

**CDP Background Paper No. 10**

ST/ESA/2010/CDP/10

June 2010

**Views and perspectives of the Committee for Development Policy on United Nations support for small island developing States***Philippe Hein*

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**Background**

The present paper was prepared by Philippe Hein, in collaboration with Norman Girvan and Frances Stewart, all of whom are members of the Committee for Development Policy, and with the assistance of Ana Luiza Cortez, Hiroshi Kawamura and Admasu Shiferaw of the Committee's Secretariat. It reflects the discussions and the main conclusions reached by the expert group meeting of the Committee, which took place from 25 to 27 January 2010, as well as the discussions and recommendations of the Committee as agreed at its plenary meeting held from 22 to 26 March 2010. It reviews the existing support by the United Nations system to the small island developing States (SIDS). While acknowledging great diversity among SIDS, the paper notes that these countries on average have maintained good levels of socio-economic indicators despite their fundamental development challenges. It also highlights a number of problems in adequately assessing United Nations support for SIDS and makes suggestions for their solution.

JEL Classification: F5 (International relations and international political economy);  
Q01 (Sustainable development)

Keywords: small island developing countries, Mauritius Strategy, international cooperation

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## Views and perspectives of the Committee for Development Policy on United Nations support for small island developing States

*Philippe Hein*

### Mandate and background

#### *Mandate*

The present paper provides further information on chapter V of the report of the Committee for Development Policy (CDP),<sup>1</sup> which responded to the request contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/17 of 29 July 2009 on the review of United Nations support for small island developing States (SIDS). It reflects the discussions and main conclusions reached by the expert group meeting of the CDP that took place from 25 to 27 January 2010, as well as the discussions and recommendations of the Committee as agreed at its plenary meeting held from 22 to 26 March 2010.

Council resolution 2009/17 invited the CDP to consider the findings of the report of the Secretary-General on the Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (MSI)<sup>2</sup> and “to submit its independent views and perspectives on United Nations support for small island developing States to the Economic and Social Council, prior to the 2010 substantive session of the Council”.

Current support by the United Nations to SIDS is framed by the Mauritius Strategy;<sup>3</sup> the nature of this support was therefore considered in the light of the relevance and contents of the Mauritius Strategy. The latter, like the earlier Barbados Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (BPOA), was envisaged to be implemented through SIDS own efforts, supported by “the international community,” that is by all development partners, not just the United Nations. Consequently, the Committee addressed—briefly—these related issues.

The present paper reflects information available to the Committee as of 8 March 2010. This includes the letter dated 7 December 2009 from the Ambassador of Maldives on behalf of the 37 co-sponsors of Council resolution 2009/17 to the Chairperson of the Committee, making a number of detailed suggestions on the topics and issues which the Committee might wish to address. Its contents were carefully considered at the expert group meeting in preparing its draft report to the Committee.

Additionally, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), through the Small Island Developing States Unit in the Division for Sustainable Development, made available to the expert group meeting a specially prepared background paper, dated January 2010, entitled “Overview of the United

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<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2010, Supplement No.13 (E/2010/33).*

<sup>2</sup> A/64/278.

<sup>3</sup> As the Mauritius Strategy includes and updates the provisions of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA), the present paper often commonly refers to the MSI, for simplicity.

Nations institutional, administrative and technical mechanisms for small island developing States”.<sup>4</sup> Other sources of information were also consulted, such as previous reports issued by the Secretary-General on the same subject, websites of the main actors within the United Nations system that are directly involved in the implementation of the MSI, as well as the database of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC) on official development assistance (ODA). A series of in-depth reviews<sup>5</sup> is being conducted in the course of 2010 in preparation for the five-year MSI (MSI+5) review meeting in September 2010, which will likely contain additional material, and perhaps enable a more comprehensive assessment than was possible by the Committee.

The Committee was informed that there was no official list of SIDS. For the purposes of the present paper, unless otherwise indicated, the list used by DESA in its monitoring and follow-up role of the MSI is provided in annex I.

### *Development challenges and characteristics of SIDS*

The Committee recalled the main characteristics and development challenges facing SIDS, which have been identified in the substantial literature on the subject, including United Nations reports:

*Environmental vulnerability:* SIDS are ecologically fragile and vulnerable: they are exposed to adverse natural phenomena and environmental disasters, such as hurricanes, typhoons and floods, whose intensity and severity are believed to have increased recently due to climate change. Global warming and the rising sea level imply that some low-lying island States face existential threats. In as much as human economic activity is a root cause of climate change, SIDS are essentially on the receiving end of being affected by carbon emissions from production activities elsewhere. They have limited capacity to respond to and recover from these disasters. Given the smallness of the land area in many SIDS, natural disasters are very likely to cause extensive disruption of their social and economic infrastructure (including on the coastal zone where most of the population and tourist infrastructure is concentrated), affecting the whole country. Such disruption is much more than would be the case in large or continental countries.

*Small size, diseconomies of scale, discontinuity of transport modes:* SIDS also suffer from economic disadvantages associated with small size: narrow range of resources available (including fresh water), which leads to undue specialization; small land area and high population density (pressure on limited resources); and diseconomies of scale (high costs per capita) in delivering all services. Extra transport costs due to the discontinuity of transport modes affect all islands. The archipelagic character of several SIDS implies costly duplication of infrastructure, whereas the isolated location of many of them from the main markets further impedes their ability to compete.

*Trade and external economic dependence:* The centrality of international trade for the development of SIDS is well recognized. Table 1 shows that the share of exports of goods and services to gross domestic product (GDP) is higher and considerably less diversified in SIDS than in other groups of countries.

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<sup>4</sup> The information provided by the SIDS Unit was subsequently updated and expanded but was not available in time for full consideration in the present paper.

<sup>5</sup> These include the national assessments, regional synthesis reports and reports by donors. A new report by the Secretary-General on the global assessment of the implementation of the MSI, as well as a trends report on SIDS and a portfolio of MSI implementation initiatives, is under preparation.

**Table 1:****Exports of goods and services as a share of GDP, and Export diversification index, 1980–2008<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>Exports of goods and services as a share of GDP, period average (percentage)</i>			<i>Export diversification index, period average</i>	
	1980–1989	1990–1999	2000–2008	1995–1998	2005–2008
SIDS	44.7	45.0	46.2	0.70 <sup>b</sup>	0.67 <sup>b</sup>
Developed countries	17.3	18.6	21.9 <sup>c</sup>	0.12	0.16
Low-income countries	12.6	20.2	28.7 <sup>d</sup>	0.41 <sup>b</sup>	0.32 <sup>b</sup>
Middle-income countries	16.2	22.4	30.1	0.34 <sup>b</sup>	0.29 <sup>b</sup>
Least developed countries	12.5	16.1	22.4	0.73	0.69
<i>Memo items:</i>					
Small island developing States with LDC status	36.5	34.6	31.8	0.78	0.78
SIDS, excluding Belize, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Singapore and Suriname	41.1	40.1	39.1	n.a.	n.a.

**Sources:** UN/DESA, Statistics Division online database; World Bank, World Development Indicators online; and UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics online database.

**a** See Annex V, table A.1, for further information on selected SIDS.

**b** UNCTAD classification.

**c** 2000-2006.

**d** 2000-2007.

SIDS exports are correlated with the fortunes of the global economic environment: they increase whenever the world economy is in the upswing, such as the period 2002–2008. By the same token, every major global shock implies a slowdown/contraction of trade for the SIDS, which is often more pronounced, on average, than what is experienced by other developing countries.

