

Sustainable Development Latin American and Caribbean Perspectives

Based on the Regional Consultative
Meeting on Sustainable Development
19-21 January 2000, Santiago, Chile



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Foreword

Much has been achieved in the Latin American and Caribbean region since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Notwithstanding the serious problems the region still faces, and the urgency of dealing with them, important progress has been made in the area of sustainable development. The level of public awareness has increased markedly, and sustainable development issues have moved from being the concern of the few to being topics of broad public discussion. However, sustainable development is not achieved overnight. In an increasingly globalized world, all countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region are subject to a variety of external, political and economic influences, carried through investment, trade, external debt, technology transfer, development assistance and other factors. Continued economic and social development and institutional reform, however, should make the prospects for achieving sustainable development an achievable goal.

In the past decade, awareness of the environmental aspects of development and the related concept of sustainable development has gradually penetrated public policy and some economic and social practices in countries in the region. This has been reflected in the development of institutions, strategies and policies. Almost all countries of the region have established a high-level institution, at the ministerial level, to deal with environment and sustainable

development. In addition, the global conventions have also generated a series of important institutional changes and innovative mechanisms for international cooperation.

In this regard, the region has strengthened and/or created a set of regional and subregional processes and mechanisms for cooperation, including:

- The Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States;*
- The Alliance for Sustainable Development in Central America (ALIDES);*
- Mercosur (Southern Zone Common Market);*
- The Andean Community of Nations; and*
- The Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.*

However, the region still confronts a number of important challenges, such as:

- The principles of environmental protection and sustainable development continue to be viewed by most of the production sectors and a significant number of government economic sectors as external interference that hinders development.*
- The economic policies of the energy, agricultural, industrial and urban development sectors, which lead to conflicting environmental practices, call for a review of policies and instruments of environmental management.*
- Liberal trade policies in the region and the increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) have altered the course of development, the export profile and, with it, the environment as well. Insofar as the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean are seeking more and better international trade links, their pattern of production specialization in resource-intensive branches places the region in a more vulnerable situation in terms of the environmental demands.*

In response to these challenges, a regional agenda is emerging particularly under the supervision of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment and, hence, the priority tasks identified for implementation in the following years in conjunction by different bodies of the United Nations system are as follows:

- to carry out periodic evaluations of sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to determine sustainable development patterns in the region, integrating environment into economic and social decision-making;*
- to modernize public policy and consolidate institutions and instruments in order to create synergies between the different environmental conventions and regional and subregional institutional settings;*
- to harmonize and articulate strategic areas of economic development with social and environmental dimensions;*
- to redefine the region's comparative advantages on the basis of the global environmental agenda;*
- to promote the effective participation of other stakeholders; and*
- to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations programmes, funds and specialized agencies operating in Latin America and the Caribbean in the area of sustainable development.*

The 1997 Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly reaffirmed the fundamental role of Agenda 21 as a basis for achieving sustainable development. It stressed that sustainable development objectives require the integration of economic, environmental, institutional and social components and cannot be carried out without greater integration at all policy-making and operational levels. Additionally, the importance of regional implementation and regional cooperation in the implementation of Agenda 21 was stressed.

This publication is a result of a Regional Consultative Meeting on Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean held at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Santiago, Chile, 19–21 January 2000. The partners in the organization of this meeting were ECLAC, the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the Organization of American States (OAS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB).

Fifty-four participants, representing governments from the region at the senior policy-making level, regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations, financial institutions, key United Nations regional entities and selected non-governmental organizations active in the region, attended the meeting. The meeting proved to be an excellent forum for exchange of experiences in the area of national strategies and regional/subregional cooperation in

sustainable development. It proposed mechanisms for more effective inter-agency coordination, taking into consideration the complexities of economic globalization. This exchange of experiences has been instrumental in building momentum for the ten-year review of UNCED in 2002.

It is the objective of the organizers of the Consultative Meeting as well as the participants, that the cooperative process and valuable exchange of experiences initiated in Santiago continue. Many of the useful and practical recommendations resulting from the meeting will also provide tangible guidelines for relevant regional and subregional organizations in their follow up to the meeting. In this way, we wish to encourage further regional cooperation to support sustainable development initiatives at the national level.

We wish to express our appreciation to all who have contributed their time and effort to produce this publication. It would not have been possible without the collaboration between ECLAC and DESA, and even more so without the valuable written contributions of the participants.

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ACS	Association of Caribbean States
ALIDES	Alianza Centroamericana para el Desarrollo Sostenible [The Alliance for Sustainable Development in Central America]
AMARC	Association Mondiale des Radiodiffuseurs Communautaires [World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters]
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Germany) [Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development]
CAF	Corporación Andina de Fomento [Andean Development Corporation]
CARICAD	The Caribbean Centre for Development Administration
CARICOM	The Caribbean Community and Common Market
CASDC	Central American Sustainable Development Council
CCAD	Comisión Centroamericana para el Ambiente y el Desarrollo [Central American Commission on Environment and Development]
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CDERA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency-Response Agency
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism (Programme)
CEBDS	Conselho Empresarial Brasileiro para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável [Brazilian Business Committee for Sustainable Development]
CEC	Commission of the European Communities
CEHI	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute
CEIS	Caribbean Energy Information System
CEO	Chief Executive Officer

CFRAMP	CARICOM Fisheries Resource Assessment and Management Programme
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIDI	Inter-American Council for Integral Development
CIDS	Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development (established in 1996 out of CIDI)
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CLAI	Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias [Latin American Council of Churches]
CNI	Confederação Nacional da Indústria (Brazil) [National Confederation of Industries]
CNN	Cable News Network
COICA	Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica [Coordinator of the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin]
CONAMA	Conselho Nacional do Meio Ambiente (Brazil) [National Environment Council]
COP	Conference of Parties
CPACC	Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Global Climate Change
CPDS	Comissão de Políticas de Desenvolvimento Sustentável e da Agenda 21 Nacional (Brazil) [Commission on Sustainable Development Policies and the National Agenda 21]
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development (UN)
CTO	Caribbean Tourism Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN)
DTIE	Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP)

Abbreviations

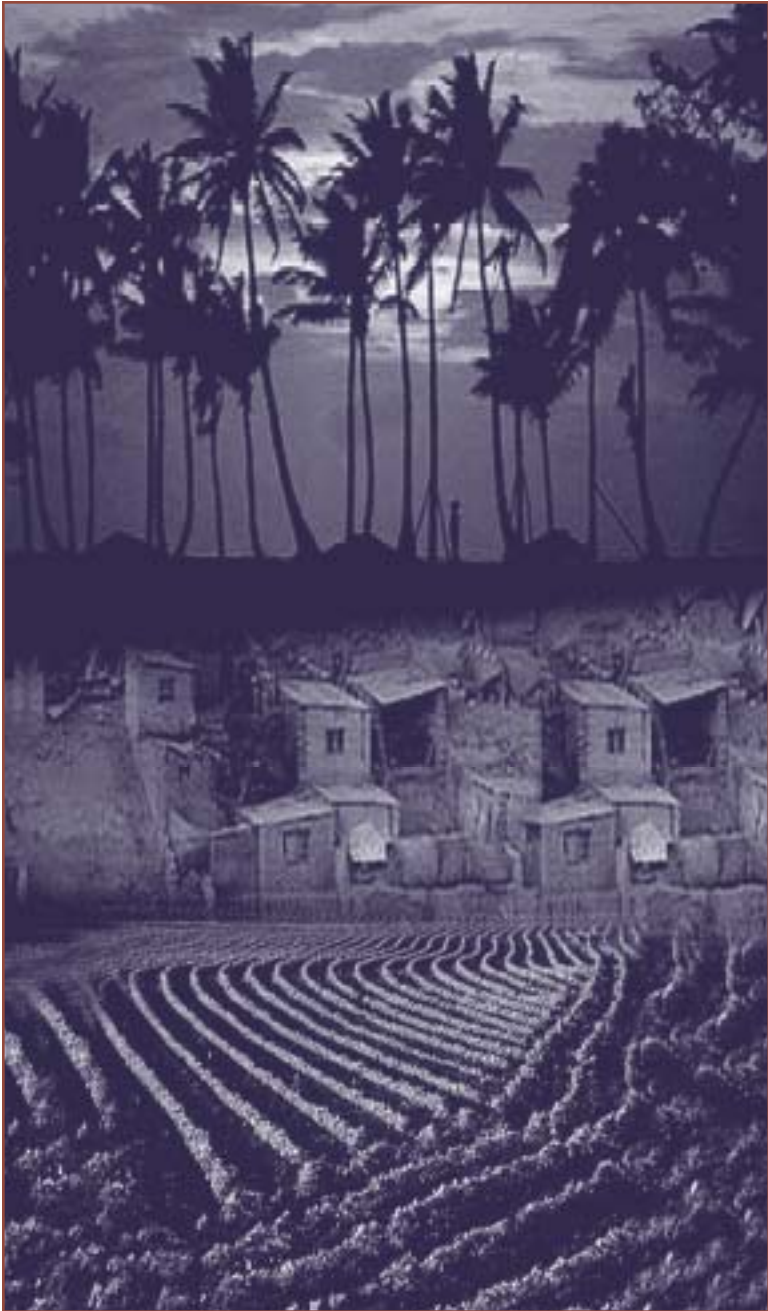
ECLAC	UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (UN)
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
ENACT	Environmental Action Programme (CIDA)
ESID	Executive Secretary for Integrated Development (OAS)
EU	European Union
EVI	environmental vulnerability index
FAPS	Foro Argentino sobre la Pesca Sostenible [Argentine Forum on Sustainable Fisheries]
FIDA	Foundation for International Development Assistance
GDP	gross domestic product
GEF	Global Environment Facility (UN)
GEO	Global Environment Outlook (UNEP)
GIS	geographic information system
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit [German Technical Cooperation Agency]
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICRI	International Coral Reef Initiative
ICZM	Integrated coastal-zone management
IGO	Intergovernmental organization
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISER	Instituto de Estudos da Religião (Brazilian NGO) [Institute for the Study of Religion]
ISO	International Organization for Standardization

ISP	Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision-making in Sustainable Development
ITC	Interagency Technical Committee
IUCN	International Conservation Organization (formerly International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources)
IULA	International Union of Local Authorities
JANEAP	Jamaican National Environmental Action Plan
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LTRR-I	Land, Territory and the Right to Resources Initiative
MARPOL	International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (73/78)
MBC	Mesoamerican Biological Corridor
MERCOSUR	Mercado Común del Sur [Southern Zone Common Market]
NAP	National Action Plan
NBG	National Biodiversity Group
NBS	National Biodiversity Strategy
NCSD	National Council on Sustainable Development
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan
NEEC	National Environmental Education Committee (Jamaica)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (USA)
NPC	National Planning Council (Jamaica)
NRCA	Natural Resource Conservation Agency (Jamaica)
NRMU	Natural Resources Management Unit (Antigua and Barbuda)

Abbreviations

NSSD	National Strategy for Sustainable Development
OAS	Organization of American States
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
PDF	Project Development Fund (UNDP/GEF)
PGDES	Plan General de Desarrollo Económico y Social (Bolivia) [General Plan of Economic and Social Development]
PNEA	Programa Nacional de Educação Ambiental [Brazilian National Programme of Environmental Education]
PNMA	Programa Nacional do Meio Ambiente [Brazilian National Programme on the Environment]
PNRH	Programa Nacional de Recursos Hídricos [Brazilian National Programme of Water Resources]
POA	Programme of Action
PRONABIO	Programa Nacional de Diversidade Biológica [Brazilian National Programme on Biological Diversity]
REDEH	Rede de Defesa da Espécie Humana [The Network in Defence of Humankind]
ROLAC	Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNEP)
SDC-J	Sustainable Development Council of Jamaica
SEMARNAP	Secretaría de Medio Ambiente, Recursos Naturales y Pesca (Mexico) [Secretariat of the Environment, Natural Resources and Fisheries]
SICA	Secretaría para la Integración Centroamericana [Secretariat for Central American Integration]
SIDS	United Nations Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States
SIDSNET	SIDS Network

SME	small and medium enterprises
TCA	Tratado sobre la Cooperación en Amazonía [Treaty on Cooperation in Amazonia]
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCSD	United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USAID	US Agency for International Development
UWICED	University of the West Indies Centre for Environment and Development
WB	World Bank (IBRD)
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WTO	World Trade Organization





Final Report

Conclusions and Recommendations of the Regional Consultative Meeting on Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Introduction

The Regional Consultative Meeting on Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, held at ECLAC's Headquarters from 19 to 21 January 2000 in Santiago, Chile, was the third in a series of such meetings organized at the regional level by the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations. The objectives of the meeting were:

- to exchange national experiences in formulating and implementing national sustainable development strategies;
- to analyze means by which regional and subregional cooperation in sustainable development has been promoted; and
- to strengthen CSD–regional links, including the Bolivia–Summit follow-up, and to explore regional priorities for the Earth Summit + 10 review in 2002.

The collaborating partners in organizing this meeting were: the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Organization of American States (OAS), the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the UNDP and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). Fifty-four participants, representing governments from the region at the

senior policy-making level, regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations, financial institutions, key UN regional bodies and selected non-governmental organizations active in the region, attended the meeting.

The outcome of the meeting was presented at the Twelfth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean in Barbados in March 2000. The report will also be made available to participants at the eighth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in New York in April 2000.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Implementation of National Sustainable Development Strategies

Factors That Have Contributed to the Formulation and Implementation of National Strategies for Sustainable Development

It is recognized that the countries of the region have addressed, in various ways, the need to develop national strategies for sustainable development (NSSDs) on the basis of proposals formulated by environmental and/or planning authorities, with a view to expediting the transition to sustainable development. At the same time, it is recognized realistically that strategic priorities are aimed at reducing the existing poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean. Another aim is to ensure that elements of sustainable development are incorporated into the national policies that will lead to NSSDs being adopted by the highest political authorities. In both of these processes, the following relevant factors have been identified which have contributed to the successful formulation and implementation of national strategies for sustainable development:

- the international agreements and commitments entered into as a result of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Agenda 21, Rio Declaration, Principles and Guidelines for Ecologically Responsible Forest Use, Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification);
- the Rio Declaration as a blueprint that sets forth principles and ethical values concerning sustainable development;
- the establishment, in most of the countries, of participatory institutional structures or forums which have generated and promoted the formulation and implementation of NSSDs, such as national councils for sustainable development or inter-ministerial commissions, among others, and which have an impact on high-level decision-making and promote consensus;
- amendments to regulatory frameworks, which have contributed to greater political integration of the sustainable development dimension (constitutions, laws and regulations);
- the phasing-in of sustainable development strategies, which open up opportunities to elaborate a new economic model that recognizes the interaction among the economic, social and environmental factors with a view to improving the competitiveness of the countries of the region in the long term;
- the growing participation of local governments, which, as a result of Agenda 21 and the SIDS Programme of Action resulting from the United Nations Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, have been inspired to formulate and implement their own sustainable development agendas;
- society's growing awareness of the sustainable development issue, which has generated greater demand for the formulation and implementation of national strategies for sustainable development;
- progress in intersectoral cooperation and coordination, which has promoted the integration of various sectoral public policies in relation to the concept of sustainable development; and

- the existence of regional initiatives such as the Regional Action Plan for the Environment adopted by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment and supported by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the World Bank; the Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision-making for Sustainable Development, adopted by the States members of the Organization of American States (OAS); the hemispheric Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Americas adopted by the countries participating in the Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development, held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, in 1996; and the preparations for the Santa Cruz + 5 meeting, planned for the last quarter of 2001 in Bolivia as one input to the Earth Summit + 10 meeting from the member states of the OAS.

Common Lessons Learned from
These Experiences: Conditions for
Success and Challenges

Lessons Learned for Ensuring the Success of NSSDs

- the desirability of ensuring the effective involvement, from an early stage, of all relevant actors in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national sustainable development strategies;
- the need to achieve long-term political commitments to the objectives of sustainable development to ensure that the latter will transcend successive administrations and to guarantee the continuity of national strategies for sustainable development;
- the viability of national strategies for sustainable development depends on the innovative and proactive capacity of the actors involved to mobilize internal and external human, financial and technical resources;

- the desirability of recognizing and specifying that sustainable development is not synonymous with environmental policy or management and, therefore, that the formulation of national strategies for sustainable development should be characterized by an integrative approach that incorporates economic, social and environmental concerns;
- the importance of reflecting, in public policy, the experiences of the private sector, recognizing that sustainable business activity is not necessarily a cost, but rather an investment;
- the building of greater awareness and participation of the population as a prerequisite for the success of national strategies for sustainable development and the need to incorporate the principles of sustainable development into formal and non-formal education; and
- the need for critical analysis of the impact of globalization on the countries of the region to enrich long-term visions.

Challenges

- including the issue of sustainable development on the priority agenda of national governments;
- strengthening institutional capacity for the implementation, supervision, monitoring and control of the commitments made in national strategies for sustainable development, including policies on the access of the public to information and to decision-making;
- strengthening institutional capacity to guarantee the representative participation of civil society in the decision-making;
- improving access to information on sustainable development and broadening its dissemination through the mass media;
- guiding the mass media to play a role in promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns;
- mobilizing funds needed to implement national sustainable development strategies;
- coordinating national finance mechanisms and international cooperation mechanisms;

- giving high priority to the coordination of donors and finance agencies to ensure that their agendas are consistent with government priorities; to achieve this, governments should articulate their priorities and be proactive in their negotiations with such agencies;
- ensuring that national priorities take precedence over those of international organizations and financial institutions;
- channelling funds towards the strengthening of permanent sustainable development institutions in the countries of the region;
- providing support to the economic valuation of the country's natural and social resource endowment so that it may be included in national accounts;
- promoting more efficient and effective use of existing direct and indirect tools for environmental management, to facilitate the practical implementation of national strategies for sustainable development;
- devising policies to channel foreign investment towards sustainable projects;
- achieving greater coordination and coherence among public policies that affect the natural resource base;
- strengthening technical capacity to formulate portfolios of practical and viable sustainable development projects; and
- recognizing existing experiences and capacities to avoid duplication of effort.

Main Characteristics of National Strategies for Sustainable Development

The issue of “Key Characteristics of National Strategies for Sustainable Development” has emerged from successive discussions of what elements constitute a sustainable development strategy. This is particularly relevant in light of the targets set by the international community, at the 19th Special Session of the General Assembly (Earth Summit + 5), to have in place by 2002 national strategies for sustainable development.

Two previous consultations among UN agencies and bilateral donors (September 1998) and national representatives of the African Region (September 1999) yielded a preliminary list of key characteristics.

