- ✓ *Energy.*
 - i. By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the energy mix.
 - ii. Substantially increase energy efficiency in the region (lighting, appliances, buildings, transport).
- ✓ *Economic instruments.*
 - i. Strengthen the use of economic instruments to promote greater resources efficiency and an inclusive, low-carbon development, considering the new approaches at the global level.
 - ii. Development of methodologies for evaluating investments that maximize the economic, environmental and social profitability, and the establishment of standards, for example for transport and buildings.
 - iii. Establish a system of economic instruments and incentives for productive and industrial processing projects that will save natural resources and energy and eventually reduce the amount of effluents discharged into water, land and the air.

6) Institutional arrangements

- ✓ *Environmental education.*
 - i. Improve and strengthen the incorporation of the environmental dimension into formal and non-formal education, the economy and society.
- ✓ *Training and capacity building of human resources.*
 - i. Incorporate environmental sustainability as cross-cutting issue in primary, secondary and university education;
 - ii. Build capacities to address vulnerabilities in the region; and,
 - iii. Establish, for the public and private sectors and for the community in general, programmes for capacity building and the creation of new skills for sustainable development.

✓ *Evaluation and indicators.*

- i. Strengthen environmental information systems and effectively integrate them into national information systems for sustainable development.
- ii. Develop and implement an assessment process to follow up the progress made towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, adopting national and regional sustainability indicators that respond to the region's unique social, economic and political features.

✓ *Participation of society.*

- i. Create and strengthen participation mechanisms to deal with sustainable development issues, with representatives from government, non-government and major groups in all countries of the region, in accordance with Principle 10.

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