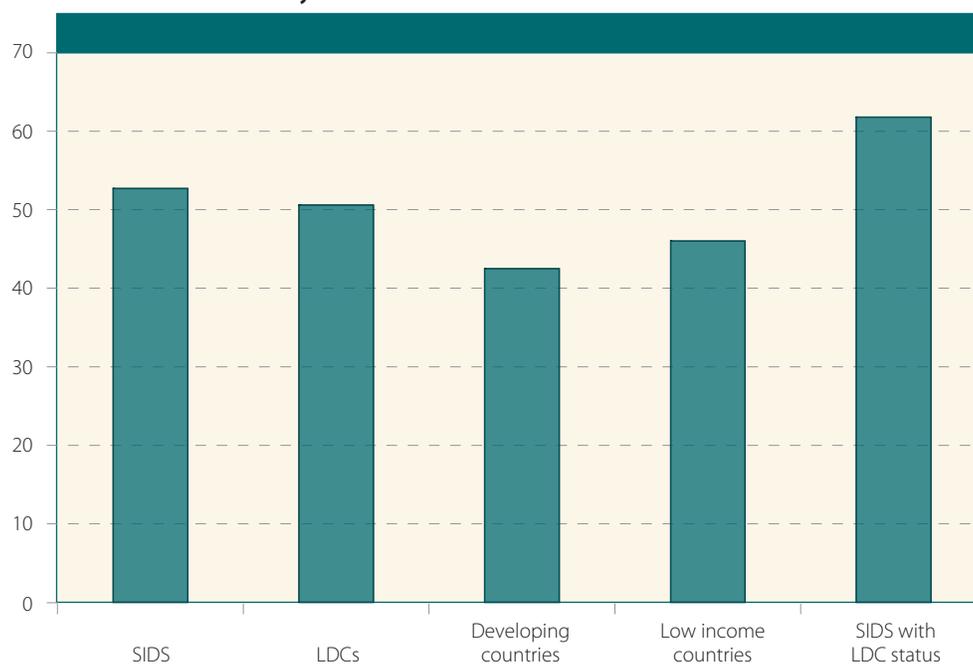
Many SIDS have diversified into exports of services (a feature which is not captured in export concentration indices). Although this is a positive development, it has exposed them to new vulnerabilities. Their services exports largely consist of tourism, which comprised about 36 per cent of their total exports of goods and services over the last two decades, compared to less than 10 per cent for other developing countries. Other export services important to several SIDS—such as hosting international business corporations or financial centres, and business process outsourcing—are notoriously insecure and volatile, and subject to economic and political decisions beyond their control.

Finally, another feature many SIDS have in common is their dependence on unrequited transfers such as migrants' remittances, ODA flows, or fishing licenses. In several cases, the domestic productive capacity of SIDS is limited so that their exports have high import content. Their extreme dependence on international trade and transfers leads to high vulnerability to external economic shocks.

*High Economic Vulnerability Index (EVI):* The above characteristics are reflected, as expected, in a high Economic Vulnerability Index (EVI). The EVI, one of the indices used in identifying the least developed countries (LDCs) by the CDP,<sup>6</sup> captures important aspects of the development challenges of SIDS as highlighted above. Figure 1 depicts the EVI as calculated for the 2009 triennial review. It shows that SIDS are indeed more vulnerable than any other group of developing countries; those that are also LDCs are the most vulnerable of all.

**6** CDP-DESA, *Handbook on the Least Developed Country Category: Inclusion, Graduation and Special Support Measures*, United Nations Sales publication No. E.07.II.A.9.

Figure 1  
Economic vulnerability index: 2009 triennial review



Source: Committee for Development Policy online database available from <http://webapps01.un.org/cdp/dataquery/selectCountries.action>.

*High incomes but stagnating growth:* In spite of their high vulnerability and the development challenges they face, the gross national income (GNI) per capita in the SIDS is well above the average for most developing countries (figure 2). As mentioned above, the relatively high incomes of SIDS tend not to be fully endogenously generated or secure, but often reflect their dependence on unrequited transfers. Additionally, over the last three decades, the average GDP growth of SIDS seems to have stagnated at slightly less than 3 per cent per year (figure 3). This contrasts sharply with the strong growth performance of all other developing countries, including the LDCs, in the 2000s. While these are common trends, the growth experiences of SIDS are heterogeneous (see table 2). Although only a few of them had a negative growth performance, about one third seems to be trapped in low growth trajectories (below 2 per cent per year).

*Social outcomes and physical infrastructure:* Tables 3 and 4 provide information on the situation of SIDS, compared to other groups of countries, regarding selected indicators of infrastructure networks and human assets, respectively. These tables show that on average SIDS have indicators that are well above that for developing countries as a whole.

*Overall assessment and diversity among SIDS:* Several fundamental development challenges for SIDS are based on characteristics which are practically fixed: size, geographical configuration and location. Therefore, certain aspects of their development problems will linger in spite of their efforts and those of their development partners.

The above-average social, economic and infrastructural indicators of SIDS are the more remarkable, given these challenges. However, it is clear that they are not a homogeneous group. For instance, some of them have tiny populations, are archipelagic, low lying, have no permanent streams or rivers and are

Figure 2  
GNI per capita, 1980–2008

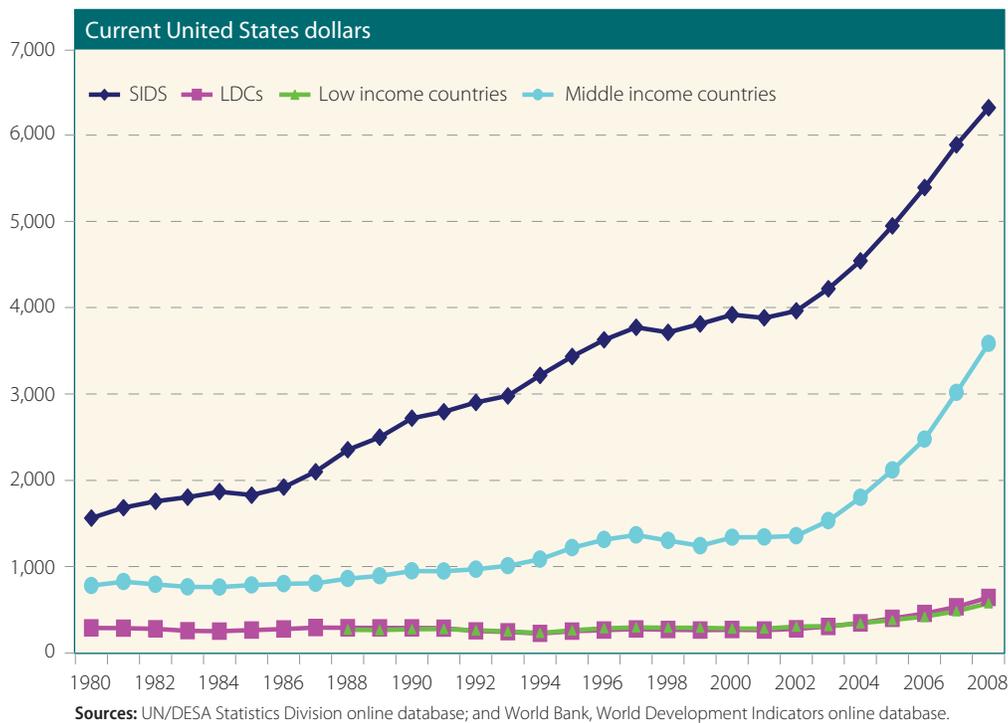
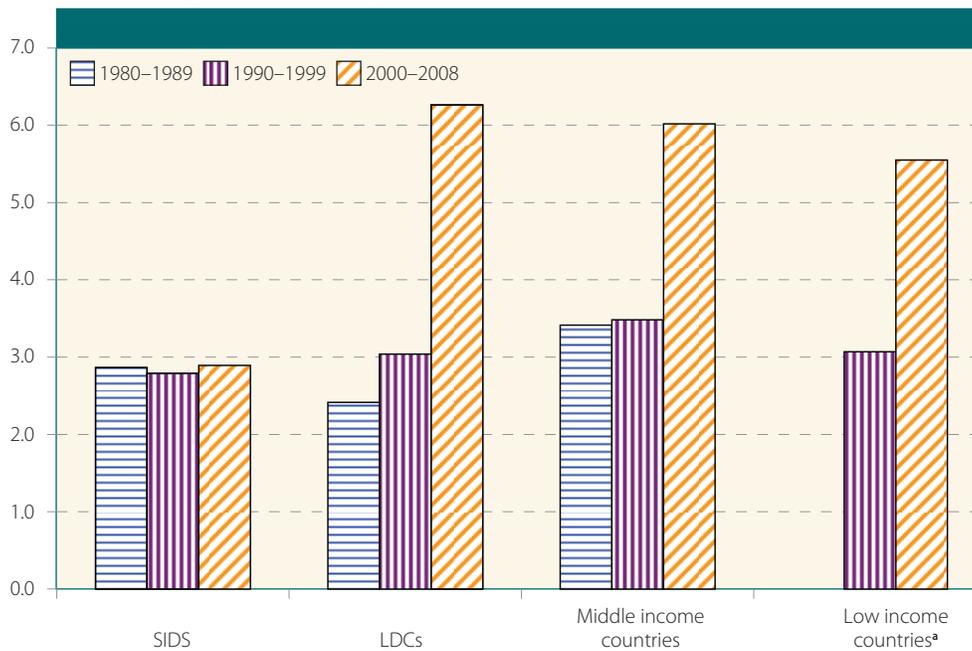


Figure 3  
GDP: average annual rate of growth, 1980–2008



**Table 2:**  
**SIDS: Frequency of the average annual growth of real GDP, 1980–2008 (number of countries)<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Growth intervals</i>	<i>1980–1989</i>	<i>1990–1999</i>	<i>2000–2008</i>
$r \leq 0$	7	3	2
$0 < r \leq 2$	7	11	14
$2 < r \leq 4$	7	10	7
$4 < r \leq 6$	10	9	9
$r > 6$	5	3	4
Total number of countries	36	36	36
<i>r = rate of growth.</i>			