(see UNDP contribution in the present report) This list was made available to the meeting as a point of departure for the discussion, during which, the following points were made:

- There was broad consensus that the list identified the basic characteristics relevant to the preparation of a national strategy for sustainable development; however, before this could be used as a “check list”, it should be subjected to further discussion and in-depth analysis.
- The list could be developed into a well defined methodological approach through the use of a matrix or flow chart indicating clearly the activities and outcomes; for example, it could be classified in such a way as to reflect the four stages of the formulation of the strategy: identification (of issues), formulation of the strategy, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
- Adequate resources should be made available to relevant institutions and institutional accountability should be established.
- It is important to include references to indicators, both in formulating and in executing strategies; appropriate indicators should be designed to correspond to national and local contexts within a conceptual framework, allowing for inter-country comparison.
- At all stages of the strategic work, vulnerability to natural and economic factors and other constraints must be taken into account.
- The specific comments on each element of the list mentioned above include the following:
 - The process should allow participation of the interested parties and lead to a strategy; the focus should be to establish objectives and overall priorities; it should reconcile diverse interests and resolve conflicts; it should establish a long-term vision with short-, medium- and long-term goals.
 - Cultural issues and governance are essential.
 - NSSDs should take into account vulnerability to natural disasters and other forms of vulnerability; policies at the subnational and local levels should do the same.
 - Intersectoral and cross-sectoral policies should both be established to address the issue of vulnerability.

- There should be close links between the budgeting (allocation of resources) and the implementation of the strategy; resources should be specifically earmarked to support the achievement of the goals established under the strategy.
- Instruments should be defined for the continuous adjustment of NSSDs.
- An inventory of natural resources and national technological knowledge should be established; environmental audits and accounting should be included as key instruments for monitoring implementation; data should be converted and transmitted as information for decision-makers; emphasis should be placed on the role of the mass media in NSSD implementation; appropriate indicators of sustainable development should be included.
- Representatives of civil society should include grass-roots organizations, academic institutions and universities.
- Alliances should also be formed with international cooperation and finance agencies.
- Priority should be given to the optimum use of existing institutions and resources over the establishment of new institutions; existing institutions should be provided with the necessary technical and financial resources to carry out designated responsibilities.
- New legal and regulatory frameworks should respond more to NSSDs than to environmental policies.
- SMART (simple, measurable, attainable, reliable and time-bound) indicators should be applied and the potential for sustainable use of natural resources for improving the quality of life of people should be demonstrated.
- Specific reference should be made in NSSDs to concerns, commitments and cooperation at the subregional and regional levels.
- The NSSDs should have a high-level political commitment and be used to elaborate a new social agenda.

It was understood that the foregoing comments should be taken into account in future work to establish a consensus around the “key characteristics” and the development of an appropriate methodology.

The Roles Played by Subregional, Regional and International Organizations and by Other Donors in Facilitating National Implementation of National Strategies for Sustainable Development

Subregional, regional and international organizations and other donors have played different roles in facilitating national implementation of NSSDs, which include:

- encouraging the incorporation of sustainable development requirements into the financing of development projects;
- encouraging consolidation of permanent sustainable development institutions in the countries of the region;
- assisting in systematizing national political agendas of the region with a view to region-wide coordination;
- facilitating the exchange of experience and public policy instruments;
- systematizing information on and knowledge of international trends; and
- supporting countries in the formulation of NSSDs in the context of international agreements, even if their support for implementation has been insufficient.



Regional and Subregional Cooperation in Sustainable Development

Guidelines Emerging from the Cooperation Frameworks, Modalities, Issues and Partners

Regional and subregional cooperation frameworks should include the concept of sustainable development. Priority should be given to regional over national projects, as in the case of European Union cooperation for Panama and Costa Rica.

There are several regional agencies involved in the areas of development, economics, trade, health, sustainable development, finance, disaster prevention, development of public policies, etc.

The principal cooperation agencies in the region are: ECLAC, UNDP, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Global Environment Facility (GEF), Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), World Bank, Central American Economic Integration Bank, Andean Development Corporation (CAF), Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Association of Caribbean States (ACS), Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD), Organization of American States (OAS), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), European Union and various bilateral cooperation agencies.

Over the last few years, there has been a great interest on the part of subregional organizations, including those in non-English-speaking countries, in project formulation and implementation. Thus, there has been an increase in cooperation and bilateral assistance among Spanish-, German-, French-, Dutch- and English-speaking countries in the region, in the areas of health, environment, agriculture and trade, among others.

There has been a greater effort to move from bilateral to multi-lateral approaches, as well as incorporating bioregional approaches to development planning.

Some of the issues mentioned are:

- support for micro-, small- and medium-sized firms;
- biodiversity;

- poverty alleviation;
- decentralization of environmental management;
- strengthening civil society;
- institution building;
- ecological and social vulnerability;
- climate change;
- governance;
- trade;
- gender; and
- state reform.

Modalities:

- non-refundable assistance;
- soft loans (tied loans);
- risk-capital funds; and
- cost-sharing.

Some shortcomings of the present regional cooperation schemes were also mentioned:

- Projects that receive support often do not correspond to national priorities but rather reflect the agendas of the international cooperation agencies.
- Regional committees and organizations have often been set up in response to donor projects geared to the region; however, the sustainability of these projects has depended on financial support from the governments.
- There is limited capacity to deal with the new integrated approach required by the concept of sustainable development.
- Insufficient cooperation initiatives exist in the areas related to seas and oceans; in order to improve this situation, further regional cooperation is recommended.
- There is enhanced coordination at the sectoral level, although, intersectoral coordination is non-existent; such a mechanism does, to a certain degree, exist in the context of the Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States.

Contribution by Non-governmental
Organizations (NGOs) to Local Issues,
Collaboration with Other Partners
Including Governments and Regional
and Subregional Organizations

NGOs have over time become more constructive and involved and are a source of information. They have, for example, played an important role in environmental education, capacity-building at the local level and in management of natural resources, parks and protected areas.

Generally, NGOs have played an active role in ensuring that sustainable development issues are taken into consideration in cooperation schemes in the region; examples of these include cooperation in the Gran Chaco Americano and the definition of principles for public participation in the Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision-making in Sustainable Development (ISP), approved in 1999 by the OAS member states. These organizations are in a better position to establish areas for discussion at the local level and, since they are multisectoral, cannot be left out of any process of sustainable development. However, the roles and participation of the different types of NGOs need to be clarified.

The contribution of small, local NGOs is limited, given their scant capacity to handle specific issues, as well as their difficulties in transmitting their achievements to the national agenda. On the other hand, major national and international NGOs, and national, regional and thematic networks, have been largely successful in having community work incorporated into the national agendas.

Notwithstanding this, the following points were made:

- A number of problems of NGO participation were mentioned, such as lack of clarity regarding the identity and mission of these organizations. For example, in some cases, the NGOs assume roles and/or functions that are within the competence of the public sector, while, in other cases, they assume the role of consultants. In some instances, the NGOs do not have the required technical capacity to act as counterparts on the same terms as the public and private sectors.

- The lack of explicit recognition of indigenous peoples, of their organizations and how these organizations differ from NGOs in general; the establishment of fora, networks and NGO registers was strongly encouraged.

The contribution of key global NGOs, such as the International Conservation Organization (IUCN) (formerly International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Earth Council, was recognized as having been important, but they also were seen as having imposed their own priorities on the national agendas. Specifically in the case of Central America, the number of subregional NGOs had grown significantly.

NGOs have made their contributions through public demonstrations, criticism and advocacy, in forging alliances with local authorities, other NGOs and government institutions dealing with areas concerned, and through representatives of the legislative power. Nevertheless, there have been cases where, owing to lack of accountability for their actions, NGOs have not achieved the desired results.

Ways and Means of Strengthening Ties Among Regional and Subregional Fora and Processes

National councils on sustainable development and other regional fora should provide opportunities for discussion, not only of environmental issues, but also of trade and other issues. To this end, UNCTAD and WTO should be included, in the field of trade, as well as ECLAC, the World Bank, IADB, UNDP and UNEP.

To strengthen links and cooperation, every effort should be made to facilitate technical cooperation between well established subregional organizations, such as ALIDES and the Andean Community. The Amazon Agenda for the Twenty-first Century is a good example of collaboration between existing regional and subregional fora in the formulation of sustainable development strategies.

Notwithstanding the importance of all ongoing international environmental negotiation efforts, the following were identified as playing a central part in international negotiations over the next few years: the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (and the Kyoto Protocol), and the Convention on Biological Diversity. The outcome from the Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, combined with the expertise of ECLAC, should provide the basis for regional follow-up of Agenda 21. Standing working groups should be created to work towards a regional consensus on this issue and for the exchange of information.

Preparation for the Earth Summit + 10

Specific Priority Areas in Which
Significant Progress Could Be Made
in Implementing Agenda 21 up to
the Year 2002, 10 Years After the UNCED

- identification and financing of sustainable development projects;
- coordination of various international bodies and agencies for the implementation of sustainable development;
- continuation of the process of defining and using sustainable development indicators to form the basis for accountability and early-warning mechanisms;
- periodic evaluation of programmes and projects for compliance with Agenda 21 and the Barbados Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States, based on agreed indicators which are simple, measurable, appropriate, reliable and time-specific and which integrate all dimensions of sustainable development; in this context, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and regional organizations such as ECLAC are requested to support countries in such evaluation efforts;

- support for regional and hemispheric activities in preparation for the ten-year review of Agenda 21 (Earth Summit + 10), particularly the regional meeting to be organized by ECLAC and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2001, as well as the five-year review of the Santa Cruz Plan of Action (Santa Cruz + 5), scheduled to be held in the second half of 2001;
- incorporation of natural-resource accounts into national accounts;
- inclusion of the economic, environmental and social vulnerability of the countries of the region as essential sustainable development variables;
- promotion of decentralization and strengthening of local fora, taking into account mechanisms such as the Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision-Making for Sustainable Development and the UNEP-UNDP Global Environmental Citizenship Programme;
- strengthening the exchange of information and improved use of existing networks in disseminating experience;
- emphasis on capacity-building, especially for the design and implementation of sustainable development projects;
- promotion of technological innovation, incorporating traditional and indigenous knowledge, to steer production processes towards more efficient and sustainable systems;
- analysis of the advantages of the relationship between trade and environment;
- strengthening of negotiation skills, in international fora, of the countries of the region through regional cooperation and coordination;
- environmental, economic and social impact assessment of tourist activity in the region, with a view to its reorientation towards sustainable development;
- promotion of land management, respecting the property rights of indigenous populations; and
- promotion of the integrated management of ecoregions, particularly river basins and biological corridors.

Contribution of Regional Efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean to the Earth Summit + 10.

A regional assessment should be made of Agenda 21, on the basis of national experience and with the support of well known academic institutions and of regional organizations. These may include ECLAC, UNEP, UNDP, IADB and OAS. Each organization would work within its own mandate, bearing in mind the work done by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). The indicators to be used in this assessment should be simple, measurable and accessible. The assessment should be conducted at a regional meeting to be convened in 2001 by the United Nations.

The agencies should support the methodological work being carried out by each country in coordination with the consultative councils on sustainable development; these methodologies should be integrated at the subregional and regional levels. Likewise, it is important to ensure the participation of important groups (parliamentarians, consumers, experts, entrepreneurs, local authorities, communicators and professional associations).

As for the Caribbean countries, the following suggestions are made:

- Efforts should be made to exchange experience among the English-, Spanish-, French- and Dutch-speaking countries of the region.
- Due attention should be paid to the vulnerability and sensitivity of small island States in the Caribbean in preparing for the ten-year review of UNCED.
- Guidelines should be developed to steer consultations on Agenda 21/SIDS and the Programme of Action at the national level.

Summary of Opening and Closing Remarks

The Executive Secretary of ECLAC, Mr. José Antonio Ocampo, in his opening keynote address, referred to the specific mandate of the regional economic commissions to evaluate the progress achieved in implementing Agenda 21 in the different regions. He stressed that the current meeting was an excellent opportunity for ECLAC to reaffirm its commitment to sustainable development, by contributing to the exchange of experiences in the area of national and subregional strategies for sustainable development, proposing mechanisms for more effective inter-agency coordination, consolidating existing development mechanisms in the region, taking into consideration the complexities arising from economic globalization. Such efforts would serve as a preliminary contribution to the evaluation to be made in the regional preparation for the Earth Summit + 10.

Concerning the overall evaluation of the decade, Mr. Ocampo gave a positive assessment in the international context with respect to sustainable development. He pointed to the following achievements:

- The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in 1992, marked the beginning of the transition towards a new international environmental regime, which, in conjunction with Agenda 21, represented a consensus on new global ethical principles aimed at establishing more equitable foundations for international cooperation.
- In the past decade, awareness of the environmental aspects of development and the related concept of sustainable development had gradually penetrated public policy and some economic and social practices in countries in the region, which was reflected in the development of institutions, strategies and policies.
- The global conventions had also generated a series of important institutional changes and innovative mechanisms for cooperation.

- The involvement of new non-State actors, with the NGOs carrying the most weight, the scientific community and the private sector.

However, Mr. Ocampo also pointed to a number of obstacles:

- The principles of environmental protection and sustainable development continued to be viewed by most of the production sectors and a significant number of government economic sectors as external interference that hindered development.
- The economic policies of the energy, agricultural, industrial and urban development sectors caused conflicting environmental practices, which called for a review of policies and instruments for environmental management.
- Liberal trade policies in the region and the increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) had altered the course of the development process, the export profile and, with it, the environment as well; insofar as the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean were seeking more and better international trade linkages, their pattern of production specialization in resource-intensive branches placed the region in a more vulnerable situation in terms of the environmental demands that it would have to face on the markets of the more developed countries.

He pointed out that, in response to the new international context, countries in the region had strengthened and/or created a set of regional and subregional processes and mechanisms for cooperation, including:

- the Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States;
- the Alliance for Sustainable Development in Central America (ALIDES);
- Mercosur (Southern Cone Common Market);
- the Andean Community; and
- the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The regional reality pointed to the need for major structural and institutional changes and raised a number of questions and outstanding issues, some of these being of a global nature, whereas others relate specifically to the region. The following were mentioned as some of the outstanding issues on the global, regional and subregional agenda for discussion at the Earth Summit + 10, and which should be included in subsequent discussions:

- harmonizing economic growth, social equity and environmental sustainability;
- redefining the region's comparative advantages on the basis of the global environmental agenda;
- modernizing public policy: consolidating institutions and instruments;
- effective participation of other stakeholders; and
- strengthening cooperation between the United Nations programmes, funds and specialized agencies operating in Latin America and the Caribbean in the area of sustainable development.

Mr. Ocampo stated that, starting with his mandate, ECLAC had pledged to continue to support governments in the region in achieving the objectives of sustainable development. ECLAC would continue to work to secure a new balance between State and market, which is one of the outstanding tasks of the reforms currently under way in the region. This would, first of all, call for active work to set up, strengthen and redesign public, private and community-based institutions and institutions that promote solidarity. Secondly, it would call for the development of improved schemes for the organization and evaluation of public management, in particular with respect to economic, social and environmental management. In the environmental sphere, efforts were being made, among others, in the following areas: trade and the environment; preparation of appropriate economic instruments for sustainable development; analysis of sustainability of productive development; and incorporation of the environmental dimension into the statistical information systems that ECLAC had been developing since its inception.

Thirdly, institution-building covered not only the national but also local and international dimensions, with particular emphasis on enhancing citizens' awareness of major development dilemmas. ECLAC was particularly concerned with the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity, given the enormous implications that they have for the region's production and social structure. Finally, the basic mandate of ECLAC was highlighted as providing a periodic regional review of sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean, encompassing economic growth, social equity and environmental sustainability.

The Executive Director of the Chilean National Commission for the Environment (CONAMA), Mr. Rodrigo Egaña, pointed out that the issue of sustainable development had generated growing attention from authorities and citizens' organizations in countries of the region. However, he also stressed that, throughout the past decade, emphasis had been placed, and deservedly so, on overcoming poverty, so that, in one way or another, the issue of sustainable development had been relegated to a second place. There had been advances in identifying the major environmental issues on the liability side, the types of institutions that were required and the policies that would have to be defined. He pointed out, among other things, the increasing tendency to integrate environmental policies with other public policies, which was proof of better integration towards the concept of sustainable development. One outcome of the improved integration was that, in opportunities for citizens' participation, civil society had, indeed, systematically become an important interlocutor for the government sector.

At the closing of the decade, one major task outstanding was how to integrate strategies for economic development, poverty-alleviation and environmental sustainability into national policies. In that respect, Chile's experience in the course of ten years of democratic government had been to mainstream the issue into the agenda of State concerns. He pointed to the advances in environmental mainstreaming, which had made it possible, among other things, to pinpoint precisely the objectives and modalities for achieving them. He also highlighted the advances made in environmental institution-building, although admittedly, there

was room for reviewing existing institutions in order to improve the way in which environmental problems were tackled. Lastly, he pointed to the achievements with respect to instruments for environmental management and control, which had evolved significantly compared with those existing in the country ten years earlier.

The Chairman of the eighth session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, Mr. Juan Mayr, in his message, emphasized the need to keep sustainable development high on the national and international policy agendas. He stated that national sustainable development strategies, as a means to achieve the integration, interrelation and interdependence that underlies sustainable development, may be more important for the process of consultation and participation they invoke, than for the outputs they actually produce. In his view, much more should be done to ensure that the resources and capabilities of regional institutions are properly focused not only on regional issues, but also on national issues that are amenable to regional approaches and cooperation. A main challenge for the present Regional Consultative Meeting would be to identify ways and means to promote greater regional focus and cooperation in implementing sustainable development. The contribution this meeting could make in this respect would add to the insights and proposals already developed in the other regional consultations, and enrich the understanding of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

The UNDP Resident Representative, Mr. Thierry Lemaesquier, stressed that, since the Earth Summit held in Rio in 1992, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had been participating very actively in efforts to devise paths towards the implementation at the national level of the commitments made with respect to sustainable development. He highlighted the need to strengthen dialogue and cooperation among public authorities, civic organizations and, increasingly, the private sector, which had gradually been assuming a greater role.

Bearing in mind that Agenda 21 was one of the most important documents to have emerged from the Earth Summit in Rio, UNDP had focused its efforts in giving support to countries in the formulation of

national programmes through the programme referred to as “Capacity 21”, complying with the recommendation that countries should formulate their own programmes. He emphasized that a national strategy should be developed in a political and cultural context, which should take into consideration citizens’ and governmental priorities in all spheres in order to guide the country towards sustainable development. The challenge was to give form to that ideal openly and through a participatory process. Lastly, he urged Latin America and the Caribbean to attend the Earth Summit + 10 meeting with strong approaches and results to show to the world.