**Source:** UN/DESA, Statistics Division online database.

**a** See Annex V, table A.2, for further information on selected SIDS.

**Table 3:**  
**Selected indicators of infrastructure networks<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>Roads, paved (percentage of total roads) 2000</i>	<i>Internet users (per 100 people) 2005</i>	<i>Telephone lines (per 100 people) 2004</i>	<i>Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people) 2005</i>
SIDS	48.5 <sup>b</sup>	16.7 <sup>c</sup>	19.1 <sup>d</sup>	39.2 <sup>e</sup>
LDCs	12.1	0.8	0.8	5.0
Low-income countries	12.1	2.2	2.2	5.8
Middle-income countries	37.6	8.9	14.2	28.3

**Source:** World Bank, World Development Indicators online database.

**a** See Annex V, table A.3, for further information on selected SIDS.

**b** Average of 24 SIDS.

**c** Average of 33 SIDS.

**d** Average of 30 SIDS.

**e** Average of 29 SIDS.

**Table 4:**  
**Human Assets Index and its components, 2009 triennial review<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>HAI<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>Prevalence of undernourishment in total population (percentage)</i>	<i>Under-five mortality (per 1000)</i>	<i>Adult literacy rate</i>	<i>Gross secondary enrolment ratio</i>
SIDS	81.5	12.0	45.6	86.7	75.0
LDCs	45.8	29.6	140.7	60.4	34.3
Developing countries	68.8	17.8	81.1	76.8	60.8

**Source:** Committee for Development Policy online database available from <http://webapps01.un.org/cdp/dataquery/selectCountries.action>.

**a** See Annex V, table A.4, for further information on selected SIDS.

**b** Human Assets Index.

particularly remote. Many others do not share these extreme features. Ten SIDS are LDCs<sup>7</sup> while one<sup>8</sup> has only recently graduated from LDC status.

<sup>7</sup> Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kiribati, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

<sup>8</sup> Cape Verde.

In addition, the existence of other developing—and even developed—countries facing challenges similar to those of the SIDS makes identifying this group of countries, or establishing a distinct category deserving special support measures, a rather complex issue (see below for further discussion).

However, being both small and an island State at the same time could arguably elevate development challenges beyond those commonly faced by other developing countries. It is these characteristics that give continuing relevance to the SIDS development agenda. It is against this background that specific programmes like the BPOA and the MSI were adopted.

### **Existing frameworks for SIDS**

Starting at the Fourth Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) held in Nairobi from 5 May to 1 June 1976, the specific problems of island developing countries were the subject of several reports—for discussion in UNCTAD and the General Assembly—and of resolutions at regular intervals between the late 1970s and 1994. In parallel, the various conventions between the European Community/European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States consistently had specific provisions for island ACP States. Since 1985, the World Bank has been applying a “small island exception” in determining eligibility for concessional loans by the International Development Association (IDA). The Commonwealth Secretariat has a tradition of focusing a significant part of its activities on small islands and States. The Non-Aligned Movement has also pursued a specific focus on small island developing States, for instance, holding a meeting on this subject in 1983 in Grenada.

Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992, the formal expression “small island developing States (SIDS)” has gradually gained currency. Agenda 21, adopted at the Rio Conference, contains a section on “sustainable development of small islands” (chapter 17, section G). The Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States held in Barbados from 25 April to 6 May 1994, adopted a Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS (BPOA), which identified 15 priority areas and the necessary actions to be taken at the national, regional and international level.

The BPOA recognized that implementation had to be consistent with relevant parallel international processes and was, primarily, the responsibility of SIDS themselves, whose efforts were to be supported and complemented by international cooperation. Monitoring and implementation were to be carried out by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD).

Progress on implementation and overall assessment of the BPOA was conducted at a major international meeting held in Port Louis, Mauritius, from 10 to 14 January 2005, which adopted the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (MSI). The MSI identifies critical areas for further attention in the BPOA and includes emerging issues that constitute development challenges considered to be relevant to SIDS (see below). The CSD continued to have responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the MSI, while DESA, through the Small Island Developing States Unit in the Division for Sustainable Development, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations agencies, was requested to articulate a plan for implementation. The General Assembly will review progress in the implementation of the MSI with a two-day high-level meeting to take place at its 65<sup>th</sup> session in 2010.

***Brief overview of the Mauritius Strategy***

The Mauritius Strategy addresses a wide range of issues. As an organizing framework, this section identifies four major areas of development challenges and categorizes the strategies and interventions outlined in the BPOA and the MSI as discussed below.

*Interventions related to climate change and natural disasters:* Climate change poses serious existential and developmental challenges to small island developing States, as has been well recognized in Agenda 21. Since the triggers for climate change and natural disasters are exogenous to the decisions and activities of SIDS, the solutions should be sought through a concerted global effort.

Nonetheless, the MSI outlines strategies aimed at boosting the capabilities of SIDS to closely monitor and predict climate change and natural disasters, and at increasing their preparedness to deal with adverse natural shocks. Improved monitoring requires building modern information systems and the requisite human capital in SIDS in order to monitor meteorological and hydro-geological phenomena, while the strengthening of these countries' preparedness involves building up and enhancing mitigation and adaptation capabilities, both at the national and regional levels.

*Interventions related to natural resource management:* The effective management of natural resources is crucial for the sustainable development of SIDS given their limited resource base. At the same time, the heavy concentration of SIDS populations and economic activities in coastal areas can lead to rapid depletion and deterioration of the natural resource endowments. Waste management considerations, relating to the potential negative impact of waste on natural resources, especially on freshwater supplies, coastal and marine resources and tourism, are also included in this category.

The BPOA/MSI, therefore, calls for actions to develop integrated national development plans that aim for the establishment of relevant infrastructure and institutions at national and regional levels to promote conservation, preservation and the sustainable use of natural resources. The international community is also expected to support SIDS in a number of areas such as the introduction of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), facilitating the development of mutually advantageous fishing arrangements and providing environmentally sound and energy efficient technologies.

*Interventions related to international trade:* The overall development strategy calls for the diversification of the export products of SIDS given the constraints imposed by their narrow natural resources base.

Despite the recognition of the centrality of trade for SIDS, the strategy documents are rather brief on the relevant measures that need to be taken, particularly chapter XIII, "Trade: globalization and trade liberalization" of the MSI.<sup>9</sup> A great deal of attention is devoted to the processes of the World Trade Organization (WTO), including accession of non-members and the erosion of preferences, but little guidance is provided in terms of those actions that may be required to promote diversification using international trade as a means to achieve a more dynamic and sustained transformation of these economies.

*Cross-cutting issues:* The heavy dependence of SIDS on international trade and tourism, as well as their vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters, necessitates efficient transport and communication networks, advanced scientific and technological inputs and the requisite human capital. In other words, accumulating such capabilities determines the effectiveness of the other development strategies mentioned

above, which explains why the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and the development of human capital have been given special attention in the BPOA and the MSI. Developing these capabilities to the desired level requires more resources than SIDS could generate domestically because of the fragile nature of their economies, the high overhead cost of building such capabilities in small countries and their public-good nature.

### **Assessing support by the United Nations**

The Committee for Development Policy noted that responsibility for overseeing the implementation and review of the MSI was essentially vested in the Commission on Sustainable Development, and that CDP's own functions, as an advisory body on policy, might not make it the best body to address implementation and operational issues, such as United Nations support.

The CDP, instead, identified a number of problems in adequately assessing United Nations support for SIDS. These, as well as suggestions for their solutions, are discussed in the following five sub-sections.

#### ***Addressing too many generic issues***

As summarized above, the MSI contains comprehensive assessments of the problems faced by SIDS and recommendations for action. Indeed, it is one of the strong points of BPOA and MSI that SIDS themselves have been enabled to fully participate in their elaboration, including through regional meetings.

However, many themes in this comprehensive list of problems affecting SIDS are not directly and specifically related to their small size and island-ness. As a result, it is not always possible to identify the disadvantages that are particular to them as SIDS rather than common ones applicable to developing countries in general. For instance, paragraphs 14 and 15 of the report stress the “role of youth”, and “the importance of gender equality”, respectively.<sup>10</sup> Examples are also to be found in several other operational chapters, notably in chapter XIV on education and chapter XVII on health (with special emphasis on HIV/AIDS)—two areas where there is limited island specificity, and where SIDS tend to fare significantly better than the average of all developing countries (see table 4).<sup>11</sup> This risks diverting the focus from SIDS-related issues and can undermine the credibility of the Programme and make monitoring more elusive. That being said, it is realized that there is no theme which is completely exclusive to SIDS. For instance, some issues also concern low-lying continental countries, small developing countries which are not islands or large developing countries.

#### ***Absence of targets and benchmarks***

Although the MSI contains numerous policy recommendations, there are almost no targets, milestones or yardsticks. In particular, the support expected from the international community is neither precise nor quantified.

The MSI, like the earlier BPOA, was the result of extensive intergovernmental consultations. As these documents were adopted by consensus, the language may be less precise than one would wish, and some provisions have weak operational significance, if any. Two examples are:

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10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

- “International organizations should operate on an integrated cross-sector-based approach in order to ensure the optimum utilization of resources across sectors”.<sup>12</sup>
- “The international community recognizes that all efforts undertaken in the implementation of the present Strategy must be ... in accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations”.<sup>13</sup>

The absence of targets and the paucity of operationally meaningful recommendations make it very difficult to monitor implementation and United Nations support and to measure fulfilment of the MSI. As an illustration of what would be needed, a revised Programme of Action, while addressing the recognized specific vulnerability of almost all SIDS to natural and environmental disasters, could propose the creation of an insurance fund(s), payment from which would be triggered by the eventuality of pre-defined disasters. Premiums paid in, including those contributed by the international community, could easily be monitored. The Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) provides an example of the kind of instrument which could be utilized in this regard.<sup>14</sup>

### *Imprecision in the definition of SIDS and composition of the group*

There are no clear and consistent criteria for classifying countries as SIDS for which the BPOA and MSI are designed.<sup>15</sup> Unofficial lists of SIDS appear in the various websites of DESA, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Land-locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS), the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS) and UNCTAD. The lists on the sites of DESA, OHRLLS and AOSIS are almost identical—containing 51 (or 52) countries or entities. On the other hand, the unofficial list “used by UNCTAD for analytical purposes only” is much more restricted, being limited to 29 States.<sup>16</sup>

The DESA list includes countries that are not islands<sup>17</sup> but that became members of AOSIS by virtue of being deemed “low-lying coastal states”, while a number are not members of the United Nations or are not independent countries.<sup>18</sup> The cut-off size of “small” is not specified, so that the range of land area and population of countries in the group is wide:<sup>19</sup> countries of 8 million-11 million people are grouped with microstates with populations of less than 500,000.<sup>20</sup> In general, the principle of self-selection applies. This may be understandable for political reasons but, as a result, it makes the group highly heterogeneous and complicates the task of monitoring United Nations support.

The problems associated with such imprecision are well known in circles associated with SIDS issues.<sup>21</sup> Yet, the question of eventually establishing a formal SIDS list, whose members would be based

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., para. 94.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., para. 95.

<sup>14</sup> See [worldbank.org/.../Catastrophicriskinsurancefacility.pdf](http://worldbank.org/.../Catastrophicriskinsurancefacility.pdf). A donor pledging conference held in February 2007 pledged a total of US \$47 million to the CCRIF reserve fund. It is understood that CCRIF made a quick disbursement on the occasion of the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

<sup>15</sup> This contrasts, for example, with the case of LDCs.

<sup>16</sup> For UNCTAD’s unofficial list of SIDS, see <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intItemID=3645&lang=1>

<sup>17</sup> Belize, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana and Suriname.

<sup>18</sup> For example, French Polynesia, United States Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

<sup>19</sup> Population size varies from 1,398 (Niue) to 11,300,000 (Cuba).

<sup>20</sup> It may also be noted that Singapore, which has man-made fixed links with the Asian continent (road, railway, electricity and water) and ranks relatively high in most classifications of advanced or high-income countries, is listed.

<sup>21</sup> However, this question of uncertainty about the membership of SIDS is not well known generally in mainstream development circles.

on consistent, objective and transparent criteria, has not been placed on the agenda of the various fora or addressed in numerous consultations regarding SIDS so far, including the CSD and the Economic and Social Council. It is believed that the reason for this is the political sensitivity of the issue, which is likely to be divisive among member States, including the current “SIDS”. In fact, the stance of Governments as expressed in various fora appears ambivalent when it comes to considering what focus the international community should adopt while addressing issues concerning countries that are small, vulnerable and insular.<sup>22</sup>

### *Inadequacy of information*

As indicated above, Council resolution 2009/17 of 29 July 2009 specifically invites the CDP to “consider the findings” of the report of the Secretary-General dated 10 August 2009.<sup>23</sup> The report provides information on the follow-up to the MSI in terms of arrangements for the preparation for the five-year review of this Strategy which is to take place in 2010. It reports on the thematic review of the implementation of the MSI by the Commission on Sustainable Development and gives information on Secretariat support and United Nations system collaboration in implementing the MSI. As regards the topic of Action to further implementation of the Mauritius Strategy, this consists of a section entitled Action by Member States, which is in fact an account of a number of specific actions or efforts undertaken by selected SIDS that are United Nations member States (no information is provided on actions by other member States, such as donors). The earlier monitoring reports by the Secretary-General on the same subject, which were also considered by the CDP, follow more or less the same pattern.

The Secretary-General’s report, in dealing with the question of United Nations support, provides information on the support given by DESA (notably by the SIDS Unit), the Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The support recorded concerns mostly the logistical and facilitation aspects of implementation, for which the resources of a trust fund are being used and capacity-building measures such as improvements in statistical systems and analysis.<sup>24</sup> The continuing support for the holding of regional meetings and the funding of delegations has been particularly valuable, as it has enabled SIDS, despite their limited capacity, to participate effectively in meetings aimed at the design and review of programmes.

However, the information contained in the Secretary-General’s report is incomplete. For instance, there is no information on what OHRLLS has been able to do to support the MSI and exercise its mandate for support and advocacy (see further below). The report also does not provide information on the activities of several other United Nations organs and bodies that are known to have given at least some support (including the Global Environmental Fund, UNCTAD, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

<sup>22</sup> In the United Nations, through the BPOA/MSI, member States focus on SIDS; in the WTO the contracting parties are considering the possibility of addressing the problems of “small and vulnerable economies”. The Commonwealth, for its part, has a programme on small States: “countries with a population of 1.5 million or less” (see <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/180407/>). In the context of the Twelfth Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held in Accra from 20 to 25 April 2008, Governments expressed themselves in particularly diffuse language by calling for “stronger national action and international support ... for developing countries, including Africa, LDCs, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and other structurally weak and vulnerable small economies” (TD/L.413, para. 11).

<sup>23</sup> A/64/278.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 45-48.

(UNFCCC) and several specialized agencies). The support of the World Bank,<sup>25</sup> part of the United Nations system of organizations, is not documented either.

The background paper prepared by the SIDS Unit for the CDP in January 2010 (and further elaborated upon in March 2010) complements the information contained in the Secretary-General's report<sup>26</sup> on support by the United Nations system and covered the activities of more agencies in greater detail. In particular, it provides information—not previously publicly available—on the activities of the Inter-Agency Consultative Group on SIDS (IACG). This is an informal coordinating mechanism in which the focal points of all relevant United Nations agencies, regional commissions, regional intergovernmental organizations and other interested actors have a chance to exchange expertise, experiences, approaches and information on planned activities, as well as coordinate joint efforts. There are currently twelve United Nations bodies that participate in the IACG. The creation of this Group, which started meeting in mid-2009, is a positive new initiative. It appears to be functioning actively.

In spite of the incomplete information available, there are numerous indications of much involvement by the United Nations Secretariat and many United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in their respective area of competence, and evidence of valuable initiatives being pursued by the relevant actors within the United Nations system. Annex II, extracted from the 2005 report of the Secretary-General,<sup>27</sup> provides information on the main mandated actions, as identified by the MSI, and links them to those relevant United Nations partners. Another listing of United Nations system partners is shown in annex III. Additionally, there is a wide range of international agreements, conventions and protocols that bear direct relevance to the sustainable development of SIDS, besides the programmes analyzed in this paper, some examples of which are indicated in annex IV. Yet, information available in selected agencies' websites (OHRLLS, UNEP, FAO, UNESCO and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), to give a few examples) is outdated in some instances, often not systematized and does not clearly identify the link of those actions/projects/research to specific provisions of the MSI. This makes it difficult to assess the extent of their efforts to meet the objectives of the MSI.

### *Resource gaps and diffusion of responsibilities*

Although numerous United Nations bodies and agencies are called upon to provide support to the MSI, two components of the Secretariat are expected to spearhead United Nations support to SIDS and to play central roles in overall implementation of the MSI:

- (i) Within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the SIDS Unit in the Division for Sustainable Development is responsible for coordinating system-wide implementation of the MSI. The Unit acts as a liaison and focal point for its overall implementation at the international level, and for supporting the domestic implementation efforts of SIDS at national and regional levels. In addition, it is itself the focal point for a number of specific chapters of the MSI.