The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, Mr. Nitin Desai, in his address, stated that the process initiated at Rio provided impetus for undertaking regional initiatives and helped foster concerted regional efforts towards the achievement of sustainable development. He referred to the Hemispheric Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development held in Bolivia in 1996, the Plan of Action for Sustainable Development and the Caribbean Action Plan under the UNEP Regional Seas Programme, as examples of such initiatives. An essential purpose of the present meeting, in his view, would be to take stock of where the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean stand with respect to national and regional sustainable development strategies. With regard to regional cooperation, the goal should be to achieve concrete results in terms of understanding shared problems, promoting exchange of information, formulating common approaches and ideas, and catalyzing joint actions, particularly among regional institutions.

The Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Dr. César Gaviria, in his message, mentioned five important milestones for the hemisphere of the Americas: (1) sixteen governments have had the foresight to establish national councils, policies and/or plans for sustainable development; (2) a first presidential summit on sustainable development for the hemisphere was convened in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, in December 1996, where a declaration and 65 Initiatives in a Plan of Action were adopted; (3) the Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion

of Public Participation in Decision-making for Sustainable Development was recently approved; (4) in 1997 an Inter-American Task Force on Sustainable Development, with seven working groups, was established; and (5) the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development (CIDS) was established in 1996 out of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI). He urged the use of these existing instruments to their full advantage and to take them into account in the deliberations of the present meeting. He believed that the hemisphere could provide the CSD with positive and substantive inputs to its long-term goals.

Ms. Alicia Bárcena, Director of the Environment and Human Settlements Division of ECLAC, drew attention to the challenges that the sustainable development paradigm presented for Latin America and the Caribbean. In her view, Latin American and Caribbean countries needed to devise a regional vision of sustainable development in order to conceive and construct a perspective and an outlook of their own. She recalled that the region, and especially ECLAC, had contributed substantially to the generation of innovative ideas and concepts relating to development. In response to those challenges, a regional agenda was emerging and, hence, the priority tasks identified by ECLAC for implementation in the following years in conjunction with other bodies in the United Nations system were as follows:

- to carry out periodic evaluations of sustainability in Latin America and the Caribbean in order to determine sustainable patterns in the region, particularly those based on both economic and social perspectives;
- to follow up on public policies and international agreements from a regional monitoring centre;
- to coordinate strategic areas of social development with social and environmental dimensions, which implies pursuing two initiatives: building empirical evidence of the links between the economy and the environment, and assessing the social costs of unsustainable practices; and
- to develop a new citizens' contract around sustainable development.

Lastly, she confirmed the offer made by Mr. Ocampo to make the Commission's capacities available for the regional meeting (Earth Summit + 10) to be convened jointly with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), in mid-2001, to assess the status of Agenda 21. That forum would provide an opportunity for the region to present its vision and to report on the progress it had made in implementing the international environmental agenda.

UNEP's Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), Mr. Ricardo Sánchez Sosa, presented a brief report on the State of the Environment of the Region and outlined UNEP's priorities for the next two years in the Latin American and Caribbean region. He also stressed that the goals and priorities set out by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean were of the greatest importance to the region. He emphasized that the focus of the Forum should be on implementing all of Agenda 21 and not only environmental issues. Concerns such as education, health, poverty and equity should be at the centre of attention during these meetings.



Key Characteristics of National Strategies for Sustainable Development

Suggested Elements of National Strategies for Sustainable Development Arising from Regional and Inter-agency Consultations

Agenda 21 proposed that all countries develop national strategies for sustainable development. The goal has been formalized by the OECD Development Assistance Committee and the United Nations General Assembly, setting target dates of 2005 and 2002, respectively. As Agenda 21 gives no guidelines for how to develop such national strategies, there is also no clear definition of what they are. Early on, it was recognized that it is not possible to write prescriptive guidelines for what a NSDS would be. Prescriptive guidance would not recognize the myriad of entry points and priorities that are dependent on the specific political, economic, social and environmental context of a country. However, it was recognized that certain issues need to be addressed within all the strategy work underway. The NSDS covers broader aspects than environment alone, so it is necessary to distinguish the features that are singular, and articulate how it builds upon NEAPs, NCS, NTFAPs, NAPs and poverty alleviation strategies.

For many decision-makers, however, NSDS is still very synonymous with an environmental action or management plan. Thus, the challenge is to think not just of what has been our experience to date but rather what is the ideal towards which we are all working. It is clear that we need to identify the features that would differentiate a NSDS from other strategies. What should the process look like? What features distinguish the outcomes of NSDSs from those of other plans and strategies? How will we, country by country, and within the international community, recognize a good NSDS when we see one?

To help distinguish the strategies for sustainable development from other strategic frameworks, it could be useful to identify key characteristics of national sustainable development strategies. This would help the international community assess how far the goals have been achieved;

it will help national governments assess their own progress; it will help identify areas for strengthened interventions; and finally, it will help formulate effective assistance programmes targeting the “weak” area of the national strategy process.

Consultations have been held to begin the process of identifying key characteristics. The following elements have emerged:

- **commonality of vision**
 - participation which builds consensus;
 - clarity in direction—agreeing on the way forward; and
 - continuous processes for reconciling different interests.
- **integration of policy**
 - integrates social, economic and environmental considerations into national development policy;
 - establishes cross-sectoral policies; and
 - influences sectoral policies.
- **addressing issues of long-term growth**
 - reconciliation of short-term market forces with long-term planning needs; and
 - consistency between vision and public/private spending.
- **iterative and responsive process**
 - flexible, dynamic-seizing opportunities, responding to change, recognizing timing; and
 - integration of successes into the process.
- **knowledge**
 - allowing for information and knowledge to flow through all levels; and
 - based on sound data, scientific information.
- **partnerships**
 - build on partnerships between local and national governments, civil society organizations and the private sector.
- **nationally (as opposed to externally) driven process**
 - support networks, dialogue with national leader;

- build political commitment; and
- recognizing and supporting local (as opposed to central) action.
- **strengthen capacity**
 - identifies needs, and provides for capacity-building at all levels and across sectors.
- **institutional framework**
 - reforms or adapts existing institutions or creates new ones to promote effective sustainable development planning and implementations.
- **tangible successes**
 - provide tangible benefits to stakeholders;
 - make clear contributions to poverty-reduction and other goals of sustainable development; and
 - establish a common understanding of successes, that could be monitored later.
- **fitting the national process and priorities into the international context**
 - highlighting the importance of international sustainable development commitments;
 - recognizing the national impact of globalization;
 - ensuring a regional and international complementarity of objectives, while allowing for a plurality of processes; and
 - monitoring the motivation of the UN system and other supporting agencies.
- **the “heavy-weight” decision-makers must be part of the process**
 - NSSDs are not “smoke screens” for “business as usual”; and
 - realizing the importance of political and economic power.

*Based on a paper submitted by
the United Nations Development Programme*



Section I:

Country Experiences in
Implementing National Sustainable
Development Strategies



An Assessment of Antigua and Barbuda's Sustainable Development Strategies

Introduction

Like most of the countries in the Caribbean, Antigua and Barbuda's economy largely depends on a vibrant tourism industry. The development of this industry over the years has had mixed results. Although this industry is the largest contributor to the economy, this has come at a high price. The global focus on sustainable development has come at an opportune time, since the practices within most sectors of the economy have not been sustainable.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda, like others in the region, has seen the need to integrate environmental, economic and social objectives into the overall development of the country. To this end, Antigua and Barbuda has become a member of a number of regional, subregional and international organizations so as to better understand and adapt to the changing global challenges.

Following is an assessment of Antigua and Barbuda's sustainable development strategies up to the end of 1999.

Main Priorities and Objectives

These are:

- to effect fiscal reform, which will be in the form of programme budgeting and will meet two main objectives:
 - to reduce the cost to the Government of implementing environmental legislation, the aim being to provide incentives for the private sector to become involved; and
 - to adopt non-traditional social and environmental indicators, with a view to fiscal reform, given that the traditional economic indicators for budget allocation and economic assessment are no longer adequate.
- to restructure legislation not only to protect natural resources but also to ensure that minimal resources will be required for implementation, thus reducing the cost of enforcement to the Government, with the following objectives:
 - to incorporate “green marketing” and other strategies, such as “due diligence”, into new legislation; and
 - to ensure that relevant government agencies are required to report on key sustainable development indicators (as well as other indicators), which will facilitate and streamline reporting and feed into budgetary reform.
- to improve education in schools and for the general public; this is a longer-term approach to sustainable development, with the following objectives:
 - to make it easier to implement national changes and policies to achieve sustainable development;
 - to instill sustainable practices into all areas of the curriculum; and
 - to reduce the negative impacts on the environment by instilling responsible environmental practices into the population at large.
- to improve negotiation in the context of various international trade and environmental treaties, with the objective of increasing the influence of small islands in decision-making internationally.

Role of the Institutional Framework

In Antigua and Barbuda, no new and distinct agency has been formed with the sole responsibility for sustainable development. The government has seen fit, however, to designate the Ministry of Finance as the driving force in policy determination. The coordinating agency will be the Environment Division of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment. This agency will:

- ensure that the strategies are implemented;
- coordinate the development of sustainable development plans; and
- monitor implementation by agencies.

The Development Control Authority will play the leading role in the enforcement of regulations.

It is believed that this arrangement would be more effective in the short term. The Ministry of Finance, through a Cabinet Decision or legislation, would mandate each agency to develop a sustainable development plan as part of the agency's overall work programme. The Environment Division will be responsible for publishing the National Strategies on Sustainable Development Strategies. A network will then be established between the three key agencies for the proper management of the entire system.

Decision-making and Consultation

Currently, there is no formal coordinated effort in decision-making and consultation in the implementation of sustainable development strategies. A sectoral approach has always been in place. New policies and regulations have been a result of formal and informal consultations with public and private entities.

It is realized that this is not the ideal situation. In the future it is expected that a Sustainable Development Council will be organized, consisting of the Permanent Secretary of each ministry, and established by January 2001.

Participatory Nature of the Process

The process has always been of a participatory nature. This is due in part to the ease of access to technicians and decision-makers and the presence of strong extension departments (departments that interact closely with stakeholders). There is also constant feedback and interaction between stakeholders and the Government.

It is highly likely that this format will continue. In the near future, however, a reporting requirement will be designed and implemented by the Ministry of Finance in association with the Environment Division of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment.

Linkages with Subregional and Regional Strategy/Action-Plan Framework

Antigua and Barbuda is a member of a number of subregional and regional organizations whose focus is on the environment.

The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is a sub-regional political association of small island nations. This organization established a Natural Resources Management Unit (NRMU) in 1986 to coordinate environmental activities within the subregion on its behalf. Later, in 1996, the NRMU and the OECS Fisheries Units were merged and mandated to focus on sustainable development. Additionally, it undertook a new direction aimed at facilitating the management of OECS natural resources by fostering collaboration amongst the member states and promoting a coordinated approach to development.

The OECS has been spearheading the implementation of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) process following the 1994 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Subsequent to the meeting of the Ministers of Environment in Anguilla in 1999, the NRMU was mandated to develop subregional and national sustainable development strategies based on the SIDS Programme of Action (POA). This is a programme for sustainable development. It focuses on the management of environmental problems, the management of resources and the

building of the capacity to promote sustainable development. The SIDS/ POA reflects the priorities of the region in carrying out Agenda 21. Antigua and Barbuda's status report on the 14 priority areas of the SIDS/POA comprises the following elements.

Climate Change and Sea-Level Rise

Antigua and Barbuda has ratified the Montreal Protocol [on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer] to the Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and is participating in the Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Global Climate Change (CPACC) Project. However, the Government has not developed or upgraded national legislation to address climate-change issues.

The Government is currently undertaking enabling activities to develop national inventories of greenhouse-gas sources or sinks. Additionally, national communication strategies, which include a climate-change component, have been developed. Although the Government has not promoted the development and/or use of technology to reduce emissions, it has participated in jointly implemented projects in this area, working with international organizations.

Natural and Environmental Disasters

Antigua and Barbuda has established and strengthened management institutions to deal with natural and environmental disasters. Policies that deal specifically with such disasters have been established, and new disaster-mitigation plans have been established and existing ones strengthened.

Management of Waste

The Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal (Basle, 1989), the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London, 1972), the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena de Indias, 1983) and its Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Oil Spills, and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL, London, 1973/78) have all been ratified as a means of addressing the management of waste. Regulations, economic instruments and public participation have all been developed to ensure the sustainable management of waste.

Port/marina reception facilities have not been established in accordance with Annex V of MARPOL 73/78, but enabling legislation is being developed.

Antigua and Barbuda has proposed the use of clean technologies, such as the disposal of solid waste in landfills, to ensure the sustainable management of waste. Although NGOs are not involved in any formal recycling programmes, various members of the business sector are involved in such programmes by, for example, offering financial incentives to customers who return glass bottles; and hotels utilize “grey” water for upkeeping gardens.

The Government has promoted public awareness and conducted educational campaigns and, in 1998, established the National Solid Waste Management Authority which is a lead agency in this regard.

Coastal and Marine Resources

Legislation has been established for watershed management (for example, the 1961 Antigua and Barbuda Water Regulations Act) and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) management (the 1983 Fisheries Act). Draft legislation is being developed with respect to the coastal zone, the EEZ and watersheds. Moreover, coastal-zone, watershed and EEZ management institutions and administrations have been strengthened by initiatives to combine coastal-zone management with other avenues of economic development.

The Government is currently working on an integrated coastal-zone management (ICZM) plan in association with the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Comprehensive research and monitoring programmes for coastal and marine resources have not been developed. The Government has, however, developed a management plan to ensure sustainable harvesting of fish stocks and processing of fish. It has also developed and implemented educational and awareness programmes promoting the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources.

Antigua and Barbuda has developed new policies to address the following coastal and marine resource issues:

- oil spills;
- land-based sources of marine pollution (Dumping at Sea Act);
- water quality (Public Utilities Act); and
- effluent standards (Public Health Act).

The Government has ratified the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Kingston, 1982) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES, Washington, D.C., 1973). Although it has not ratified the Convention Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (New York, 1995), it has adhered to its principles. The Government has also adhered to the International Coral-Reef Initiative (ICRI; proposed at the UN Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Barbados, 1994), and the UNEP Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities.

Freshwater Resources

There is no legislation protecting watershed areas in Antigua and Barbuda. Equally, no irrigation policy exists. However, the Government provides duty-free concessions to farmers for irrigation equipment. A programme to reduce water loss in distribution systems has been established.

The Government has ratified the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD, Paris, 1994). A National Water Resources Management Plan exists. As a component of this Plan, the Government has promoted the use of incentives, such as reducing charges to industries that use less water and increasing charges to domestic consumers who use “non-essential” water. Regulatory measures, community participation and forest management are being used as strategies for the management of freshwater resources.

Antigua and Barbuda has developed decision-making tools, including forecasting models. It has also strengthened national capacities for effective decision-making. Procedures to monitor and respond to impacts on water resources have been established. With respect to appropriate technology, the Government has promoted the use of desalination and rainwater collection systems.

Land Resources

To reduce conflicts between land uses and to ensure the optimal and sustainable use of land, the Government has prepared land-use plans. The most recent plan dates back to December 1999. Land and geographic information systems (GIS) have been developed as decision-making tools, and attempts have been made to incorporate the Ministry of Agriculture into the parcelling and sale of land.

To prevent/reduce soil degradation, Antigua and Barbuda has implemented policies to encourage the use of soil-conservation methods, to control freely roaming animals and to regulate the cutting of trees.

To encourage the sustainable and integrated use and management of land and its natural resources, the Government has formulated laws for beaches, parks and protected areas. Appropriate reforestation programmes have also been supported, but not fully implemented.

A housing plan/strategy has been formulated to address issues of shelter. Moreover, the Government has intervened by providing sites and services, credit and houses. It has also provided support for investors intending to construct housing complexes and has made preferential interest rates available to civil servants who have provided many years of service. Increased awareness and strengthening of physical planning offices have been promoted through training. Currently, a national data base is being developed to establish a liaison between the offices responsible for physical planning, the environment and finance.

Energy Resources

The three most important sources of energy used in Antigua and Barbuda, in order of increasing preference, are natural gas, oil and steam turbines. Although the Government has supported the concept of energy conservation, it has not promoted or implemented public education and awareness programmes in this regard. However, energy-efficient technologies have been promoted.

Tourism Resources

Tourism is a major contributor to Antigua and Barbuda's economy. The Government has not, however, adopted measures to ensure that development and environmental management are mutually supportive.

The Government has formulated policies for tourism in general, including recreational and cruise ships. Policies for marine-based activities, such as yachting and recreational fishing, have been formulated. The development of appropriate economic/fiscal instruments, regulatory measures and public participation has been carried out as part of a tourism management strategy.

Although measures to protect the cultural integrity of Antigua and Barbuda have not been developed, a Cultural Department intended to perform this function has been established. The Government has developed policies to increase local ownership within the tourism sector through the "Antiguanization Programme" which provides concessions to locals desirous of building hotel complexes or to invest in such initiatives.

Biodiversity Resources

Antigua and Barbuda has ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity. Marine and terrestrial national parks have been established. Public awareness/education programmes have been promoted, as well as public participation in the conservation of biodiversity. These measures are not, however, being implemented effectively.

The Government has conducted research on systems for the management of biodiversity. Integrated pest-control management has been promoted. Ownership of intellectual property rights is not adequately or effectively protected. Public participation has not been developed as a strategy for the conservation of biodiversity resources. Similarly, the use of economic/fiscal instruments has not been developed.

National Institutions and Administrative Capacity

Antigua and Barbuda has strengthened the institutional and administrative capacity of the Environment Division of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment in order to integrate environment and economic policy into national planning. Implementation strategies and schedules, including financing, have been developed.

The Government has established national information nodes on sustainable development to encourage the development of the SIDS Network (SIDSNET), and to facilitate the exchange of experiences among small island developing states.



Regional Institutions and Technical Cooperation

Antigua and Barbuda has supported regional organizations through membership and budgetary contributions. The Government has encouraged coordination and collaboration among regional bodies and between the international community and regional programmes.

In an effort to encourage such coordination and collaboration among regional bodies, the Government has obtained membership in subregional bodies mentioned earlier (OECS/NRMU, Caribbean Conservation Association, [CCA]). It also participates in regional projects for protection of natural resources sponsored by the Organization of American States (OAS). Coordination between the international community and regional programmes has been facilitated through collaboration with UNEP, the International Maritime Organization and UNDP.