However, the SIDS Unit does not have the resources to deliver on its mission statement. As a result, it has not been able to publish any materials of significance, and the documentation it prepares, including

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<sup>25</sup> As mentioned above, the World Bank operates a “small island exception” policy in its lending operations, and has spearheaded the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF); these two initiatives have been among the most concrete and verifiable modalities of genuine special treatment in favour of small island economies.

<sup>26</sup> A/64/278.

<sup>27</sup> A/60/401.

the Secretary-General's monitoring reports, has the shortcomings noted elsewhere in the present paper. The CDP believes that these shortcomings derive partly from the weaknesses of the BPOA and MSI themselves, identified above, which make concrete substantive follow-up difficult to undertake, and partly from the limited resources allocated to the Unit until recently.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, reporting by agencies, funds and programmes is largely done on a voluntary basis, as the Unit has no authoritative or enforcement mandate.

(ii) OHRLLS, for its part, is mandated to:

- “Support the coordinated follow-up of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.
- Undertake advocacy work in favour of the small island developing States in partnership with the relevant parts of the United Nations as well as with the civil society, media, academia and foundations.
- Assist in mobilizing international support and resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action.
- Provide support to group consultations of SIDS.”<sup>29</sup>

The Office's website reports almost no recent activity with respect to SIDS. As at 5 December 2009, it showed that three issues of the SIDS newsletter had been published in 2006 and 2007. The “Facts and Figures” rubric consisted of only one table (on ODA in some SIDS monitored by OECD/DAC), which had been last updated in January 2007 and contained data for 2005.

OHRLLS clearly does not have the resources and capacity to fulfil its mandate with regard to SIDS. Until recently, there was only one staff member—assigned part time—to carry out the function.

In order to complement the SIDS own lobbying efforts, it would be helpful if the OHRLLS could utilize its advocacy mandate more pro-actively to bring the situation of SIDS to the attention of international donor agencies, and follow up by providing them with concrete proposals for resilience-building projects.

### Support by other development partners

Support to SIDS from the international community/development partners, besides that provided by the United Nations, is crucial. This is clearly recognized by the MSI where:

“The international community reaffirms its commitment to supporting the sustainable development of small island developing States through the provision of financial resources, ..., and underlines the crucial involvement of the donor community, including the international financial institutions and regional development banks.”<sup>30</sup>

The Secretary-General's report also emphasizes this aspect and affirms that “For the five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy, the emphasis will remain the same: the mobilization of support to assist the small island developing States in addressing their most urgent sustainable development challenges.”<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> As of 1 June 2010, the staffing of the Unit will be increased at the Professional level.

<sup>29</sup> Source: OHRLLS website.

<sup>30</sup> A/CONF/207/11, annex II.

<sup>31</sup> A/64/278, para. 50.

At the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, “delegates vigorously urged all development partners to honour the commitments made...”, thus implying that this had not been done sufficiently.<sup>32</sup> However, these commitments are not spelt out in operational terms, so they cannot be monitored effectively. In fact, the commitments under MSI are not something upon which donors are asked to report systematically.

The Secretary-General’s report also calls for a “scaling up of support from the international community”.<sup>33</sup> In this regard, data show that SIDS receive more aid per capita than the average for developing countries. Data from OECD/ DAC covering 29 SIDS indicate that ODA from bilateral donors to this group doubled from 2002 to 2007, reaching \$2 billion. On a per capita basis, ODA was on average \$39 in 2007, slightly lower than the average for LDCs (see table 5). However a small number of countries in the SIDS group account for a significant share of the total and it is not clear how much of this flow is directed to the implementation of the BPOA and the MSI.<sup>34</sup>

### SIDS own efforts

The efforts of SIDS to implement measures to respond to their challenges are not a matter on which the CDP has been specifically requested to give its views. Yet, documenting such efforts could help to elicit more focused support from the international community and from the United Nations system itself. The report of the Secretary-General appropriately contains a section on these efforts.<sup>35</sup> However, as in earlier similar reports, the information provided is illustrative rather than comprehensive, as not all SIDS or themes can be covered in a short document. Furthermore, it is not always clear whether the efforts reported refer to those made before or since the MSI, or even before the BPOA.<sup>36</sup>

The CDP has no evidence or reason to doubt the general conclusion of the Secretary-General’s report that “concerted efforts are being made by the small island developing States to implement meaningful policies and adaptation strategies to address their vulnerabilities and build resilience at the national level”.<sup>37</sup> However, this conclusion needs to be supported by systematic collection and assessment of data and information.

It is in the interest of SIDS themselves that their own efforts are reported and widely publicized. It is realized that this would require additional resources. However, the designated body in the United Nations could provide a matrix to SIDS which would help standardize the replies and allow for a measure of aggregation. In any case, not all information can be presented in an official Secretariat report, which is necessarily constrained by space. It would be sufficient to post it on a website (for example, Sidsnet), with which SIDS could interactively keep up to date. Such reporting should not overburden further the limited government personnel resources of SIDS.

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32 Ibid., para. 23.

33 Ibid., para. 82.

34 Six of the twenty-nine SIDS in table 5 account for 67.2 per cent of the total.

35 A/64/278, paras. 50-81.

36 For instance, the information that “*Hydropower is used for electricity production in islands such as Fiji, Jamaica, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Vanuatu, Dominica and Haiti*” is insufficiently precise, as it is not clear what proportion of this hydropower was installed since the adoption of the BPOA or the MSI (A/64/278, para. 68).

37 A/64/278, para. 82.

**Table 5:**  
**ODA gross disbursements to selected SIDS, 2002–2007**  
(Millions of current US dollars)

<i>Country/Year</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2007 ODA per capita (dollar)</i>
Antigua and Barbuda	8.9	3.1	2.2	6.3	3.6	3.2	38
Barbados	1.4	3.1	5.1	3.2	6.0	10.7	1 042
Belize	8.9	9.1	8.5	10.4	9.6	14.1	47
Cape Verde	37.9	103.0	115.6	152.2	120.1	140.9	286
Comoros	14.1	16.2	21.6	38.0	29.5	38.7	62
Cuba	42.7	63.2	71.5	64.7	65.7	69.7	6
Dominica	14.3	4.1	19.0	7.1	16.0	17.5	241
Dominican Republic	134.6	140.7	141.8	146.1	203.6	239.3	25
Fiji	21.8	46.3	55.0	64.2	57.3	49.0	59
Guinea-Bissau	37.6	117.3	42.7	103.0	80.6	96.7	63
Guyana	30.9	34.8	79.9	101.2	76.7	64.7	85
Haiti	123.5	172.7	255.1	586.0	470.2	546.5	57
Jamaica	91.9	66.2	137.1	126.6	115.3	99.2	37
Kiribati	18.1	15.3	13.3	25.7	24.6	25.9	273
Maldives	14.4	9.5	10.8	36.7	27.9	28.1	92
Mauritius	31.9	33.1	45.7	55.6	59.9	94.2	75
Papua New Guinea	218.6	252.8	273.1	296.3	299.2	348.7	55
Saint Kitts and Nevis	7.6	0.2	0.4	1.3	6.8	1.8	37
Saint Lucia	12.0	5.3	5.7	8.5	6.4	11.0	66
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	4.2	3.8	8.0	5.0	5.1	59.3	544
Samoa	32.2	28.7	27.4	33.8	43.6	32.2	177
Sao Tome and Principe	18.3	28.8	25.2	27.8	25.2	36.2	229
Seychelles	3.1	5.7	5.9	9.7	11.7	4.8	57
Solomon Islands	28.1	82.5	119.1	195.5	196.5	239.2	483
Timor-Leste	173.1	145.6	143.4	190.9	213.0	270.7	254
Tonga	14.2	18.4	19.8	28.9	20.1	28.1	273
Trinidad and Tobago	2.8	5.5	10.5	8.0	24.4	19.0	14
Tuvalu	11.3	5.5	7.4	8.5	14.0	10.1	1026
Vanuatu	23.6	31.0	36.4	37.7	49.3	56.8	252
Total SIDS	1181.9	1451.1	1707.2	2379.1	2281.9	2656.3	39
<b>Memo items</b>							
<i>Donors</i>							
Development Assistance Committee	1057.5	1281.3	1393.3	1962.8	1722.4	1991.4	..
Multilateral institutions	124.4	169.8	313.8	416.2	559.5	665.0	..
ODA flows to income groups: <sup>a</sup>							
Least developed countries	..	24041.0	25215.0	26024.0	28189.0	32530.0	42
Other low-income countries	..	9035.0	10632.0	18153.0	23590.0	15573.0	9
Low middle-income countries	..	18371.0	20112.0	40522.0	26392.0	25766	11
Upper middle-income countries	..	2108.0	2566.0	2601.0	3827.0	4086.0	10

Source: OECD/DAC online database.

a Does not include regional or subregional flows.