Transport and Communication

Antigua and Barbuda has continued its road-construction programme and tax-concession policy on vehicles for public transportation, in an effort to strengthen its transport services, giving regard to safety and low cost. The newly developed National Transportation Board administers this sector.

The Government has improved international telecommunication links. Economic/fiscal instruments, regulatory measures and public participation have been developed with respect to transport and communication strategies.

Science and Technology

Antigua and Barbuda has ensured that science and technology policy is closely linked to national environmental strategies and sustainable development plans, emphasizing elements such as self-sufficiency and research and development training for science and technology. The development and use of information and communication technology to overcome size and isolation problems have also been emphasized. Research and development in agricultural processing has been promoted.

The Government has ensured access to data bases on environmentally sound technologies of local relevance.

Human Resource Development

Sustainable development ideas have not yet been infused into education curricula. Gender and population issues have been incorporated into the mainstream of the Government's decision-making and planning. The Government, in consultation with local communities, has given priority to meeting the basic needs in urban and rural settlements. The elimination of poverty in these settlements is also being given priority.

Distance-training has been used to meet expanding educational demand and the demand for knowledge and training in the field of environment. The roles of women, youth, communities, farmers and the academic community have been strengthened through sustainable development initiatives. Moreover, with respect to national land-use data bases and the dissemination of information relevant to sustainable development, programmes have been developed for women, youth and communities.

Antigua and Barbuda has sought to improve the quality of education, training and human resources by: upgrading primary, secondary and tertiary education; technical/vocational training; national management/planning capacities; and the labour-market linkage. The Government has encouraged the use of traditional knowledge and skills in the health sector.

It should be noted that the NRMU considers its OECS Implementation Plan: 1996 to 1998 as its contribution to implementing the global SIDS Programme of Action. The Environmental Capacity Development Project was developed by the OECS, supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and in collaboration with the NRMU. The project focuses on environmental capacity development in order to address institutional and technical gaps in the NRMU and the environmental institutions of member states.

Future Plans and Initiatives

These are:

- On the national level, the Environment Division is in the advanced stages of developing a web site by which the public would have access to all environmental information relating to Antigua and Barbuda, as well as several relevant links.
- The Government, with the assistance of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the OECS, is currently putting in place a national data base with a geographical information system component; this data base, among other things, will be used for tourism and environmental management and land-use planning, and key aspects of sustainable development.
- The Environment Division is working with the OECS in the conduct of training workshops on environmental management systems. This is quite significant because most of the hotels are situated on the coast, and improper disposal systems can result in serious negative environmental impacts.
- The Government has developed and implemented programmes and legislation that will address ship-generated waste and has conducted many public-relations campaigns to reduce the generation of land-based sources of pollution.
- Efforts have been made to preserve local customs and practices; for example, the Environment Division is currently assisting pottery makers in the protection of the lands where the clay is mined.
- To reduce the physical damage to the environment, the Government is currently strengthening legislation within the Ministry of Health and the Development Control Authority; these agencies are responsible for monitoring coastal-water quality, and physical planning, respectively.
- With the assistance of the United States Government, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda is developing a national coastal-zone management plan, in consultation with government agencies and the private sector.

- A comprehensive monitoring programme for coastal and marine resources has been designed, and the Government has developed national capabilities to ensure sustainable harvesting of fish stocks and processing of fish.
- With regard to legislation, the Government is updating all relevant legislation to ensure the sustainable use of, and reduction of conflict in, the coastal zone.

Constraints

The greatest constraints to the implementation of sustainable development strategies are:

- policy—lack of comprehensive policies;
- institutional/capacity-building—too many separate agencies are involved in sustainable development issues;
- technical—insufficient remuneration of technocrats to keep them in Antigua and Barbuda;
- financial—lack of adequate funding;
- information management—lack of adequate technology and baseline information;
- legislation—although existing legislation is inadequate, this constraint is being addressed; and
- vulnerability to hurricanes—Antigua and Barbuda has been seriously affected by approximately five major hurricanes in the last ten years; the passage of each hurricane sets back development by at least three years.

The implementation of the recommendations of the SIDS/POA is important to the sustainable development of Antigua and Barbuda. However, these measures require increased commitment on the Government's part to provide institutional strengthening and funding, in addition to addressing the other constraints mentioned above.

*Based on a paper submitted by
Antigua and Barbuda*

Preliminary Evaluation of the Implementation of Bolivia's National Strategy for Sustainable Development

Introduction

The concept of sustainable development is the result of an evolution starting with the implementation of international conventions at the national level and the technical work carried out over three governments, starting with the adoption and periodic revision of environment laws.

In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), or the Brundtland Commission, published a report entitled "Our Common Future", which contributed greatly to the establishment of sustainable development as the guiding norm of international development policy. The report had considerable success in promoting sustainable development as a reference by which governments and international institutions would appraise their policies and activities. It provided the conceptual and policy basis for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, Rio de Janeiro, 1992).

At UNCED, a programme of actions, Agenda 21, was adopted and an institutional mechanism for its implementation in each country was created, within the United Nations system. This mechanism was called the

United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). It was at UNCED that the international community formally adopted the concept of sustainable development as a working norm for all countries—whether industrialized or at a lesser stage of economic development—in the field of development planning.

In Bolivia, in the regulatory context, the concept of sustainable development began to be applied when the Environment Law was adopted. This concept, specified in Article 2 of this Law, indicates that this is “... the process by which the needs of the present generation are met without putting at risk the satisfaction of the needs of future generations.” This formulation coincides completely with that proposed in the Brundtland Report. The Law adds that the concept of sustainable development implies a global task of a permanent character.

However, for the application of the concept of sustainable development to the planning mechanisms of a specific country, such as Bolivia, a more operative formulation of the concept is necessary. A first attempt was made with the preparation of the General Plan of Economic and Social Development (PGDES), of 1994, which tried to articulate economic, social, environmental and political fields.

Bolivian Agenda 21 of 1996

In the Bolivian Agenda 21 of 1996 sustainable development is described as "... a process that... [seeks to] improve the quality of life of all Bolivians through a process of transformation of production that utilizes the human, natural, physical and financial capital rationally, as well as the institutional and cultural patrimony, without putting at risk the satisfaction of the needs of future generations and the assimilative capacity of nature, in a framework of equality and administrative feasibility."

Based on these elements, and as part of the obligation assumed in Rio, Bolivia developed its own concept of sustainable development, created the first Ministry of Sustainable Development, and initiated a process of decentralization of planning and decision-making, through the Laws of Administrative Decentralization and of Public Participation. The concept of sustainable development in the Bolivian Agenda 21 considers four fields in which policy decisions have an impact: economic growth, social equity, rational use of the natural resources and administrative feasibility.

The Bolivian Agenda 21 enumerates the following principal challenges that Bolivia must face in order to initiate sustainable development:

- overcome poverty, marginality and all forms of discrimination;
- attack the coca problem through the integrated development of the agricultural areas;
- reduce national dependence on governmental development assistance, through the internal generation of savings and investment;
- reorient the growth model towards the transformation of production, through the production of goods that correspond better to the structure of demand;
- conserve the natural resource base and preserve environmental quality; and
- modify social attitudes towards the internalization of the dynamics of change, and adopt new ways of doing things with a view to facing the challenges rather than avoiding them.

Adjustment of the Concept of Sustainable Development and the Strategic Features of the Bolivian General Plan of Economic and Social Development

In the development of the national capacity for planning, a more operative definition of sustainable development is being adopted. In the present government, the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Planning has taken on responsibility for the fields of public participation (municipal strengthening) and of management of public policies for age groups and classes, indigenous peoples and original settlers, in addition to the fields of strategic planning and environmental management, which its institutional predecessor had overseen.

In this context, the Ministry has adjusted the definition of sustainable development, as follows: “the integrated, systemic and complex process with the objective of improving the quality of life of the whole population through the integrated development of production, social development with equity and the full participation of the citizenry under the rules of the conservation of the natural resource base and the preservation of environmental quality.”

Sustainable development covers four fields in which policy decisions have an impact and which cover social requirements. The following aggregate effects are generated in these four fields:

- In the economic field, *integrated productive development* seeks to promote empowerment and productive transformation, in a framework of equitable distribution. One of its most important instruments is the gradual generation of higher levels of added value in national production. In this sense, it contains some very important elements of economic growth but it is, nevertheless, different from the concept of “economic development” which is a more diffuse notion.
- In the social field, *equitable social development* seeks to generate the integral and universal access of society as a whole to the benefits of development. In this way, social integration is achieved based on respect for differences in identity: what is known as development with identity, as opposed to the undifferentiated concept of “social equity”.

- In the policy field, *full citizen participation* is necessary for the construction of an effective democracy, the generation of a citizen culture and the strengthening of the organizations of civil society in their relations with the State. In this way, it is planned to guarantee the participation of the population in the basic policy decisions with respect to sustainable development. This concept differs from the flat concept of governance which designates an increase in the efficacy of the State to carry out its actions, without necessarily giving this efficacy a participative content. In our concept, levels of efficacy in the State's structures are acquired in order to achieve a better representation of the public interest and a clearer transmission of social demands to the political and institutional structures of the Bolivian State.
- In environmental management, *the conservation of the natural resource base and the preservation of environmental quality* are necessary to promote the sustainable management of the natural resources and the use of criteria of sustainability, efficacy and efficiency in the exploitation of these resources. Equally, this effect seeks to generate a complete and harmonious national land use, in order to achieve a land-use structure which the country lacks today. The application of the concepts "conservation" and "preservation" surpasses the mere political formulism of the expression "environmental conservation".
- In viewing the dynamic relationship amongst the four fields of sustainable development (and its aggregate results), it is important to consider the concept of *reciprocal transversality*. This concept defines the relation between the economic, social, environmental and political aspects of development actions. This means that each action has effects, greater or smaller, in the four fields of sustainable development. But, at the same time, every action receives simultaneous influences from the four fields of sustainable development. Thus a network of reciprocal relations between the economic, social, environmental and political variables is created, with multiple effects. An adequate conception of sustainable development, to be operative, must include reciprocal transversality as a starting hypothesis.

The new General Plan of Economic and Social Development includes the concept of sustainable development as the conceptual matrix of the Bolivian State. The PGDES defines the strategic guidelines relating to the four pillars on which the Government's Plan rests: opportunity, equity, institutionality and dignity.

To achieve the main agreed national objectives, Bolivia must use as a permanent working tool the strategic, integrated and participative management that will convert the strategy guidelines into a process of give and take; that is, an intercourse between the State and the civil society, the public institutions and the market place, as a group of social partners. In this way, the strategic guidelines given in the PGDES are:

- empowerment and productive transformation;
- harmonious land use;
- investment in human development;
- extensive environmental management;
- a legal framework;
- full civil participation;
- creation of a democratic, civil and productive culture;
- efficacious and transparent public administration; and
- concerted national policies with respect to the coca-cocaine circuit.

Initiatives in the Adjustment and Extension of the Bolivian Agenda 21

The PGDES is not specifically a National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD), although it contains elements of sustainability in its formulation. In the Bolivian view of planning, the NSSD must respond, in a general way and from a conceptual standpoint, to the structure of the global Agenda 21. In this sense, the Bolivian NSSD takes the form of a national Agenda 21 and defines, principally, the environmental, social and political (in the sense of full public participation) criteria of a necessary and adequate economic development.

In this sense, it was decided to adjust the Bolivian Agenda 21 (NSSD itself), extending its focus to cover areas not covered in the first version of this Agenda, and which correspond to areas of programmes covered by (and of relevance to Bolivia) the global Agenda 21, in which the main guidelines for sustainability are given.

However, it was considered convenient to restructure the new NSSD on the basis of the definition of Agendas 21 for Bolivia's major macroregions, specifically the Bolivian Amazonia, the Bolivian "chaco" [lowland plain in southeastern Bolivia not part of the Amazon river basin] and, eventually, the Bolivian "puna" [Andean, treeless plain above ~3500m altitude]. Once these regional Agendas have been defined, the national Agenda 21 could be built up from the elements contained in them. This would allow the boundaries of the NSSD to be set on the basis of biophysical information on the major land areas of Bolivia.

In parallel, National Consultation with the civil organizations will be started with a view to establishing the main strategic guidelines for the elaboration of the new NSSD. This public consultation is backed by a pilot initiative of the OECD/DAC (Development Assistance Committee) on the organization of national consultations on sustainable development, in countries chosen on the basis of their experience in this field.

With these inputs, the PGDES and the NSSD (the national Agenda 21) will be up-to-date until the end of 2001; the PGDES covering the agreed instrumental policies in the various fields of development and the NSSD containing, by programme area, the strategic guidelines for the horizontal links amongst the social and environmental variables, and for public participation in economic development.

This work, which is the outcome of a unique process of planning, will include the territorial variables and will allow the realization of two fundamental purposes aimed at socializing the concept of sustainable development:

- incorporation of the social partners charged with private investment into the analysis and the formulation of guidelines for sustainable development and of the definition of the macro-economic policies, of public investment and of economic development; and
- conversion of the themes of sustainable development into subjects of political debate in Bolivian society, thus bringing them to the forefront of national decision-making.



Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development and Mechanisms for Public Participation in Decision-making in Bolivia

The institutional framework for sustainable development in Bolivia comprises, principally, two types of institutions: those responsible for the management of public power, and those that are instruments of consensus-building between the public power and the civil organizations.

Among the former there is, naturally, the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Planning which has various fields of management, as previously noted. The Vice-minister of Environment, Natural Resources and Forestry Development defines the policies and norms with respect to the management of biodiversity, environmental quality, water, land and forestry resources. The Vice-minister of Strategic Planning and Public Participation is charged with two fundamental management areas in sustainable development:

- strategic planning, at the national, departmental and municipal levels, and land-use regulation; and
- municipal strengthening, in the context of decentralization, and the deepening of public participation.

These two areas of management are complemented by two other specific fields of action: first, age-group and class policies; second, development policy for native peoples and original settlers.

Strategic planning and day-to-day management have mechanisms of cooperative planning with civil society. At the national level, the National Council on Sustainable Development (NCSO) has a membership of approximately 60 representatives from various public and academic institutions, private enterprise and NGOs, and can make recommendations on national strategies.

There are also departmental and municipal entities concerned with participation and concerted decision-making. In the municipal governments, there are the traditional Municipal Councils, but there is also a Watch-Dog Committee in each municipality comprising representatives of the territorial organizations. In the departmental prefectures, the Departmental Council is made up of representatives of the Municipal Councils of each Province in each Department.

In the development of the mechanisms for public participation and consensus-building in sustainable development, there has been constant progress. The PGDES of 1994 and the Bolivian Agenda 21 (NSSD) of 1996 made use of incipient validation mechanisms. Participation was more substantive in the definition of the instrumental policies of the PGDES of 1998. In the adjustment of the PGDES and in the construction of the new NSSD, which will be reviewed in 2001, use will be made of more elaborate instruments for cooperative planning.

Relations in Sustainable Development at the Regional Level: Lessons Learned

On the whole, the planning and construction of sustainable development in Bolivia has found only occasional counterparts in Bolivia's Latin American and Caribbean partners. Apart from individual actions with bordering countries, Bolivia's actions have been limited to the coordination of activities in international fora on environment and development. For example:

- the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD);
- the various agreements and conventions on environment (climate change, biodiversity, desertification, etc.); and
- regional fora of environmental authorities (of Latin America and the Caribbean, Meeting of the Environment Ministers of Amazonia, the Andean Committee of Environmental Authorities, etc.).

In the specific field of planning for sustainable development, efforts were made to coordinate macroregional initiatives, such as the elaboration of an Agenda 21 for the Greater Amazonia and an Agenda 21 for the American "chaco" [lowland plains]. These efforts are continuing so far, based on the definition of the Agendas 21 for the Bolivian parts of these important macroregions of the Americas.

At the national level, important lessons have been learned in the process of planning and construction of sustainable development. A synthesis of the main lessons learned can be given:

- It is difficult to define appropriate strategies for sustainable development without a continuous adjustment of the instruments of participatory planning. This process is part of the concept of sustainable development as an initial condition and allows an analysis of the application of plans and programmes.

- The social partners charged with public and private investment, and those determining economic and macroeconomic policies, have shown themselves to be rather reluctant to adopt the concept of sustainable development in their decision-making networks; most of the time, this has made it difficult to adopt the NSSD as a set of agreed national plans. Consequently, the policies, actions and initiatives in sustainable development have always been depreciated by these social partners, who regard them as environmentalist formulations without a technical basis, and have thus underrated their intrinsic complexity.
- Wherever it has been possible to count on a socialization of the concept, even if incomplete, the social partners, especially in the local communities, have accepted sustainable development as a paradigm that, although it requires a long implementation time, is a suitable alternative for improving the quality of life; the complex nature of the relations of the concept has not always permitted its optimum socialization, giving rise to misunderstanding or indifference to the subject.
- In its implementation, the NSSD has not always had the resources necessary to achieve substantive results; in some cases, the objectives were formulated in general terms, or were very ambitious in the general development context, which is why the assignment of resources was insufficient to achieve the declared purposes.
- Public participation could not always count on the instruments of communication, transmission of demands and information and the development of capabilities needed to give it a substantive character. In addition, sustainable development was not always a high priority in the society's political debates, so that the strategy for the eradication of poverty was seen more as a conventional problem of economic growth and social security than as an initiative in the promotion of sustainable use of the physical base of the environmental resources.

For these reasons, it is considered that the new NSSD or Bolivian Agenda 21 should attend to the following factors, in the light of lessons learned:

- an adequate development of the systems and mechanisms of planning, with an adequate structure for the instruments to detect the social demand, through cooperative planning;
- the appropriate definition of the instruments for the implementation of the NSSD, including the determination of indicators of sustainable development that would show the real advances in each of the programme areas;
- the involvement of the public and private partners in the areas of economic and macroeconomic management, including their sensitization to the themes of the construction of sustainable development;
- the diffusion and satisfactory socialization of the concept and its implications amongst the organisms and partners in the civil society, principally amongst the partners in local development, through communication and education;
- the assignment of sufficient resources to the implementation of the plans and programmes of the NSSD, from internal sources, such as the Official Development Aid, in accordance with the obligation assumed by the developed countries at UNCED; and
- the establishment of pertinent and opportune channels for social participation in day-to-day management, for the policy discussion on sustainable development, and for the equitable distribution of the surpluses, linking the sustainable use of the environment and its resources to the eradication of poverty.

*Based on a paper
submitted by Bolivia*



Sustainable Development Strategies and Related Activities Currently in Place in Brazil

Introduction

Sustainable development, which imposes long-term rethinking of the concept of development, includes the dimensions of social, economic, political, institutional, ecological, environmental, demographic, spatial and cultural sustainable development. This brief review deals mostly with the environmental aspect of the concept.

Economic development imposes some environmental losses, if public policy is not as effective as expected. Evaluations are necessary in order to improve the implementation of public policies. Human-centred development is associated with the concept of quality of life, which depends on levels of income, levels of material consumption and environmentally acceptable living and working conditions. It is essential to improve radically the economic and social conditions of the majority of the Brazil population, most of whom suffer from extremely low standards of living.

The environment can be a permanent source of employment and income, by exploring areas such as tourism, recycling, sustainable use of forests and parks, sport fishing, production of tropical fruits and production of medicine from native plants. There is an urgent need for the establishment of a new pattern of development.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio in 1992 established some commitments for achieving this new pattern, which are summarized in Agenda 21. Sustainable development is still a challenge in the vast Brazilian continental territory, which holds many natural resources, the greatest biological diversity on Earth, relatively abundant water resources, mostly sunny weather all year round, and a complex society made up of more than 160 million inhabitants. There is a growing awareness that Brazil must foster progressive sustainable development, reflected in integrated public policies, committed private initiatives and new popular demands.

In 1997, the discussion of the gains and losses arising from the commitment to Agenda 21 has shown that, in Brazil, although deforestation, water pollution and desertification continue to be intense, there are some positive trends: new legal resources have been established (the law on river basin management, in 1997, the law on environmental crime, in 1998); a new institutional setting for the environment is being consolidated at federal, state and local levels, at which, increasingly, specialized government departments deal with the problem. Some states have evolved highly participatory and democratic methods of dealing with the challenges, such as the system of the State Council for Environment in the State of Minas Gerais.

New instruments, besides the traditional command and control ones, have begun to be used, such as economic incentives and the increasing links between environmental and economic policies.

The challenge persists to build up sustainable development based on integrated development, in which the land is understood as being linked to human capital, and knowledge as being the key to fruitful results. Information is essential in our economies: information on the reality and on the ways to transform it.



Actions Leading to Sustainable Development and Agenda 21

The decision to incorporate the concept of sustainable development into governmental action plans led to the creation of the Commission on Sustainable Development Policies and Agenda 21 (CPDS) in February 1997. This Commission reports directly to the Presidency and is chaired by the Ministry of Environment. It involves the ministries concerned with development and environment, as well as representatives of citizens' organizations. CPDS has defined the methodology of approach to the basic themes of Agenda 21.

Six main themes selected from Agenda 21 have been studied: sustainable cities; sustainable agriculture; infrastructure and regional integration; management of natural resources; reduction of social inequalities; and science and technology for sustainable development. Consortiums were hired to elaborate each of these six studies.

Each consortium has worked under terms of reference elaborated by a group of technicians from various parts of the Federal Government. These terms of reference were discussed and approved by the Commission on Sustainable Development Policies. The building up of the thematic documents was based on a participatory process which involved the three governmental spheres, the private sector, academia, social movements, NGOs, etc. The involvement was in the form of workshops and seminars.

In a current evaluation of the implementation of Agenda 21 in local governments, the Ministry of Environment has received reports on related experiences from the following municipalities: Angra dos Reis; Rio de Janeiro; Joinville; Santos; São Paulo; Vitória; and Volta Redonda. Some state governments have also been actively involved, such as Maranhão, Minas Gerais, Pernambuco and Rondônia.

The Brazilian Agenda 21 will be launched in 2000 as a discussion paper, in an effort to promote consensus on Strategic Planning for Sustainable Development. This document will be discussed in five regional seminars, which will involve various stakeholder groups, to enrich the discussions.

The Federal Government has been incorporating the dimensions of sustainable development step by step to its macro-programmes. The Commission on Sustainable Development and Agenda 21 asked that the multi-year plan 2000–2003, *Avança Brasil* comprising 365 programmes distributed among several ministries, be evaluated by a working group of the Planning, Budget and Management Ministry, the Environment Ministry and the Socioeconomic Development Bank. The plan is being revised and adapted and will therefore regard sustainable development not as a financial restriction, but as a source of new opportunities for investment. Public policy in Brazil will be increasingly focused on the promotion of sustainable development through the proper use of natural resources.

Besides programmes coordinated by the Federal Government, there are many important sustainable development strategies currently being developed. State and municipal governments, the private sector and NGOs have their own programmes and initiatives.

As members of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, large-scale private corporations established the Brazilian Committee for Sustainable Development (CEBDS) in March 1997. This Committee presented what became a chapter of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, which has been very active in fostering sustainable practices in business. Today, more than 50 corporations have joined the Committee, and its administrative council is made up of 26 leaders of large Brazilian corporations.

Together with CEBDS, the Brazilian industrial sector is mostly active in helping to promote sustainable development through the Brazilian National Confederation of Industries (CNI) and its system. The services provided by the CNI cover a wide range of activities providing support for micro-, small- and medium-sized industries. Promoting the adoption of sustainable technologies and practices is also part of the support provided.

Of the more than 1,000 NGOs in Brazil, several are actively engaged in promoting Agenda 21, supporting governmental actions; for example, SOS Mata Atlântica [Atlantic rain forest] (a network of more

than 170 NGOs working with 3,000 local governments); ISER (Rio de Janeiro); REDEH (a network for the development of the human species); and Vitae Civilis (São Paulo), which is also present in the Brazilian Commission on Sustainable Development. NGOs play an important role in influencing public policy for certain specific popular demands and in helping government evaluate the effectiveness of its actions, as well as providing services to low-income populations, especially in environmental education, public health and employment strategies. NGOs help the government to implement transparent and participatory public policy-making.

An example of the participatory way of designing, implementing and evaluating environmental public policy is the National Environmental Council (CONAMA), which is a consultative and deliberative council on Brazilian environmental policies; it comprises governmental and citizens' representatives. From the governmental sphere, there is one representative from each Ministry of the Federal Government, one from each State Government and one from the Federal District of Brazil. From the non-governmental sphere, there are representatives of the confederations of industry, of commerce and of agriculture; representatives of various groups of workers; as well as representatives of legally established associations and of citizens from each geographical region of the country, who are involved with actions directly related to the environment. CEBDS and the National Association of Municipalities are also members of CONAMA.

Main Programmes and Selected Strategies of the Ministry of Environment

The current main programmes coordinated by the Environment Ministry of Brazil are:

- environmental education—to promote awareness in preventing and solving environmental problems;
- sustainable Amazon—to foster the development of the Amazon region by using natural resources in a sustainable manner, integrating economic and social aspects;
- biodiversity and genetic resources—to promote knowledge, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the equitable distribution of the benefits of its use;
- clean disposal—to reduce the generation of wastes and to increase recycling by reducing inputs of natural resources, by reducing waste and rationalizing the systems of production by reuse and recycling;
- forestry products—to increase the offer of forestry products and bi-products from planted areas, targeting sustainable employment and income generation, and reducing the pressure on native forestry wood resources, with the intent of conciliating both the commercial and the preservation goals;
- political management of the environment—to provide planning support for the control and evaluation of environmental programmes;
- water in Brazil—to contribute to the enhancement of quality and quantity of the water in some selected hydrographic systems (water sheds, river basins);
- Araguaia–Tocantins Rivers, Paraíba do Sul River, São Francisco River—to apply integrated management to the multiple use of hydropower resources for sustainable development;
- Pantanal—the sustainable development of the area by promoting economic activity that is environmentally compatible with the local ecosystem;
- Brazilian parks—to increase local conservation of energy resources and sustainable use of parks and environmentally protected areas;

- prevention and control of fire—to protect national forests from deforestation; and
- green tourism—to promote ecological tourism as an element of sustainable development.

Most programmes of the Ministry of Environment are decentralized, being implemented by state and municipal governments. Many of them also involve the participation of the private sector and of NGOs.

Sustainable Development Strategies

These are currently being implemented in various areas. Integrated governmental action is of primary importance for the achievement of effective results. The environmental sphere is one of the many variables of sustainable development, as stated above, and is of major importance.

The main broad strategies are:

- regulation of soil use and occupation through environmental planning methods, such as environmental zoning, coastal management, revitalization of water basins, ecological corridors and establishment of units of conservation;
- development of, and incentives for, procedures for the protection and conservation of endangered species, ecosystems and habitats, such as sustainable biodiversity management;
- proposal and improvement of research on biodiversity, including definition of indicators and dissemination of informational data bases;
- establishment of measures to control environmental quality in order to promote sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the atmosphere, especially with respect to energy efficiency, solid-waste management, pollution control, air-quality monitoring, green tax and clean-credit financial instruments; and
- strengthening of institutional capacity, through training programmes, environmental education and international cooperation.

Some environmental strategies are briefly described here below:

Climate change: This has been a major issue since the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in 1992, and the Kyoto Protocol thereto, in 1997. Brazil, as a “non-annex-1” country, is actively participating in the international debate. Brazil seeks to promote technology transfer and innovative incremental financial mechanisms to implement the convention and its protocols. Brazil is especially interested in the implementation of the Clean Development Mechanism, the improvement in energy efficiency and the sustainable use of renewable resources.

Ozone layer: The measures related to the protection of the ozone layer are incorporated into the Brazilian Agenda 21. After appraising the industrial production that utilizes destructive gases, strategies were designed to eliminate their use, by the adoption of cleaner technology. Currently, despite the fact that Brazil is the third biggest gross consumer of destructive substances, the Brazilian per capita consumption is approximately 80 grams, which is below the limit index of 300 grams established for developing countries (Article 5 of the Montreal Protocol). Twenty-five projects have been successfully implemented, involving more than 150 Brazilian industries. For the coming four years, approximately 8,000 entrepreneurs will be involved.

Persistent organic pollutants: Brazil is an active participant in the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee dealing with persistent organic pollutants. Tracking of information, consolidation of negotiations and elaboration of several studies are among Brazilian actions with respect to these and other chemicals. The Brazilian Environment Ministry is organizing and hosting the Third Forum on Chemical Safety, held in Salvador, 14–20 October 2000. This international forum will contribute to the improvement of integrated public policy for sustainable development.

Environmental licensing: This is one instrument to achieve better living standards. At the Federal Government level, environmental licensing has been fostered by the strengthening of the Federal regulatory/supervisory agency, as well as by the regulation of technical and administrative procedures for licensing. At the local-government level, there are projects to revise and strengthen licensing systems.

Competitiveness and environment: There is a growing concern in this field. There are, however, many opportunities for investment and development. Green labelling, the application of the International Organization for Standardization's ISO 14000 standards, industry regulations, for example, are part of the initiatives aimed at achieving greater competitiveness. More than 100 businesses have acquired the ISO 14000 certification in Brazil, and there is an increasing number of businesses interested in earning this certificate. The Brazilian programme of quality and productivity has been fostering new attitudes in industrial sectors. Larger numbers of Brazilian industries are becoming involved in the use of cleaner technology and environmental management. The use of cleaner technology increases the likelihood of bigger profits and therefore the involvement of entrepreneurs is intensified. Public policies have promoted coordination of efforts to reinforce the development of studies and sharing of information in order to increase the use of cleaner technology and environmental management, aiming at empowered competitiveness and diminished environmental losses. Strategies for competitiveness are of increasing importance to finding forms of enhancing the productivity of production systems on a sustainable and equitable basis. The competitiveness and environment issue has also been assuming increasing importance within the MERCOSUR environmental subgroup.

Amazon region: There is a Secretariat within the Ministry of Environment devoted solely to promoting the sustainable development of the Amazon region. The biggest concern is the index of gross deforestation, which was 13,227 square kilometres/year for the period 1996–1997. This represented an cumulative extension of more than 500,000 km², corresponding to 13 per cent of the surface of the region. The Federal Government is concerned with those numbers and has been implementing and strengthening actions to lessen negative environmental impacts; it is also working on the recuperation and regeneration of degraded areas. The strategies chosen involve the control of some economic activities and the promotion and implementation of sustainable economic activities. These strategies are implemented by means of monitoring, regulation and control of forest fires, cooperation with local governments, the productive sector and NGOs in the sustainable

management of natural resources, decentralization of environmental management, recuperation of degraded areas, agro-industry, biotechnology and bio-industry, and ecotourism. Ecological corridors in the Amazon are being developed in order to unite efforts directed to research, reforestation, water resource conservation, protection of indigenous reservations and fauna and flora preservation. An efficient system of forest management is currently being implemented, including certification mechanisms and programmes to reduce the waste in the processing of wood. Funding from the Global Environment Facility, through the World Bank, has been a key element for the programme of expansion and consolidation of a system for protected areas.

Conclusion

The selected strategies briefly described are a small part of the universe of public policies aimed at sustainable development. The sustainable management of natural resources ought to be implemented through participation, transparency of information, decentralized actions, institutional capacity development and integrated policies. Therefore, it is essential that discussions on environment and sustainable development should take place as often as possible, in an effort to involve as many representatives of the various sectors of society as possible. This helps to bring together contributions from different countries, drawing on current theory and practice, broadening a well informed and action-oriented debate on sustainable development. That is the way to build up the possibilities for enhancing the effectiveness of public policies focused on sustainable development.

*Based on a review submitted by
the Secretariat of Environmental Quality
in Human Settlements
Brasilia*



Chilean Government's Report on Sustainable Development

Introduction

During the last decade, Chile was able to combine a high economic growth rate with a strong reduction in poverty and with substantial advances in the rehabilitation and protection of the environment.

Increase in production, and the country's macro-economic stability, have been attributed to the application of a consistent free-market policy which has diversified the production base and consolidated Chile's position in world markets; all this has led to a higher standard of living for the population. The UNDP report on Human Development in Chile 1998 noted that real salaries have increased, inflation has fallen and unemployment has decreased to historically low levels. The quantity, the variety and the number of destinations of exports have also increased impressively. In sum, Chile "...has more than doubled its income per capita in the last decade. At the same time, poverty has steadily fallen, while human development has increased. Social expenditure has almost doubled, especially in education, health and habitat. Territorial decentralization, at the regional and community levels, is being pursued, and priority is being given to public involvement in policy development. Emphasis is also being placed on vulnerable groups, such as the aged, the handicapped, the young and female heads of household."

There has also been a notable reduction in overall mortality and, even more, in infant mortality.

Nevertheless, besides these advances, the associated environmental problems have become more and more obvious. The main ones are, to different degrees: water and air pollution, of urban as well as industrial and mining origin; degradation of natural resources owing to their unsustainable exploitation, including native forests, fish stocks and soils; and uncontrolled urban development, with its traffic congestion and improper handling of solid and liquid wastes.

This situation is not recent; it is due to the accumulation of actions over decades and even centuries. These problems have become more evident now because of increased awareness, economic progress, advances in scientific research and the full operation of the democratic institutional structure that foments free expression and citizen participation.

Although there were important antecedents, it is only since the early 1990s, with the re-establishment of democracy, that the environmental dimension has become fully incorporated into State policy, with the main objective of creating conditions for the accounting of economic growth with environmental protection and the sustainable use of the natural resources, in a context of increasing social equity.

Chile's environmental achievements in the last decade include advances in the legislative, institutional, cultural and management fields. Law No. 19.300, on the General Bases of the Environment (1994); the creation of

the National Environment Commission (CONAMA, as the coordinating entity) and of the National System of Environmental Management; the drafting and application of the relevant regulations; and the elaboration of an Environmental Policy for Sustainable Development, are some of the highlights of these achievements.

However, this progress has gone hand in hand with an environmental reality increasingly subject to the demands of development, on the one hand, and to the heritage of underdevelopment, on the other. To meet these challenges, the national effort to pursue sustainable development has sought to combine economic development with social equity and justice, as well as the preservation of the environment and raising the standard of living of all Chileans. In this way, the principles and the commitments accepted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, are being implemented; this requires the political will to incorporate the concept of sustainable development into all the fields of public and private action.

The task has not been easy to carry out, but we can summarize the main achievements as well as the obstacles and challenges still to be faced.

Environmental Policy for the Sustainable Development of Chile: Objectives and Priorities

In January 1998, the Board of Directors of CONAMA approved the document entitled “An Environmental Policy for Sustainable Development”. It presents the overall policy of the Chilean Government in the field of environment; it incorporates the principles and objectives of Law 19.300 and develops the conceptual and strategic bases for making the country’s development environmentally sustainable. The Policy is consistent with other programme priorities, such as modernization and the decentralization of democratic processes, the modernization of production, overcoming poverty, increasing access to opportunities for everyone and raising the standard of living.

The Policy has the central objective of promoting environmentally sustainable development with a view to guaranteeing an environment free of pollution, the protection and sustainable exploitation of the natural resources, the preservation of nature and the conservation of the cultural patrimony. The Policy is based on stable and permanent principles; it establishes medium-term and long-term objectives and provides guidelines on action to orient the country’s environmental management in the coming years.

With the publication of this Policy the Government has made known its Environmental Agenda. It defines eight priority tasks to consolidate and perfect the National System of Environmental Management and identifies 14 environmental themes to be dealt with in the immediate future.

The Principles of the Environmental Policy

There are ten principles:

- *environmentally sustainable public policies*: the aim is to involve all sectors transversally;
- *the roles of the State and the private sector*: the aim is to encourage the private sector—the motor of production—to adopt the best available technology and the best environmental practices; the State should protect the common good and the rights of citizens through an opportune and efficient service that promotes, regulates and sanctions accordingly;
- *citizen participation*: this backs environmental management and allows recognition of legitimate differences among the stakeholders, so as to achieve agreements and consensus;
- *sustainable development*: the aim is to respect the physical limits to the use of renewable and non-renewable resources, and to include the concept of intergenerational equity;
- *polluter responsibility*: polluters of the environment must make good the damage done and rehabilitate the part of the environment they have degraded—the “polluter pays” principle applies;
- *prevention*: the aim is to avoid damage, since environmental rehabilitation is more costly and less effective;
- *stability*: the aim is to define an environmental legal framework based on clear, coherent and sustained rules, with a view to giving confidence to all the stakeholders;
- *gradualism and steady improvement*: the aim is to reverse the environmental degradation of recent decades, although this can only be done gradually;
- *perfection of the system*: the aim is to consolidate the model of environmental management, recognizing the need to perfect the legislation and the institutional infrastructure; and
- *responsibility to the international community*: the aim is to comply with international environmental agreements to which Chile is a party.