## Summary and conclusions

The small island developing States—although not a homogeneous group—face specific development challenges linked to their smallness and to their environmental and economic vulnerability and external dependency. In spite of these constraints—many of them being fixed factors—the CDP noted with satisfaction that SIDS, as a whole, had consistently maintained good levels of social, economic and infrastructural indicators—above the average of all developing countries. However, there is considerable diversity among them. Ten SIDS lagged behind and were on the list of LDCs.

The CDP noted a number of problems in adequately assessing United Nations support for SIDS and made suggestions for their solution:

a. *The MSI addresses too many generic issues:* CDP, therefore, recommended that a revised strategy should focus on sustainability issues related to the smallness and vulnerability of SIDS to environmental, climatic and external economic shocks, along with measures to increase resilience to prevent them from interrupting their progress due to stresses.

The fixed factors, such as size and location, could be addressed—to a certain extent—by including, for example, increased pooling of resources and enhanced regional cooperation and integration, but these interventions may not necessarily eradicate these disadvantages. It is also necessary that any measures proposed should reflect the great diversity among SIDS, with particular reference to those that are LDCs.

b. *Absence of targets allowing for proper monitoring of the MSI and of United Nations support for it:* The absence of targets and milestones, together with the often vague and general language devoid of operational content used, make monitoring more elusive. The development of targets and concrete policies and interventions in many cases would require the MSI to make nuanced distinctions among the different types of SIDS, depending on such factors as population size, geographical configuration and resource endowment.

c. *Imprecision in the definition of SIDS:* Proper focus and effective monitoring of the MSI would require the establishment of an agreed list. However, this question has not been placed on the inter-governmental agenda so far.

The CDP emphasized that it views the LDC category as the most important category for international support measures. The desirability or otherwise of creating, in addition to this, a formal United Nations category of SIDS based on objective criteria is essentially a matter for intergovernmental consideration, going beyond the mandate of the CDP as given by Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/17. The CDP also recalled that the emergence of the LDC category in 1971 was made possible through intense intergovernmental consultations; at that time, the CDP contribution consisted of advising on criteria for identification of the category.

d. *Inadequacy of data on, and absence of, an effective tool for monitoring United Nations support:* Despite significant involvement by the United Nations, the information available is insufficient to allow a reasonably informed and comprehensive view of the extent and nature of the support provided effectively to the MSI by the United Nations system.

In order to give more prominence to the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island States, United Nations agencies could be requested to report on their relevant contributions to

their respective governing bodies. Information could thus be readily available to be collected by the SIDS Unit. In order not to add to systemic bottlenecks, it might be desirable to develop some simple indicators agreed upon by the IACG, on which various parties would report in a transparent and results-oriented manner.

In this context, the CDP proposes consideration of developing an effective monitoring instrument in the form of a MSI monitoring matrix. The matrix contained in the annex to the Secretary-General's first report after the Mauritius International Meeting provides a good model for this purpose (see annex II of the present paper).<sup>38</sup> Preparation of the matrix, which could be done under the guidance of the IACG, would itself force certain 'specificity' in refining action elements and highlight the extent of support by United Nations agencies and other actors. Special attention should be given to the results obtained and the impacts should be quantified as far as possible.

e. *Under-resourcing and diffusion of responsibility among United Nations bodies supporting SIDS:* The CDP had difficulty understanding clearly the respective mandates of the two main central bodies (DESA and OHRLLS) with respect to SIDS, and how they interacted with each other in practice. Their mandates should be reviewed with the objective of allowing more effective monitoring and pro-active advocacy. Adequate resources should be provided for their activities.

Given the geographical dispersion of SIDS, it is necessary that support in implementing MSI should continue to be provided regionally and subregionally, to complement the central role of DESA and OHRLLS, and that of global United Nations agencies. In this regard, the role of the regional commissions, regional development banks and the subregional intergovernment organizations (which mostly consist of islands) could be clarified and made more precise.

f. *Monitoring of support by the international community:* Support by the international community is considered crucial for the implementation of MSI. However, the nature and extent of this support are not clearly specified in MSI and it is not monitored. It is recommended that once the commitments of donors have been more clearly defined and are better focused, an operational mechanism could be put in place to monitor systematically the international support to the SIDS-specific and vulnerability aspects of these programmes and their main features. The relevant United Nations entity could develop a standard questionnaire to this effect. The cooperation of OECD/ DAC should be sought on reporting. If a website, along the lines of the WTO-DAC website on trade capacity building is envisaged, resources will be required to set it up and maintain it.

SIDS receive on average a relatively high level of ODA per capita, which appears to have increased in recent years. However, the extent to which this support is focused on their specific vulnerabilities as SIDS or to the implementation of the BPOA/MSI is not known. It is of the utmost importance for assistance to be focused on these objectives, supported by proper monitoring and an assessment of their effectiveness.

g. *Documenting SIDS own efforts needs improvement:* SIDS own efforts at implementing the Programme of Action could be helped by attracting more relevant support from the United Nations and international partners; it would also be beneficial if these efforts were more systematically documented. As suggested above, this needs to be facilitated through improved coordination with other reporting requirements by all development partners, including United Nations agencies, regional commissions, and the subregional groupings comprising SIDS.

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38 A/60/401.

**List of SIDS used by DESA to monitor sustainable development**

American Samoa  
Anguilla  
Antigua and Barbuda  
Aruba  
Bahamas  
Barbados  
Belize  
British Virgin Islands  
Cape Verde  
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
Comoros  
Cook Islands  
Cuba  
Dominica  
Dominica Republic  
Fiji  
French Polynesia  
Grenada  
Guam  
Guinea-Bissau  
Guyana  
Haiti  
Jamaica  
Kiribati  
Maldives  
Marshall Islands  
Mauritius  
Micronesia (Federated States of)  
Montserrat  
Nauru  
Netherlands Antilles  
New Caledonia  
Niue  
Palau  
Papua New Guinea  
Puerto Rico  
Saint Kitts and Nevis  
Saint Lucia  
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines  
Samoa  
Sao Tome and Principe  
Seychelles  
Singapore  
Solomon Islands  
Suriname  
Timor-Leste  
Tonga  
Trinidad and Tobago  
Tuvalu  
United States Virgin Islands  
Vanuatu

## Annex II

## Matrix of actions to operationalize the Mauritius Strategy

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Mandated initiatives</i>	<i>United Nations system partners</i>
Climate change	National and regional initiatives on adaptation to climate change; support for the development and/or transfer of appropriate technology to address climate change adaptation and mitigation; and support for the formulation and implementation of CDM projects.	GEF, UNFCCC, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UN-Habitat
Energy resources	Programmes to enhance energy efficiency and further develop renewable energy options; support for the formulation and implementation of integrated and interdisciplinary bio-energy policies and programmes; promotion of public/private partnerships and market-oriented approaches to diversifying energy sources. Support from regional development banks; implementation of public awareness programmes in communities and among stakeholder groups on the impact of fossil fuel-based energy use on the environment; support for training programmes to change traditional attitudes in the use of energy, to promote wider use of renewable energy sources; and support for the establishment of regulatory frameworks and supportive public policies regarding the development and use of renewable energy.	FAO, UNDP/GEF, UNEP, UNESCO
Natural and environmental disasters	Support for SIDS efforts to build human, technical and managerial capacities for disaster reduction and prevention; strengthening of national capacity for natural disaster preparation, response, mitigation and rehabilitation; review of regional mechanisms and establishment/strengthening of early warning capacity; increased public education and awareness on disaster preparedness and mitigation measures; design and implementation of interdisciplinary, intersectoral partnerships in national environment management plans; mainstreaming risk management in the planning process; and support for SIDS review and reform of the insurance sector to strengthen response to natural disasters.	FAO, ISDR, UNDP, UNESCO, UN Habitat
Management of waste	Identification of cost-effective, environmentally sound waste management systems; exploration of innovative mechanisms to finance waste management initiatives; strengthening of national and regional regulatory regimes; and promotion of reduction, re-use and recycling strategies.	UNDP, UNESCO, UN-Habitat
Coastal and marine resources	Support for national efforts to complete the delimitation of maritime boundaries; support for the completion of continental shelf claims; programmes to strengthen the monitoring, reporting, enforcement and control of fishing vessels, so as to reduce the incidence of IUU fishing; acquisition and installation of surveillance and monitoring systems; support for efforts for early ratification of/accession to relevant Fishing Agreements; and support for the design and implementation of integrated policies for the management of marine protected areas, coral reefs and related marine ecosystems.	FAO, UNEP, UNESCO
Freshwater resources	Support capacity development in water quality and water demand management; programmes to improve infrastructure for water catchment, storage and distribution; programmes to strengthen sanitation and sewerage systems; and design and implementation of strategies to contain pollution, including through public awareness campaigns.	FAO, UNEP, UNESCO