The Objectives of the Environment Policy

The Policy incorporates seven specific objectives:

- *recuperation and improvement of environmental quality*: the recovery of basic environmental quality and its maintenance at a level compatible with sustainable development and the protection of human and ecosystem health. The principal instruments for achieving this objective are environmental-quality standards, decontamination plans and specific environmental policies;
- *prevention of environmental degradation*: the promotion of the adoption of practices compatible with environmentally sustainable development of production and other human activities. The main instruments to this end are environmental-impact assessment, the incorporation of the environmental dimension into public policies, environmental education, environmental quality and emission standards, prevention plans and scientific and technical research;
- *promotion of the protection of environmental patrimony and the sustainable exploitation of the natural resources*: this is the sustainable use of the natural resources without compromising their availability and their natural capacity for self-replacement. The instruments are the regulations of Law 19.300, conservation measures, sustainable land management and the study of the ecosystems;
- *introduction of environmental considerations into the production sector*: the design and implementation of systems and procedures to ensure environmentally adequate production of national products, and therefore to contribute to the greater insertion of these products into national and international markets. The instruments for achieving this objective are: the policy of promoting clean production technology; the incorporation of internationally agreed environmental quality standards into Chilean production processes and products; the design and adoption of systems of environmental certification; and the complementarity between environmental policy and foreign trade;

- *involvement of the citizenry in environmental management*: the establishment of institutional guidelines, and increased opportunities for citizen participation in the context of the Environmental Law; also, the generation of programmes aimed at modifying human conduct and practices with respect to the environment, so as to share effectively the responsibility for the care of the environment. The instruments for achieving this objective are: consolidation of the mechanisms of citizen participation embodied in the Law; strengthening the role of the National Environment Council; the revitalization of environmental education; and the establishment of the Fund for Environmental Protection;
- *strengthening environmental institutional infrastructure, nationally and regionally*: the aim is the full implementation of the National System of Environmental Management, stressing the regional dimension of environmental management, the coordinative and technical capacities of the human resources, the perfecting of supervisory capacity and the implementation of the National Environmental Information System; and
- *perfection of environmental management and the development of new management instruments*: the revision and modification of environmental legislation with a view to achieving an integrated, coherent and effective body of environmental standards, as well as the incorporation of new management instruments, such as economic incentives and self-regulation mechanisms.

Commitments and Sustainable Development Indicators

Chile's Environmental Agenda contains a work plan and specific commitments to be met in 2000 (too voluminous to be included in the present report). They reflect the materialization of each of the objectives of the Environmental Policy and provide the parameters by which to evaluate the fulfillment and success of the proposed Environmental Agenda.

Also, among the new management instruments referred to hereabove, is the elaboration of sustainable development indicators reflecting the country's progress in this field. The recommendations of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development are thus being followed.

The global experience in this field shows that there are considerable difficulties in the application of global and national indicators. At these high levels of application, these indicators are contested, do not satisfy all the stakeholders, are often subject to other interpretations than those for which they were originally intended and require unachievable levels of information. Consequently, in the development of these indicators, a regional perspective has been taken in Chile, with a more direct and more specific relation between the indicators and the country's characteristics.

Indicators for the regions of Atacama, Metropolitana, Maule and Araucanía are being developed, and others are under study for the regions of Bío-Bío, Aysén and Magallanes; and, by the end of the year 2000, indicators will have been developed for all 13 regions into which Chile is administratively divided.

The criteria that have been applied flow from a consultative process in the definition of objectives and social, economic and environmental goals for each region, and these are measured by indicators or by relevant statistics. This ensemble of data can be used to generate a clear and easily understood picture of a complex situation, its evolution and the degree to which it differs from the desired situation. This in turn allows a diagnosis of emerging problems to be made as a basis for decision-making.

Institutional Framework

An important step in the juridical history of Chile was the consecration of environmental protection measures at the constitutional level; these measures were embodied in the 1980 Political Constitution, wherein, on the matter of the recognition and establishment of constitutional rights and duties, the right to live in a clean environment is assured and (in article 19, no. 8) a duty is imposed on the State to ensure that this right is not abused and to oversee the preservation of nature. The constitutional text also recognizes (article 19, no. 24) that the social function of property includes, to the extent necessary, the conservation of the environmental patrimony.

Nevertheless, prior to this constitutional text, legal environmental standards were embodied in the legislation in various ways. Many of the legal standards adopted in Chile in the past had an impact on environmental questions, and long before the concept of environment or the notion of environmental protection became legitimized in the society in general. There are thus about 1,300 legal dispositions that have an environmental relevance in one way or another. This ensemble includes, for example, texts whose applicability dates from 1916.

Law 19.300, and the Presidential Monthly Message that goes with it, is a fundamental instrument that sets the structural and institutional juridical framework for the national environmental policy and the main mechanisms for its implementation. It contains 92 permanent articles and seven transitory articles. Prior to its promulgation, however, regulations were drawn up for the work of the Consultative Councils, for the creation of the System of Environmental Impact Assessment, for the prescription of Environmental Quality and Emission Standards and for the establishment of Prevention and Decontamination Plans.

In this way, a model for the environmental institutional infrastructure was adopted which, respecting the sectoral environmental competences, assumed a fundamental transverse coordinative role. Its design is therefore coherent with the concept of modernization of the State which seeks to facilitate the functioning of the public entities and to integrate responsibilities multisectorally.

For this reason, CONAMA was created as a body for horizontally coordinating the various ministries and services with environmental competences and which decide jointly the actions to be taken to make the National Environmental Management System work. This transversality thus faces the challenge of incorporating sustainable development into public policy. In this way, the pre-existing institutional competences are respected but are linked through CONAMA which is a functionally decentralized public service with its own juridical personality and patrimony, and is subject to the supervision of the President of the Republic.

The highest authority of CONAMA is its Board of Directors made up of the 13 Ministers of State presided by the Minister Secretary-General of the Presidency. This structure recognizes the transversality of the environment and the active role that each ministry should play in the formulation of environmental policies and in their effective implementation by the public services and entities under these ministries.

Besides the Board of Directors, CONAMA also has an Executive Directorate, a Consultative Council, and Regional Environment Commissions (COREMAs). It is the job of the Consultative Council to oversee the environmental coordination of the ministries and the public services of the National Environmental Management System, to monitor compliance with the agreements and policies adopted by the Commission, to propose laws and administration actions to the President of the Republic, and to approve the Commission's programme of work and projects. The agreements adopted are carried out by the competent State entities.

The Executive Directorate of CONAMA is responsible for the implementation and conduct of the tasks called for by the law and for carrying out the agreements and orders made by the Consultative Council. This Council is the means by which CONAMA obtains opinions and complies with all legal requirements. Its membership is representative of the business, scientific and labour sectors, and of NGOs dedicated to the protection and study of the environment.

The COREMAs are the bodies through which services are decentralized in each of the 13 administrative regions of Chile. Each is formed by the Regional Superintendent, who is the president of the

Regional Council, with membership also including the Governor of the Region, the Regional Secretaries of the ministries that are members of the Board of Directors of CONAMA, four regional advisors and the Regional director of CONAMA. The function of the COREMA is to develop within its region the work of the responsible services, the regional development and environmental protection policies.

Public Participation in Decision-making

In Chile, public participation in environmental management expresses the right of citizens to be informed of and to intervene in actions affecting them. On the basis of this principle, the design of the environmental institutional infrastructure includes specific mechanisms for receiving public concerns and contributions in this field. In this way, the Law incorporates into Chilean public management, and for the first time, formal opportunities for public participation.

The Law 19.300 and the Environmental Policy on Sustainable Development both recognize that legitimate, transparent and socially acceptable environmental management is only possible through the concurrence of the various stakeholders in the civil society. Participation allows recognition of the legitimate differences among the partners as well as the search for consensus among them.

In this light, the strategy for civil society's participation in environmental management includes the following elements:

- recognition of the fact that environmental policy is only viable insofar as the citizenry and its representative organizations accept and approve the contents thereof and are able to act accordingly;
- the construction of a consensus on how the country could advance towards sustainable development is itself a process in which the various social, economic and environmental options should be balanced and made compatible, in spite of their apparently diverse sources which, however, are tending to become integrated; and
- agreement that environment as a national concern is not simply a technical problem but also one of promoting the right behaviour and social outlook of the members of civil society.

These elements are expressed in the current instruments of environmental management that establish the opportunities for the involvement and participation of the citizens, as well as their rights and duties. These instruments, which are described briefly here below, are the environmental impact assessment system (EIAS), the environmental quality and emission standards and the prevention and decontamination plans. The Consultative Councils and the Sustainable Development Council also provide such opportunities.

Citizen Participation in the Environmental Impact Assessment System

The Law provides a mechanism of citizen participation in the environmental impact assessment system; this mechanism consists of informing the public of the scope and impacts of investment projects and receiving the public's comments on such projects, with a view to considering them for inclusion in the determination of the environmental qualification. This mechanism is of special importance, owing to the community's growing awareness of the environment and of the impact (negative or positive) of investment projects on their standard of living.

By promoting citizen participation, the environmental impact assessment system seeks to:

- provide information on a specific assessment of a project, so that the community may know and understand its positive and negative impacts;
- ensure that the diversity of opinions may be expressed during the opportunities arranged for citizen participation in the discussion of a project;
- channel the various opinions expressed in the context of an environmental impact assessment;
- collate opportunities for the participation of those persons, groups or communities with lesser access to information on specific projects; and
- perfect the methodology for the presentation of the community's observations on a particular environmental impact assessment.

Participation in the Setting of Environmental Quality and Emission Standards

Environmental standards regulate the maximum acceptable levels of contaminants in media such as air, soil and water. These standards guide the design of public policy and production processes used in the country. The parameters for the desired environmental protection are also based on the standards, so public participation in their development is fundamental.

There are two types of environmental quality standard: primary, for the protection of human health; and secondary, for the protection of the environmental components. Primary standards are applied throughout Chile, whereas the secondary standards may be applied in more restricted areas.

Emission standards are decided for specified areas; that is, they are valid only in the areas for which they are specified and for which they meet the specific environmental characteristics of the area of application. This, in turn, depends on the specific environmental capacity of the area to receive emissions, effluents and wastes without prejudice to the area's environmental quality.

According to the Law and its corresponding regulations, the obligatory procedure for the approval of a standard includes provision for the consultation of the public, the private sector, scientists and communities. The observations made must be taken into consideration. In this sense, specific procedures are set up for the information of the citizenry and the organizations and institutions concerned with a particular environmental problem to which a specific standard applies; a timetable is set up for the reception of the results of consultations, opinions and suggestions, which must be collated and considered in the final project.

Participation in the Prevention and Decontamination Plans

Prevention and Decontamination Plans are oriented, respectively, towards environmental rehabilitation of zones declared to be latent (i.e., the levels of contamination have not yet exceeded the standard, but are high enough to justify concern), and of zones declared to be saturated with one or more contaminants (i.e., a relevant environmental standard has been exceeded).

In zones declared latent, the plans have the objective of preventing the indicators established under the standard from being exceeded. In zones declared saturated, the decontamination plan seeks to meet the relevant environmental standard; exceeding even only one index triggers the application of the corresponding decontamination plan.

As in the previous instrument, once a place has been declared latent or saturated, the community and its organizations, interest groups and specialists have the possibility to know in advance the main lines of a plan under development, and thus to be able to arrange consultations, and to put forward to the authorities their views and proposals.

National and Regional Consultative Councils

The Consultative Councils are the formal and permanent bodies for public participation in community environmental management; they provide opportunities within the country's environmental infrastructure for the State and civil society to meet. The existence of such Councils means that CONAMA and the National Environmental Management System can consult regularly on policy questions and environmental management with 128 persons who are leaders of opinion in their respective sectors.

A Consultative Council comprises two scientists, two representatives of NGOs directly concerned with the environment, two representatives of independent academic centres dedicated to environmental matters, two representatives of business, two representatives of workers, and one representative of the President of the Republic. The Chairman of a Consultative Council is, *ex officio*, the Minister Secretary-General of the Presidency and President of CONAMA.

In each of the 13 regions of the country there is a Consultative Council of the Regional Environment Commission (COREMA). This Council has nine members: two scientists from higher education centres in the region, two representatives of NGOs directly concerned with the environment, two representatives of business, two representatives of workers and one representative of the Regional Superintendent. The Council elects its own Chairman from amongst its members.

The work of these bodies provides a valuable contribution to the country's environmental management, by allowing the environmental authorities to know fully and to consider the viewpoints of the various citizen groups in decision-making. Since their establishment in 1996, they have become increasingly important in decision-making and in expanding the subjects submitted for their consideration.

The Council on Sustainable Development

This Council, created in 1999, is an advisory body to the President of the Republic and has as members 92 representatives of all the main fields of public- and private-sector activity. Its function is to propose actions to promote sustainable development in the country.

Its task is carried out through the concerted action of public and private agents, with the object of ensuring the participation of the national social groups in decision-making with respect to these purposes.

The membership of the Council on Sustainable Development includes members of the National Consultative Council and two representatives of each regional Consultative Council. In this way, the Consultative Councils discharge their function of advising the various bodies concerned with environmental management.

Conclusions

From the lessons learned in recent years it is possible to emphasize the factors that have proven the most relevant in the design of a strategy for successful sustainable development, as follows:

- From the social standpoint, the fight against poverty has been the first condition for advancing towards a strategy for successful sustainable development. Progress in meeting the basic needs of the major part of the population has had a decisive influence on changing the patterns of production and consumption, and the life styles that affect sustainable development. The economic regulatory frameworks for the provision of basic services for the population and for the exploitation of natural resources are the “rules of the game” that have favoured an effective policy of cooperation between the State and private investors. They are now expressed in the significant broadening of the road network; the provision and coverage of drinking water and sewerage; energy security; and the use of marine, mining and forestry resources.
- From the structural standpoint, another fundamental condition has been institutional and social stability, which has allowed the creation of a space favourable to environmentally sustainable development. The foregoing is a key, especially in the context of difficult international financial and production conditions in recent times. This has required the establishment of wide-ranging “national agreements”, in a democratic context, to ensure that the efforts in the field of sustainable development become defined as national tasks.
- From the standpoint of institutional design, the horizontal environmental management system that has been adopted has prevented the marginalization of environmental concern within the State, and has allowed the permeation of the concept of sustainable development through all aspects of environmental management.

- It has also been fundamental to seek an approach between environmental and socio-economic policies, to facilitate the advancement of a strategy for sustainable development. In particular, in the economic field, the efforts to involve the private-business sector (especially industry, mining and construction) should be mentioned. This sector has made a genuine effort to implement environmental and sustainable development policies in business, with a view to making a contribution to the country's general well-being. In this field, one of the principal objectives is the internalization of environmental costs which is being progressively achieved with the consolidation of the instruments employed.
- The idea has also been expressed through the inclusion of economic considerations in all components of environmental policy, and especially in the development of key management instruments: prevention and decontamination plans; environmental standards; and the environmental impact assessment system.
- Besides the operation of "command and control" instruments, alternative instruments have been considered; notably: market incentives that by their nature are more efficient and dynamic; voluntary agreements; responsibility systems; and information systems. Most attention has been given to determining the feasibility and effectiveness of instruments not yet fully adopted even on the basis of international experience, through analysis of institutional, legal, cultural and political factors, before such instruments are formally adopted.
- Another essential factor has been citizen participation. Without the effective use of social organizations, significant advances in sustainable development would be difficult to imagine.

*Based on a paper
submitted by Chile*



Cuba in Search of Sustainable Development

Introduction

The principal objective of the revolutionary project being developed in Cuba has been, is and will be, to raise the standard of living of its people, by meeting their material and social needs, with emphasis on raising the educational and cultural level and on incorporating the environmental dimension into the country's socioeconomic development. This objective considers all Cubans as full and equal members of Cuban society.

The Cuban environmental strategy for sustainable development is essentially one of continuity, in as much as the idea of sustainability is intrinsic in the principles underlying the Cuban revolutionary model.

Cuba's economic situation and survival in the recent difficult years has inevitably taken a heavy toll of the natural resources and has limited their conservation. Nevertheless, the capacity to learn from experience is part of Cuba's sustainable development in which the idea of sustainability has been reinforced, not weakened, by the acquisition of greater awareness and new skills with respect to the rational use of the resources. The search for greater efficiency in production, the quest for alternative energy sources and the use of biological products in agriculture, are

a few examples of the reconciliation of development needs with sustainability under present circumstances, and have been made possible by the scientific and technical qualifications of the people.

The collective access to the basic social services, as a guarantee of the equity concomitant with sustainable development, remains a bulwark of the revolutionary conquest, and allows the establishment of a firm social basis for sustainable development.

As a clear expression of the country's political will to back the strategic objectives and work programmes relative to the new concepts and aims of sustainable development, the National Environment and Development Programme was prepared as Cuba's response to the call of Agenda 21 adopted at the "Earth Summit" (Rio de Janeiro, 1992).

The elaboration of the Programme started in 1992, combining the Programmes of Social and Economic Development with environmental conditions and needs on the basis of economic, political and social principles maintained by the State. Nearly all State entities and many other organizations and institutions took part in this elaboration.

The Programme includes themes not covered by Agenda 21, but does cover aspects of special importance in the country's development strategy: for example, Protection of the Tourism Resources, Protection of the Working Environment and Protection of the Natural and Cultural Patrimony, Sustainable Energy. The 32 themes

of the Programme each include a diagnosis, the respective objectives and a set of specific actions, based on and integrated into the forecasts and actions of the Development Programme under way.

On this same basis, Territorial Programmes are being carried out in each Province, taking into account local priorities. At this time, the National Environment and Development Programme is being restructured on the basis of a new conception and new methodology. In this new vision, the Programme is aimed at organizing in an integrated system the strengths and weaknesses in work on the environment, with a view to indicating the actions carried out so far and those that still have to be undertaken to deal with the main environmental problems of the country and reach the goals of sustainable economic and social development.

Institutionalization

By the Decree Law 147, of 21 April 1994, on the reorganization of the central administrative agencies of the State, the National Commission for the Protection of the Environment and the Rational Exploitation of the Natural Resources was disbanded. Its functions passed to the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment under the Ministry's own specific law, thus resolving a contradiction by which certain Ministries had prerogatives in environmental matters concerning the same resource that they exploited for production purposes.

An Agreement was adopted on the same date; it stated that "it is a common function of all central administrative agencies of the State to: incorporate the environmental dimension into policies, plans, projects, programmes and other actions of each agency, in accordance with sustainable economic and social development; comply with the dispositions of and means deriving from the national environment policy and, to this end, lay down the corresponding dispositions, in the framework of each agency's competence, and to monitor compliance."

A key year for the institutionalization of the Environmental System was 1995, with the establishment of the Environment Agency, with its centres, institutes and other entities, involving the creation of 15 territorial environment units, and five Science, Technological and Environment Centres for the four mountain areas and the Zapata wetlands.

On the international level, Cuba has a firm policy of adhesion to the main international environmental legal instruments and their implementation in Cuba.