<b>Annex II (cont'd)</b>		
<i>Sector</i>	<i>Mandated initiatives</i>	<i>United Nations system partners</i>
Land resources	Programmes and legislation to improve land management and strengthen land tenure; programmes to reduce watershed and land degradation; implement sustainable forest management strategies to reduce forest degradation and loss; support strategies to enhance food security and promote agricultural diversification; support national and regional research initiatives in the use of appropriate technology, particularly for small farmers; strengthen agricultural extension services; support the development of aquaculture; support the development of early warning systems to monitor food security; and programmes to improve food processing, marketing, product development and quality control.	FAO, GEF, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO
Biodiversity resources	Support for control of the primary pathways for potential invasive alien species; support for the development of local capacity to protect and effectively use traditional knowledge; educate and build community capacity to protect and conserve indigenous species and their habitats; and support the development in SIDS of natural resource accounting systems.	CBD, FAO, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO
Transportation and communication	Programmes to support increased ICT literacy and skills development; support for the development of ICT community multimedia centres and for the creation of subregional hubs; support low-tech communication mechanisms for rural and remote locations; support increased local content and applications; programmes to bridge the digital divide, especially in rural communities; develop/strengthen postgraduate programmes in ICT; develop information systems and databases; explore strategies to exploit opportunities in areas like e-commerce, telemedicine, distance learning, sharing of best practices; and assist SIDS in the development and strengthening of intellectual property laws.	UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO
Capacity development and education	Support national strategies to promote comprehensive access to primary education; support programmes for on-the-job training and adult education; support regional and national programmes to promote technical and vocational education; strengthen distance learning arrangements; improve teacher training programmes; explore the establishment of/participation in Regional Centres of Excellence; support for the SIDS University Consortium initiative; development of programmes to engage the human, technical and financial support of the SIDS Diaspora; and support programmes to strengthen SIDS national and regional NGO networks and civil society structures.	
Health	Review/strengthen strategies to control HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases; support the pursuit of partnerships for programmes to combat HIV/AIDS; support for enhanced data collection on demographic and epidemiological trends; support public health strategies and public awareness campaigns to reduce incidence of non-communicable diseases, and enhance immunization programmes; and programmes to support the development/appropriate use of traditional medicines.	

<b>Annex II (cont'd)</b>		
<i>Sector</i>	<i>Mandated initiatives</i>	<i>United Nations system partners</i>
Culture	Assist SIDS efforts to strengthen national policies and legislative frameworks to support and protect cultural industries; support capacity-building to promote cultural industries in music, art, festivals, theatre, film and cultural tourism, among others; support the development of measures to improve institutional capacity for marketing cultural products; support the development of capacity in SIDS for rights management and for patent, trademark and copyright administration to protect all forms of creative innovation; assist SIDS in implementation of legislation to protect indigenous intellectual property; support programmes to protect natural, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, including public-private partnerships; encourage community-based participation in policymaking to safeguard cultural heritage; assist SIDS in the preservation of local languages through locally developed curricula; assist SIDS strategies to improve the management and maintenance of cultural and natural heritage sites; support programmes to record traditional knowledge and preserve customary cultural values, traditions and practices; support the development of programmes to teach and transmit traditional community values to infuse basic education with local and indigenous knowledge; and programmes to support strategies to attract increased venture capital for small and medium cultural enterprises and to promote the establishment of culture support funds in SIDS.	UNESCO, UNCTAD
Governance	Support for the design and implementation of national sustainable development strategies in SIDS; support for efforts to strengthen community involvement in decision-making, planning and programme development; support for programmes enhancing a participatory approach to sustainable development with civil society; support SIDS strategies to enhance the representation of women in decision-making at all levels; programmes to more actively engage corporate and other private sector actors in sustainable development; promotion of public-private partnerships; strengthen regional mechanisms in support of sustainable development in SIDS; and identify/design programmes for SIDS-SIDS, South-South cooperation, particularly in sharing of best practices, capacity development and transfer of appropriate technology.	FAO, DESA, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UN Habitat

<b>Annex II (cont'd)</b>		
<i>Sector</i>	<i>Mandated initiatives</i>	<i>United Nations system partners</i>
Trade and finance	Provide technical assistance in support of SIDS efforts to prepare for World Trade Organization accession; assist SIDS in analysing the impact of trade liberalization, with a view to implementing appropriate adjustment strategies and enhancing their competitiveness in international markets; support product diversification and the development of niche markets; support through research and analysis SIDS advocacy towards ensuring that their environmental vulnerability is appropriately taken into consideration by the multilateral trading system; support the development and strengthening of legal, regulatory and physical infrastructure to assist SIDS in promoting a domestic environment conducive to entrepreneurship; support the design and implementation of measures to strengthen the private sector and promote micro-enterprise; support the establishment of innovative financial mechanisms to respond to the structural disadvantages of SIDS; capacity-building to strengthen SIDS participation in international trade negotiations at the national and regional levels; strengthen SIDS institutional capacity to develop trade-related policies and relevant regulatory measures; assist in the analysis and formulation of policies and the development of infrastructure required to address issues relating to sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) and technical barriers to trade (TBT); support research and analysis towards re-examination of the criteria for graduation from LDC status, taking into consideration the special vulnerabilities of SIDS; analysis of SIDS debt sustainability to support effective debt management; and assist SIDS in the design and implementation of programmes to encourage foreign investment and facilitate remittances.	FAO, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO
Other issues	Support SIDS strategies to expand employment opportunities for youth and the poor; support SIDS strategies to expand education opportunities for youth and the poor; support the integration of the MDGs into the planning and development processes of SIDS; and assist SIDS in strengthening legislative framework and in implementing regulatory and other measures to address their security needs.	DESA, UNDP, UNESCO

**Source:** Report of the Secretary-General on the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (A/60/401).

## Annex III

**United Nations system partners in SIDS**

Economic Commission for Africa

Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: Small Island Developing States

Global Environment Facility

International Telecommunication Union (Programme for LDCs, SIDS and Emergency Telecommunications)

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity

Secretariat for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

Secretariat for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development: Special Programme for Least Developed, Landlocked and Island Developing Countries

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development, Small Island Developing States Unit

United Nations Development Programme (Capacity 2015: SIDS)

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (implementing the Mauritius Strategy; Small Island Voices; On the Frontlines of Climate Change)

United Nations Environment Programme (Regional Seas Programme: Secretariat of the Caribbean Environment Programme; Secretariat of the Pacific Environment Programme, Islands)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (Sustainable energy solutions)

United Nations Office for Partnerships

United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Land-locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

World Intellectual Property Organization

World Meteorological Organization

World Bank (Small States)

World Tourism Organization

World Trade Organization: Work Programme on Small Economies

**Source:** UN/DESA Division for Sustainable Development website available from [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/dsd\\_aofw\\_sids/sids\\_un/unfocapoin\\_shmtl](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/dsd_aofw_sids/sids_un/unfocapoin_shmtl).

**Selected multilateral environmental agreements relevant to the sustainable development of SIDS**

Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal  
Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety  
Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships  
Convention on Biological Diversity  
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora  
Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals  
Kyoto Protocol  
London Convention and Protocol—Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping Wastes and Other Matter  
Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer  
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat  
Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants  
United Nations Conference on the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provision of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks  
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea  
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification  
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

**Source:** UN/DESA Division for Sustainable Development website available from [http://www.un.org.esa.dsd/dsd\\_aofw\\_sids/sids\\_multenviagre.shtml](http://www.un.org.esa.dsd/dsd_aofw_sids/sids_multenviagre.shtml).

## Annex V

**Table A.1**  
**Selected SIDS: Exports of goods and services as a share of GDP, 1980–2008**  
 (Period averages, percentage of GDP)

	1980–1989	1990–1999	2000–2008
Antigua and Barbuda	73.0	83.8	60.0
Bahamas	78.4	47.7	43.1
Barbados	60.5	52.7	55.9
Belize	47.8	55.4	55.9
Cape Verde	20.3	18.2	17.6
Comoros	14.6	16.7	15.2
Cuba	32.4	16.8	16.4
Dominica	39.8	51.8	44.9
Dominican Republic	42.5	37.3	33.7
Fiji	49.5	60.1	54.2
Grenada	44.3	45.3	37.4
Guinea-Bissau	10.2	14.1	34.9
Guyana	57.6	78.2	88.8
Haiti	26.6	12.3	14.5
Jamaica	46.1	47.5	37.1
Kiribati	19.1	22.2	14.0
Maldives	91.9	91.8	81.4
Marshall Islands	18.7	12.2	12.4
Mauritius	54.5	61.8	59.8
Micronesia (Federated States of)	3.4	3.4	3.4
Nauru	19.1	22.2	14.0
Palau	25.4	17.6	64.0
Papua New Guinea	42.3	53.0	72.8
Saint Kitts and Nevis	58.4	53.8	45.0
Saint Lucia	58.4	63.7	50.6
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	65.9	53.3	45.2
Samoa	32.7	30.0	30.4
Sao Tome and Principe	22.6	23.9	31.1
Seychelles	46.2	61.6	81.3
Singapore	178.3	176.1	217.9
Solomon Islands	55.7	56.6	41.5
Suriname	43.0	51.2	55.6
Tonga	26.0	20.6	17.2
Trinidad and Tobago	40.4	48.4	59.5
Tuvalu	19.4	12.3	12.6
Vanuatu	45.5	46.1	45.8
Average SIDS	44.7	45.0	46.2
Average excluding Belize, Guinea-Bissau, Singapore, Suriname	41.1	40.1	39.1

Source: UN/DESA Statistics Division online database.

**Table A.2**  
**Selected SIDS: Average annual real rates of growth (per cent), 1980–2008**

	<i>GDP</i>			<i>GDP per capita</i>		
	<i>1980–1989</i>	<i>1990–1999</i>	<i>2000–2008</i>	<i>1980–1989</i>	<i>1990–1999</i>	<i>2000–2008</i>
Antigua and Barbuda	6.4	3.3	5.3	8.2	1.3	3.7
Bahamas	3.9	1.9	1.4	1.8	0.1	0.1
Barbados	1.7	0.7	1.9	1.3	1.0	1.8
Belize	4.6	5.0	5.5	1.9	2.1	3.1
Cape Verde	5.7	6.1	6.5	3.7	3.8	4.8
Comoros	3.3	1.3	1.8	0.3	-1.0	-0.4
Cuba	3.9	-2.3	6.1	3.1	-2.8	5.9
Dominica	6.2	2.2	1.5	6.7	2.4	1.7
Dominican Republic	3.7	4.9	5.3	1.5	3.0	3.7
Fiji	1.7	2.9	0.9	0.2	1.9	0.2
Grenada	4.9	3.5	2.9	4.0	3.1	2.7
Guinea-Bissau	2.9	0.9	1.5	0.8	-1.6	-0.8
Guyana	-2.9	4.7	1.3	-2.7	4.6	1.2
Haiti	0.7	-1.1	0.5	-1.5	-3.1	-1.1
Jamaica	1.3	1.8	1.3	0.2	1.0	0.6
Kiribati	-5.3	4.2	1.8	-7.8	2.6	0.1
Maldives	11.7	8.7	6.8	8.3	6.0	5.3
Marshall Islands	5.3	0.6	3.2	0.8	-0.6	1.4
Mauritius	4.3	5.1	4.4	3.3	3.8	3.5
Micronesia (Federated States of)	3.0	1.3	-0.5	0.0	0.0	-0.8
Nauru	4.9	-5.4	-6.8	3.0	-6.5	-6.9
Palau	-5.5	0.9	1.9	-7.2	-1.7	1.1
Papua New Guinea	1.4	4.5	2.7	-1.1	1.8	0.1
Saint Kitts and Nevis	6.0	3.9	3.6	6.6	2.8	2.2
Saint Lucia	5.9	2.9	2.1	4.3	1.6	1.0
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	6.0	3.5	4.3	5.2	3.4	4.2
Samoa	-0.3	1.4	4.1	-0.7	0.5	3.9
Sao Tome and Principe	-1.4	1.2	5.7	-3.4	-0.7	3.9
Seychelles	2.5	5.1	1.6	1.7	3.8	1.1
Singapore	7.4	7.6	5.4	5.1	4.5	3.6
Solomon Islands	1.5	4.2	1.3	-1.7	1.3	-1.3
Suriname	0.4	0.3	4.9	-0.5	-1.1	3.6
Tonga	6.1	2.2	1.2	6.3	1.7	0.6
Trinidad and Tobago	-1.6	3.9	7.6	-2.8	3.2	7.2
Tuvalu	-1.5	5.4	2.1	-2.5	4.7	1.6
Vanuatu	4.1	3.2	3.0	1.6	0.7	0.4
Average	2.9	2.8	2.9	1.3	1.3	1.7

Source: UN/DESA Statistics Division online database.

**Table A.3**  
**Selected indicators of infrastructure networks**

	<i>Roads, paved (percentage of total roads)</i>	<i>Internet users (per 100 people)</i>	<i>Telephone lines (per 100 people)</i>	<i>Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people)</i>
<i>Country/Year</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>
Antigua and Barbuda	..	34.9	46.4	103.6
Bahamas	57.4	31.9	43.8	70.5
Barbados	98.6	63.2	53.7	81.4
Belize	17.0	8.9	11.9	41.0
Cape Verde	69.0	6.1	15.3	17.1
Comoros	76.5	3.3	..	..
Cuba	49.0	9.7	6.8	1.2
Dominica	50.4	36.1	29.3	..
Dominican Republic	49.4	11.6	9.7	38.3
Fiji	49.2	8.5	12.8	24.8
Grenada	61.0	20.0	31.3	44.5
Guinea-Bissau	..	1.9	0.7	6.7
Guyana	7.4	20.9	13.5	36.8
Haiti	24.3	6.5	1.5	5.4
Jamaica	70.1	46.5	16.0	74.8
Kiribati	..	2.2	4.8	0.7
Maldives	..	6.8	10.8	69.0
Marshall Islands	..	3.9	..	..
Mauritius	97.0	24.1	..	..
Micronesia (Federated States of)	17.5	11.8	11.0	12.8
Palau	..	..	39.1	30.4
Papua New Guinea	3.5	1.7	1.1	1.2
Samoa	..	3.4	9.2	13.4
Saint Kitts and Nevis	..	27.1	53.2	..
Saint Lucia	..	21.6	..	64.1
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	68.0	9.2	17.5	65.0
Sao Tome and Principe	68.1	13.8	4.7	7.8
Seychelles	..	25.3	25.8	70.9
Singapore	100.0	61.9	44.6	102.8
Solomon Islands	2.4	0.8	1.5	1.3
Suriname	26.0	6.4	16.5	46.6
Tonga	27.0	2.9	12.8	29.3
Trinidad and Tobago	51.1	13.9	24.4	69.8
Vanuatu	23.9	5.1	3.2	5.9

**Source:** World Bank, World Development Indicators online database.

**Table A.4**  
**Human Assets Index and its components**

<i>Countries/Indicators</i>	<i>HAI</i>	<i>Prevalence of undernourishment in total population (percentage)</i>	<i>Under-five mortality (per 1000)</i>	<i>Literacy rate</i>	<i>Secondary enrolment ratio</i>
Antigua	85.4	28.0	12	86	105.2
Bahamas	93.9	6.0	19	96	90.9
Barbados	99.6	2.5	14	100	103.2
Belize	85.5	2.5	23	75	78.7
Cape Verde	81.9	15.0	36	84	79.3
Comoros	48.2	52.0	77	75	35.1
Cuba	98.1	2.5	8	100	92.7
Dominica	95.9	2.5	15	88	106.0
Dominican Republic	80.7	21.0	39	89	79.1
Fiji	91.8	2.5	27	94	82.4
Guinea-Bissau	33.8	32.0	212	65	17.7
Guyana	92.1	6.0	68	99	104.6
Haiti	39.8	58.0	82	62	29.3
Jamaica	90.4	5.0	19	86	87.1
Kiribati	87.6	5.0	65	93	87.9
Maldives	87.5	7.0	59	97	83.1
Mauritius	90.8	6.0	18	87	87.8
Papua New Guinea	54.3	14.0	90	58	26.0
Saint Kitts and Nevis	91.6	15.0	20	98	93.7
Saint Lucia	93.6	8.0	19	95	93.5
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	86.0	6.0	32	88	74.9
Samoa	92.2	2.5	31	99	80.6
Sao Tome and Principe	72.1	5.0	102	88	49.8
Seychelles	94.7	9.0	13	92	111.8
Singapore	88.6	2.5	4	94	63.0
Solomon Islands	64.1	9.0	81	77	30.1
Suriname	86.8	7.0	39	90	79.6
Timor-Leste	54.0	22.0	110	50	53.4
Tonga	96.6	2.5	25	99	93.7
Trinidad and Tobago	89.2	10.0	20	99	76.3
Tuvalu	88.4	10.0	38	95	84.4
Vanuatu	72.3	7.0	42	78	40.1

**Source:** Committee for Development Policy online database available from <http://webapps01.un.org/cdp/dataquery/selectCountries.action>.