The Basis of the National Environment Strategy

Among the functions of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment is the direction and control of the execution of policy on problems of the environment, as well as the rational use of the natural resources in the sustainable development of the country, and the development of the national strategy needed for the protection of specific national resources and biodiversity.

Cuba's environmental policy is embodied in various programme documents and legal instruments; notably, the Constitution, the Cuban report to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) and the National Environment and Development Programme (1993).

Nevertheless, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment decided to present, in an integrated manner, the principles and the ideological basis of national environment policy for the coming years under Cuba's present state of socioeconomic development; to identify the country's main environmental problems; and to establish the main lines of action to solve them or minimize their impact. The National Environment Strategy arose out of these considerations.

The Ministry could not carry out so broad a strategy alone, without involving all the participants in environmental policy-making and management. The preliminary documents were therefore analyzed and evaluated by all the relevant national and local entities.

The National Environment Strategy

Conceptual Aspects

The National Environment Strategy is conceived as the guideline document for Cuba's environmental policy. Its objectives are to indicate the proper ways to preserve and develop the environmental achievements of the Revolution, to overcome the errors made and the insufficiencies detected and to identify the environmental problems requiring most attention at present, while laying the basis for more effective work.

The Elaboration of the National Environment Strategy

The first draft version was circulated in early 1996 to all departments of the Ministry, which developed many important criteria and proposals for modification. The first formal version of the Strategy was developed on this basis and then submitted for consideration and approval to the Ministry's directors in June 1996. The version thus approved was circulated to the other Ministries for comment. At the same time, a Draft Framework Law on the Environment was circulated by the Executive Committee, again for comments and changes. Provincial workshops on the Strategy were organized in the second half of 1996, with the strong participation of social organizations. The Strategy was revised in the light of all these observations and, in its present version, provides the framework for Cuba's environmental policy.

A national workshop was held to explain the content and scope of the Strategy, to analyze how the Agreements to be elaborated with the State's Central Administrative Units will fit together, to study alternative ways of implementing the Strategy and to fix the time-table for the elaboration of sectoral strategies. Regional delegations of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, social organizations and associations (e.g. Committees for the Defence of the Revolution, Cuban Women's Federation, Young Communists' Union, Cuban Workers' Trade Union) took part in the workshop.

Summary of the Strategy's Content

Besides its objectives and principles, the Strategy identifies the main environmental stakeholders and the coordination and integration required for effective work. It also deals with the main environmental problems to be faced in the short to medium term, including those having a direct impact on the way the environment is affected by human behaviour, and in particular the problems of environmental awareness and education. Each problem is defined together with the work guidelines for minimizing its impact. The instruments needed to give effect to the Strategy, conceived as an integrated system, are as follows:

- National Environment and Development Programme;
- land-use regulation;
- environmental legislation;
- environmental impact assessment;
- environmental licensing;
- state environmental inspection;
- scientific research and technological innovation;
- environmental education and dissemination;
- economic regulatory instruments;
- environmental indicators for decision-making; and
- international environmental policy.

Each is briefly defined, as well as what it is expected to achieve and how.

Implementation of the Strategy

In the two years since the Strategy's approval, advances have been made in the implementation of the mandates and other indications therein, bearing in mind that the Strategy comprises not only the environmental dimension, but also the economic and social aspects, seen as an indissociable triad with respect to improving the standard of living of the Cuban people as the fundamental purpose.

1997–1999: Major Advances

Development of the sectoral environmental strategies: The elaboration of the National Environment Strategy was accompanied by that of the sectoral environmental strategies in a joint effort of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment and the other central government organisms significantly concerned with the environment. The results have been positive.

The sectoral strategies have been developed on the basis of detailed analyses of each sector, with the identification of the main sectoral environmental problems and the actions and agents to reverse negative environmental situations. The sectoral strategies are being carried out in the business unions and territorial entities of each organism, in accordance with the territorial environment strategies referred to herebelow.

So far, sectoral environment strategies have been developed for the main branches of industry, construction, sugar cane and other forms of agriculture, transport, communications, trade, higher education, hydrological resources, public health, tourism, the CIMEX Corporation and, in 2000, for the armed forces and civil aviation. This process is, of course, open to the appraisal of new means of action.

In the same way, environmental-collaboration agreements have been reached with the National Institute for Sport, Physical Education and Recreation; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Culture; the Cuban Radio and Television Institute; and the principal social organizations. A code of environmental conduct for builders was also drafted.

Conformation of the territorial environment strategies: These have been approved in the Provinces and the Special Municipality of the Isla de la Juventud, and is now being implemented in all the municipalities. This also covers the various People's Councils and production groups in each Province. Coordination and collaboration agreements have also been signed between the provincial agencies and the corresponding environmental authority.

Hydrographic basins: The National Council of Hydrographic Basins and, within the Provincial Councils, the Water-basin Councils are being set up for the protection of the basins and the recuperation of those basins that have been damaged. An environmental diagnosis has been made of each important basin of national interest: Cuyaguaje, Almendares-Vento, Ariguanabo, Zaza, Cauto, Guantánamo-Guaso, Toa and Hanabanilla, which were selected on the basis of their economic, social and environmental complexity and their physiographic characteristics. In 1999, the pollution load in these basins was reduced by 9.2 per cent (all together they receive 25 per cent of all pollution sources). In the 51 basins of only provincial interest (which receive 35 per cent of all pollution), the reduction was 7.6 per cent; in the remainder, it was 3.5 per cent.

Legislation: Law No. 81, on the environment, approved as a Framework Law in July 1997, embodies basic precepts for the achievement of sustainable development in Cuba. More recent, specific legal dispositions have been adopted, such as: the Forestry Law (1998), with its Contraventions Decree; the Decree Law on Biological Security; the Decree Law on the National System of Protected Areas and Environmental Contraventions. All have received the approval of the Council of Ministers and await the signature of the State Council. Presently being drafted or awaiting approval are the Decree Laws on the Management of the Coastal Zone and on Biological Diversity.

The Decree Law on Territorial Water Resources, and other legislation complementary to the annulled Law No 33, are being revised. Also, the introduction of environmental aspects into the Penal Code, the Civil Code and the Law on Civil, Administrative and Labour Procedures is being pursued.

Environmental technical norms: The Technical Committee on Environmental Management was formed in 1996, under the chairmanship of the Directorate for Environmental Policy of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment; it is charged with revising and completing the national technical norms for environmental management. It also deals with International Organization for Standardization's ISO-14000 standards and their implementation at the national level.

Among the 23 national norms for environmental management approved so far, six have been adopted as Cuban norms from those approved by the ISO. The implementation of these ISO-14000 norms has been initiated.

Investment and economic instruments: Environmental impact assessment has been steadily improved and accompanied by increased decentralization. Similarly, State Environmental Inspection has also been improved, including closer working relations with those organisms charged with natural resource inspection and incorporation of the procedures required to guarantee environmental protection.

Environmental investment has been included in the annual investment plans of the various Ministries and regions, aimed at environmental protection or at correcting the pollution impact of centres of production and service units. A Resolution of the Ministry of Finance and Prices is being implemented to reduce duties on technology, products and processes favouring the environment. A Draft Resolution on the accelerated depreciation of environmentally friendly investments is in preparation. Taxes on forestry and ecotourism have also been adjusted to stimulate the protection of the natural resources.

The National Environment Fund was approved in 1999. It is a new mechanism for mobilizing resources destined for the environment. It complements, but does not replace, the responsibility of the Ministries that direct production or services to deal with the environmental problems these activities cause.

Science and technological innovation: The approval and implementation of a sectoral plan for the environment has been an important step in the incorporation of scientific research into the solution of specific environmental problems, with the strengthening of the environmental component in the National Plan for Science and Technological Innovation. In the Fora on Science and Techniques, the environmental component has also been increasingly stressed. A Resolution of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment governs technology transfer, including the necessary environmental considerations.

Other strategies: The National Strategy for Environmental Education promotes the introduction of the environmental dimension into the curricula of the national system of education and higher education. The environmental education of the managers, professionals and workers of each sector has been addressed and, in the territorial strategies, one of the priority aspects is the environmental education of the population, taking advantage of the provincial environmental education programmes. The communication media also now pay much closer attention to environmental matters.

The National Study of Biological Diversity was prepared in 1998, and the National Strategy on Biological Diversity and its corresponding Action Plan, in 1999. The Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy is also being developed.

Monitoring: The basis for the National Environmental Monitoring System is being established, including its programme of implementation.

Information on sustainable development: The Cuban environmental situation is reflected in periodic reports of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, in close collaboration with other Ministries; these reports are aimed at decision-makers and the general public.

International panorama: Following approval of the present Strategy, Cuba has signed some important international environmental agreements: the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (New York, 1992); the Convention to

Combat Desertification (Paris, 1994), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar, 1971); the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Area (Cartagena de Indias, 1983); the Montreal Amendment (1997) to the Montreal Protocol (1987) on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (to the Vienna Convention, 1985); and the Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (Rotterdam, 1998).

Participation of the Citizenry through Social Organizations

Women have played, and still play, an important role in the spheres of production and the workplace in the community and social contexts, and within the Federation of Cuban Women. Children and youths have various organizations, such as the Pioneer Movement, the Secondary School Students' Federation, the University Students' Federation, the Young Communists' Union and the Youth Technical Brigades. These constitute strong support for the environment through various associations, such as the Friends of Nature and ECOJOVEN, and more generally through community work.

The Workers' Movement is organized in diverse trade unions in which the workers express their viewpoints and participate in decision-making in the workplace.

The Committees for the Defence of the Revolution, which cover almost the entire population, undertake important work for the benefit of the community, including recovery of raw materials and the cleaning of streets, gardens and undeveloped spaces, thus contributing to improving the standard of living and the environment for the whole population. They also support campaigns for improved sanitation, the collection of recyclable materials and reforestation.

The National Small Farmers Association interacts with the farm workers and promotes means of increasing agricultural productivity by the application of the results of scientific research, thus helping to rescue traditional farming methods and to protect the environment.

The National Association of Innovators and Researchers and the National Science and Technique Fora have made important contributions to the solution of various problems: the shortage of spare parts; the optimization of industrial processes; the substitution of imported raw materials by national resources; the development of small-scale industries; and specific environmental situations, among others. These associations mobilize the creative capacity of hundreds of thousands of workers and students to this purpose.

There are some 2,000 associations and NGOs, including those with the objective of protecting Cuba's natural resources and the environment in general, such as Man and Nature, and For Nature.

A National Programme of Community Work, coordinated by a ministerial group comprising the organizations most concerned with this work, analyzes and coordinates community actions, studies and promulgates experience according to the characteristics of each place and brings together State decisions in this field, always with respect for the diversity of traditions and customs in pursuit of what is progressive and of the transformation of what is regressive.

Shared Experience: Towards Organic Agriculture

Among the steps taken by Cuba to establish sustainable organic agriculture are:

- wide use of biofertilizers, manure and leguminous plants;
- efficient recycling of organic agricultural wastes (compost) and green fertilizers;
- forestry development and humus production;
- integrated management of plagues and diseases, use of biological controls (220 centres for the reproduction of insectivorous organisms and insect pathogens, and biological preparations);
- associated crops (maize, soya, corn etc.) that combat erosion as inter-harvest crops (green fertilizers, timing of harvesting);
- urban agriculture;
- medicinal plants;
- food self-sufficiency in agricultural cooperatives and communities (results: fresh, healthy produce; minimum use of fuel for food transportation, food production according to community needs and wishes, and corresponding to functional sustainability of the environment);
- changes in irrigation methods, with gravitational recovery systems and use of low pressure;
- introduction of new clones and varieties;
- agrochemical studies and characterization of soils;
- use of biopesticides;
- irrigation with fertilizers;
- minimum possible working of the soil;
- reforestation; and
- application of the results of scientific and technological research, as well as the development of scientific and technological capacity.

Nevertheless, the experts have indicated that Cuba cannot depend exclusively on organic agriculture, nor is it necessary. What is important is to achieve an agriculture that is ecologically, economically and socially sustainable.

Worthy of note is the work of the National Small Farmers Association (an NGO) and other Cuban farming and cattle-raising institutions in the development of a new and sustainable way to conduct the country's agriculture.

Other Ideas in Development

- slow but steady introduction of clean production and self-regulation into industry;
- increased recovery, reuse and recycling of raw materials;
- economic exploitation of residues;
- accelerated introduction of environmental certification;
- promotion of business excellence and good practices;
- business improvement with respect to environmental management and economic efficiency, in particular, while encouraging positive experience in business organization and incentive mechanisms;
- establishment of cooperatives on state lands and the licensing of public land for the benefit of individuals;
- gradual reduction of subsidies to producers, basically in agriculture and industry; and
- mixed [i.e., with foreign capital] and differentiated businesses at touristic sites and in the cities for the supply of drinking water and sanitation.

The Regional and Subregional Framework

In the Caribbean context, it is worth noting the importance of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which has been followed by ministerial and expert meetings usually supported by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee, in which Cuba has played a full part.

Expert meetings in the Caribbean context also sponsored by ECLAC have analyzed indicators for the evaluation of sustainable development, with the participation of Cuba.

In the framework of the Association of Caribbean States, a Caribbean Environment Strategy was developed with a view to the establishment of a frame of reference for linking national efforts to achieve sustainable development in the regional context.

The annual meetings of the Ministers of Environment in the region have been held regularly to establish guidelines for regional international fora, to analyze the shared environmental problems and to coordinate joint actions. Here, too, Cuba has played its part enthusiastically.

The Latin American Summits have addressed key questions in the pursuit of sustainable development, such as poverty, education, health, economic aspects and development. Also in the Latin American context, important projects in the pursuit of the objectives mentioned above have been carried out. Cuba has participated in all these Summits and projects within its means.

Conclusions

This report has attempted a brief synthesis of Cuba's efforts to pursue sustainable development, notably through its National Environment Strategy. The hard work done in its implementation has reached all the main sectors of the economy, the provinces and municipalities and the social organizations without which, it would be impossible to achieve the objectives. The bequest to future generations of Cubans of a framework within which they could pursue sustainable development, with a decent standard of living, is the most precious aim now being pursued.

The difficult financial and economic situation of Cuba in the 1990s, including access to loans from international funding agencies, has greatly limited the possibilities of achieving national objectives in the field of sustainable development. This situation has also limited progress in Cuba's implementation of the SIDS (Barbados, 1994) Plan of Action, and has restricted access to appropriate technologies. Even so, Cuba has well qualified human resources and has made significant progress.

Special attention must be given to strengthening monitoring systems to control water and air quality, biodiversity and soil quality, since, as a consequence of the country's economic limitation, these have suffered considerable deterioration. Also, the possibility of regular monitoring and control of the sources has been strongly reduced, partly because of the obsolescence of the equipment and of the lack of supplies. Similarly, priority attention must be given to: the difficulties in the provision of habitation, especially in the large cities; deterioration of water distribution and sewage systems; the inadequate treatment of waste water which leads to the pollution of terrestrial and marine water; improvement in the supply of drinking water; the collection and final disposal of solid wastes; the insufficient urban transport; and deterioration in the road network, among other things.

The cooperation of the United Nations agencies must be increased in order to speed up progress, given that the needs greatly exceed achievements, so far. Regional and subregional interchange and integration must be strengthened.

In the Caribbean context, the fundamental problems arise from the lack of financial resources for the conduct of joint programmes and from the difficulties of communication amongst the countries for the exchange of experience.

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The Dominican Republic and Sustainable Development

Introduction

The Dominican Government, upon signing the Rio Declaration and adopting Agenda 21, took on an unprecedented commitment: that of changing its focus on development and articulating economic growth, social and environmental protection.

Executive or Legal Mandate

The National Commission for the Follow-up of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) is the Dominican Republic's equivalent of a National Council on Sustainable Development (NCSD); it was created in November 1992 to provide the necessary institutional framework for responding to the agreements and commitments assumed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The Commission is chaired by the Vice-President of the Republic and its mandate was defined as follows: To ensure inter-institutional coordination at the national level and with the organisms and agencies of international cooperation for the smooth implementation of the plans, programmes and projects to be carried out to give effect to the agreements made at the Earth Summit.

Organizational Structure

In this Commission, the orientation and execution of environmental policy, in particular, and of sustainable development, in general, is charged to the 34 centralized and decentralized institutions of the State that go to make it up.

Eight technical subcommissions were also created, on:

- education and information policies;
- forestry development;
- land and water resources;
- biodiversity and protected areas;
- protection of the atmosphere and prevention of pollution;
- urban affairs;
- energy and mines; and
- seas and oceans.

There is no subdivision of the Commission on a geographical basis, only by theme. However, in reality, work is coordinated between the Commission and Provincial Development Councils, which are the mechanisms defined by the Government for decentralizing national plans.

Degree of Multisectoral Participation

The National Follow-up Commission includes, by decree, representatives of various sectors of national life. Nevertheless, the level of participation, in quantitative and qualitative terms is uneven, being top-heavy with public institutions. The Commission comprises 26 governmental institutions, representing the economic, environmental and social fields, four non-governmental organizations, a representative of the private industrial sector, a representative of the academic sector (of the Association of University Rectors), and two representatives of local government (the municipal government of the National District and the Dominican Municipal League). However, the Commission invites other organizations of the private sector directly concerned with sustainable development to participate in work meetings, with a view to promoting a wider participation of society.

In a general way, it may be said that the relatively greater participation has been that of the institutions and organizations related to the environment and the natural resources. Social and economic institutions have traditionally played a lesser part. The private industrial sector itself has practically been absent from the Commission's actions since the beginning.

At present, through the project in support of the National Commission for the Follow-up of the Rio Agreements (National Agenda 21), there are several activities to integrate effectively the different sectors that are represented on the Commission. Moreover, a proposal is being prepared to modify the founding decree so as to broaden the diversity of member organisms and bodies. And the formulation of the National Agenda 21 is under consideration.

Economic, Social and Environmental Aspects

Economy

In the 1970s, the country's economic basis was the export of agricultural products, principally sugar, coffee, cacao and tobacco. This agro-export model decreased significantly with the emergence of the model based on services (duty-free zones and tourism), with a cumulative annual growth rate of 18.5 per cent between 1977 and 1986.

In the 1980s, the country faced an economic crisis without precedent. The society experienced substantial changes in its model, from an agricultural to an urban-services economy. At the end of the decade, half of the population had an income below the poverty line, of which 25 per cent were in a situation of penury. More than 60 per cent of the Dominican population had no access to public services, as well as having an unemployment level of 25 per cent of the economically active population.

As in other Latin American countries at the beginning of the 1990s, the Dominican Republic's Government commenced the implementation of an integrated economic programme with the objective of consolidating the gains of macroeconomic stabilization, to deepen structural change (with the financial help of the Expanded Structural Change Facility of the International Monetary Fund) and to intensify the efforts to achieve external viability through the control of internal factors. The emphasis of the programme is on a major reduction of the public sector, the development of conditions favourable to private investment, the creation of productive employment, the relief of poverty and improvement in the administration of the natural resources. Regarding external affairs, emphasis is on increasing foreign-currency reserves, equilibrium in the balance of trade and correction of the balance-of-payments deficit.

On the other hand, with the exhaustion of the model of import substitution and the predominance of policies aimed at strengthening tourism and duty-free zones, a slow-down and diminution of the industrial and farming sectors has occurred. As a consequence of the diminution of

farming, rural unemployment has risen, causing a rural–urban migration of the work force which cannot be absorbed entirely by new economic activities, thus swelling the already growing informal sector of the internal economy.

In terms of macroeconomic indicators, the Dominican economy has experienced a substantial improvement. From 1991 to 1995, the GDP, at 1970 prices, grew at a rate of 1.22 per cent and, in terms of real income per capita, at a rate of 1.13 per cent. In June 1997, the GDP reached a growth of 6.9 per cent, 0.5 percentage points above that of the previous year. Communications (16.6 per cent), construction (16.1 per cent), electricity and water (11 per cent), hotels and restaurants (9.5 per cent), transport (8.1 per cent), trade (7.9 per cent) and manufacturing (5.8 per cent) played the major part.

According to the estimates of the National Planning Office, in 1996, approximately 56 per cent of Dominican households are living in poverty and 19 per cent, in extreme poverty; the number in the latter group is about 1,619,000. The economic and social indicators show that inequalities and inequity have tended to increase strongly, as shown directly by the living conditions and state of health of the Dominican population.

Added to this situation is the disregard for the environment, since the development of economic activities in the Dominican Republic, including the development of the tourist industry and duty-free zones, has been carried out for the most part without concern for the environment. Only in recent years has the institutionalization of the environmental control mechanisms commenced.

In conclusion, the various economic models of the Dominican Republic have achieved a macroeconomic growth that does not correspond to the parameters of sustainable development. Nevertheless, the present trend is towards recognition of the importance of conserving the resource base to perpetuate economic development.

According to the preliminary report on Human Development 1999, one of the major challenges facing the Dominican Republic is the conciliation of reform and economic growth (7.9 per cent of GDP by the end of the year) with the capacity for increasing essential human capacities.

Society

Even when the country is showing signs of economic growth, the impact of these activities on development and the Dominican society's quality of life has not been equitable. The following Table gives some significant social and demographic indicators.

Area (km ²)	48,442
Total population (1993)	7,089,000
Urban population (% in 1996)	62
Public social expenditure (% GDP; 1994)	6.6
GDP (RD\$ millions; 1993)	4,200
GDP (RD\$ millions; 1995)	4,591
GDP (RD\$ millions; 1998)	5,327
Gross birth rate (per 1000; 1996)	28.3
Overall fecundity rate (children per mother)	3.3
Fecundity rate of adolescents (%; 15–19 yr; 1996)	23
Overall mortality rate (per 1000; 1990–1995)	6.2
Annual natural growth rate (%; 1990–1995)	2.2
Total growth rate (%; 1981–1993)	1.95
Life expectancy (years; 1990–1995)	67.6
Infant mortality rate (per 1000; 1991–1996)	42
Mortality rate of the under-fives (per 100,000)	57
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000)	229.3
Prenatal care (%; 1996)	96.8
Natal care (%; 1996)	92.5
Adult-male illiteracy (%; 1996)	22
Adult-female illiteracy (%; 1996)	19

In recent years, the country has produced a series of important legal and institutional changes. Tax and duty reforms have been carried out and new Labour and Monetary-Financial Codes were approved; moreover, proposed Laws on Foreign Investment and on Energy are before Congress.

Regarding the social sector, wide participation in the reform of education has been achieved through the elaboration and implementation of the Ten-Year Plan for Education. In the health sector, efforts are being made to modernize the National Health System and to approve the General Law on Health. A National Social Development Plan and a social compensation fund, known as the Fund for the Promotion of Community Initiatives, have been operative. The budgetary envelopes for health and education were significantly increased for 1998.

With respect to decentralization, Provincial Development Councils have been established to promote the formulation of development plans based on the participation of the various sectors and municipal and provincial actors.

Moreover, with the support of the UNDP's Subregional Sustainable Human Development Programme, a National Strategy and Programme of Sustainable Development is being formulated by the Commission on the Follow-up of the Agreements of the Earth Summit, with the support of the National Programme 21 project.

Likewise, the reform of the judicial, administrative and budgetary systems has begun. For farming, industry and trade, specific proposals exist for the modernization of these sectors and their adaptation to globalization and competition.

In February and March 1998, a National Dialogue was organized, in which 2,000 proposals were discussed and agreed upon and which define the will of the nation in such matters as social, economic, environmental and international policies, among others.

Environment

The country faces great limitation in the coverage and quality of basic sanitation services, owing mainly to planning deficiencies in this sector and an increase in population concentration in urban areas. For 1994, it was estimated that 34 per cent of the population lacked a drinking water supply, and only 37 per cent had access to a sewage system. The small percentage of the waste water that is collected by sewage systems is mostly discharged untreated (except in Santiago, the country's second most

important city, where 90 per cent of the waste water is collected and treated). The collection of solid wastes is also deficient, and their disposal is generally through open outfalls, without any sanitary control.

Regarding the state of the natural resources, one of the most obvious problems is deforestation. In 1981, 18 per cent of the national land area was covered with forests. In 1992, an annual loss of 20,000 ha of forest was calculated, although recent studies have shown that forest cover may now exceed 20 per cent. It is well known that deforestation negatively affects the biodiversity and may even lead to the local extinction of some species of flora and fauna. As part of the Dominican Republic's policy of protection of the natural resources, the execution of the National Plan for Quisqueya Verde was started in 1996, with the following objectives:

- to strengthen work on the conservation, management and development of the natural resources, with the involvement of community organizations and the private sector;
- to promote national reforestation, with the direct participation of the local community, and to stimulate the development of small- and medium-scale forestry industries;
- to promote the integrated management of drainage basins;
- to support agroforestry projects as a means of diversifying production, while recovering degraded areas;
- to promote the use of native and endemic species for reforestation; and
- to contribute to improving the access of the rural population to basic health services, education, drinking water, sewerage and electricity.

Heavy erosion in the drainage basins of the country is reflected in the sedimentation of the reservoirs and the marine ecosystems. Studies of seven deforested basins showed a loss of surface soil of 0.6–3.4 cm/yr (100–500 tons/ha/yr). It is estimated that 86 per cent of the surfaces of the country's drainage basins have problems of degradation.

The Dominican Republic is a signatory of numerous international agreements on the environment, but it is thanks to the present administration, with the Congress of the Republic, that the majority of ratifications of such agreements is due; they include: the Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (New York, 1992); the Convention to Combat Desertification (Paris, 1994); the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL, London, 1973; amended, London, 1978); and the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena de Indias, 1983), among others. Moreover, projects on the control and elimination of substances that affect the ozone layer, based on the Montreal Protocol, are being carried out. Recently and as part of what was agreed in the Action Plan of the Summit of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, the sale and distribution of leaded petrol was forbidden in the Dominican Republic.

During the National Dialogue, deficiencies in the legislation, and the lack of an umbrella institution to regulate all aspects of the natural resources and the environment, were identified as the principal problems to be solved. As a result, the Coordinating Commission for the Natural Resources and Environment was created; it has already submitted to the Executive and the Congress of the Republic a proposal for a Framework Law on the Environment in which the creation of the much needed State Secretariat for the Environment and Natural Resources is foreseen. The National Institute of Environmental Protection has also been created and started its work. These developments have been strongly supported by the National Programme 21 (Capacity 21).

Also in 1999, the implementation of the project on the Reform of Environmental Policies was initiated, under the coordination of the National Planning Office. This project should prepare a National Environmental Strategy, including the definition of economic, financial and tax instruments.

Contribution to the National Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development

In the first years of its existence, the Commission's activities were limited to forest coverage and protected areas, and only in 1996 did its activities increase in number and scope, with the initiation of the country's Programme 21 and of the National Quisqueya Verde Plan.

Among the achievements of the Commission since August 1996 is the conduct of the National Rio + 5 Consultation in February 1997 under the auspices of the Earth Council; some 150 institutions took part, representing the governmental sector and civil society concerned with environmental problems and the implementation of sustainable development. Key points in the country's sustainable development were identified and the evaluation and promotion of Agenda 21 carried out.

The Follow-up Commission is responsible for the formulation of the National Agenda 21. Since 1997, the job of formulation has been carried out, with the support of the National Programme 21. The formulation of the National Agenda 21 is involving all the members of the Commission, through the technical subcommissions and consultation with all the other sectors of national life.

During the National Dialogue, in February and March of this year [1999], the Executive Secretariat of the Commission presented a series of proposals on sustainable development, which were accepted and have been incorporated into the resolutions emanating from the Dialogue. These proposals cover, inter alia, constitutional reforms to incorporate the principles of sustainable development, and reform of the system of national accounts.

Also, the Office for the Follow-up of the World Summits (the entity responsible for technical support to the presidency of the Commission for the Follow-up of the Earth Summit and of eight other summits promoted by the United Nations) has incorporated the Rio principles as the horizontal axis of the planning and implementation of the agreements reached at the other summits.

Critical Concerns and Obstacles in the Implementation of Sustainable Development

During the first years of the Commission's existence, the main difficulty was the conflict of interests amongst the institutions composing it. Throughout the work of the Commission, a greater participation of those institutions dealing directly with the environment and the natural resources has been noticed, thus making the integration of the economic and social sectors difficult in real terms.

The main obstacle to the implementation of sustainable development in the Dominican Republic is the lack of a well defined policy in this field. The principles of sustainable development have been incorporated into the programmes of the political and economic sectors, but have not been established at the level necessary for effective implementation. For this reason, the Commission has focused its activities principally on public awareness, dissemination of information, and policy development, and the mechanisms for their legal and economic expression.

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Environmental Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Ecuador

Introduction

Ecuador is a country with enormous potential: high biological diversity and an extraordinary variety of ecosystems which coexist in a relatively small land area, thus giving the human population access to the natural resources and providing countless opportunities for promoting sustainable development.

Ecuador's geographical location and topography offer exceptional conditions for the sustainable use of several sources of energy. Its natural resources include the unique ecosystem of the Galápagos Archipelago. These natural advantages are accompanied by the creativity of its ethnically and culturally diverse people.

The severe crisis that Ecuador is facing provides an exceptional opportunity to turn away from worn-out processes and to take the road to sustainable economic growth, to an improved standard of living for its population, and to the recuperation and efficient exploitation of its natural wealth.

There is an increased national awareness of the importance of the environmental dimension. Sustainable development is now a constitutional principle, and the concept is being increasingly incorporated into State policy, into decision-making with respect to production, into local-government management and into public behaviour. These advances are expressed in the Environmental Management Law and in the creation of the Ministry of the Environment.

The following concerted and urgent actions are needed:

- regional integration, to take better advantage of Ecuador's geographical diversity;*
- development of durable policies and objectives for sustainable development;*
- adoption of a long-term view of the policies of sustainable use of the natural resources;*
- reform of the State, to achieve a consistent, modern, efficient and decentralized institutional structure;*
- pursuit of equity in the distribution of wealth and income; and*
- increased attention to education, health, food safety, research and technological development.*

Objective, Principles and Criteria

Objective

The main objective of the Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development of Ecuador is, by environmental management, to promote development based on the conservation and the sustainable use of the biodiversity and the natural resources of the country. The achievement of this major objective is based on 11 principles and will be judged by five basic criteria.

Principles

The sustainable development of Ecuador in the 21st century is based on the following principles:

- Respect for life in all its forms, is a necessary condition for the preservation of the ecological equilibrium on which human life and social development are based.
- The environmental dimension, involving all aspects of national development, implies an alternative social structure for the country.
- The use of the natural resources and the management of the ecosystems must be kept within limits so that they suffer no irreversible effects; nor should the use of a specific resource adversely affect the sustainable use of any other resources associated with it.
- Solidarity is a fundamental condition of sustainable development: among nations, since they share the planet, and the main environmental problems have a global dimension; among generations, since the life of our descendants will depend on the degree of responsibility we assume in using natural resources; among the various ethnic groups, cultures and regions of Ecuador, since their diversity is one of the country's main riches; and among people, since equity is as much an end as a means of development.
- The security of individuals, societies, nations and the planet must be a permanent objective of sustainable development.

- Sustainable development must ensure that the benefits derived from the access to and the use of the resources are distributed as equitably as possible among all the stakeholders.
- The State must guarantee recognition of, respect for, and strengthening of, cultural identity and diversity.
- Agreements affecting biodiversity require consultation with, and the prior informed consent of, the stakeholders and of the competent authority; this consent should be based on information that is true, transparent, trustworthy, complete, opportune, up-to-date and accessible.
- Lack of scientific proof should not be given as a reason for delaying necessary action when there is a reasonable assumption of a significant decrease in risk of: loss of biological diversity; reduced food safety; or poorer human, animal or vegetal health.
- Priority should be given to such action rather than to mechanisms of compensation or reparation for damage caused.
- States must ensure that activities in their respective jurisdictions, or under their control, do not prejudice the environment of other States or of zones outside any national jurisdiction.

Criteria

The Environmental Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Ecuador is based on the following criteria:

- The sustainable use of the natural resources should generate economic benefits that contribute to raising the standard of living of the population and to social equity.
- The creation of wealth should be based on the use of a society's human and natural resources for the well-being of all, raising the standard of living now while ensuring that of future generations.
- The management of sustainable development should be based on cooperation and shared responsibility amongst the various social and institutional partners.

- Environmental management, to be efficacious, should, as far as possible, be based on the transfer of competence and capacity to the local-government level and to relevant civil organizations.
- The State should promote international cooperation, especially in the Latin American context, with emphasis on the Andean region, in the conservation and sustainable utilization of the biodiversity.

Policies for the Sustainable Development of Ecuador

The Strategy proposes three levels of priority intervention:

- the conservation and sustainable exploitation of the natural capital;
- the control and improvement of environmental quality; and
- conservation and recuperation of sensitive and threatened ecosystems.

Conservation and Sustainable Exploitation of the Natural Capital

The policies of the State of Ecuador are here proposed under eight headings:

Biodiversity

- Guarantee the continuity of the regulatory functions and the ecological and developmental processes sustaining life and promote biodiversity at three levels: ecosystem, species, genes;
- Promote and strengthen the active participation of the various stakeholders in an overall model of biodiversity management, through decentralization of market mechanisms and of administrative services, and guarantee the rights of peoples and national sovereignty;
- Make forestry and agricultural biodiversity predominant factors in sustainable development and a basis of various economic activities that make a higher standard of living possible;

- Promote harmonization of national legislation and policy with international legal instruments;
- Strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Environment to administer the country's biodiversity;
- Adopt norms and plan programmes and specific projects on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
- Consolidate the National System of Protected Areas, including ecosystems that are not sufficiently represented and establish buffer zones and ecological corridors;
- Exercise national sovereignty over genetic resources, regulating access to them and their exploitation, as well as intellectual property;
- Regulate the importation, transfer, and release into the wild, of exotic species and genetically modified organisms;
- Assemble, appraise and promulgate knowledge and traditional practices for the direct benefit of local communities;
- Rehabilitate degraded ecosystems and species that are vulnerable, threatened or in danger of extinction; and
- Promote research on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of the biological diversity, the protection of sensitive areas and the rehabilitation of degraded areas, and build up national inventories of the biodiversity, backed by periodical evaluations using specific indicators.

Forests

- Strengthen the sustainable management of native forests to provide raw materials, goods and environmental services;
- Promote sustainable forestation and agroforestry;
- Promote the enhancement of forestry resources, so as to render transparent and competitive the market for goods and services based on the forests and their biodiversity;
- Promote the participation of the civil society in decision-making and the articulation of the sociocultural dimension in the State's forestry programmes and projects; and
- Promote the protection and the enhancement of the natural forests that are used as sacred areas or for recreation.

Bioaquatic Resources

- Promote the regulation of human settlements, productive activities and the management of the resources so that they are in harmony with the aquatic environment;
- Orient productive activities so as to maintain aquatic populations on the basis of their natural-replacement parameters;
- Establish sustainable-use zoning based on reliable scientific information and in conformity with the preservation of the biodiversity;
- Foresee and regulate marine pollution due to coastal activities and to land-based sources;
- Establish and develop information systems on the state of aquatic biodiversity;
- Monitor compliance with various international agreements in this field; and
- Promote the coordination and the strengthening of public and private institutions for administering, monitoring and studying aquatic species with a view to conserving, protecting and restoring them.

Soils

- Achieve effective use of soils by land-use regulation;
- Promote investment in soil conservation and recovery and the reconversion of misused lands to agroforestry;
- Orient the financing of productive activities to achieve proper soil use; and
- Promote research and the establishment of options for the conservation and exploitation of the “submarine soil” or continental shelf;

Water and Hydrographic Basins

- Define the institutional and legal framework for the overall management of water;
- Protect water sources and appraise the resource;
- Promote integrated management of large and small water basins with local government and communities;
- Set standards for efficient use of water, especially in the Andean region;
- Determine water-quality criteria, monitor pollution sources and regulate economic and social responsibilities of possible polluters;
- Update the water-resource inventory and establish monitoring systems, data bases and management plans at the national and water-basin levels;
- Promote the prevention of natural water disasters, incorporating risk analysis into land studies, design and planning; and
- Enhance the country's role in the production of fresh water in the context of the global water balance.

Bays and Beaches

- Facilitate the regulation of human settlements and productive activities;
- Establish permanent information and monitoring systems for the inputs, carrying capacity and environmental quality of sensitive coastal areas, such as beaches, bays, estuaries and reefs, that provide inputs to the prevention and mitigation of pollution;
- Promote and apply management plans for areas in which different interests arise (tourism, fisheries, scientific research, and the community), with a view to promoting socio-economic development while protecting the environment; and
- Promote the creation of mechanisms for information, promotion and communication that could stimulate the participation and shared responsibility of the users of these sensitive ecosystems.

Ecotourism

- Promote the identification and development of the potential for tourism in protected areas, protected woodlands, beaches and bays, snow-capped mountains and other scenic areas;
- Stimulate investment in tourism in protected areas and especially in the improvement of services;
- Establish certification procedures for sustainable tourism;
- Develop information and training systems for ecotourism, aimed at strengthening the participation of local populations; and
- Promote reinvestment of the profits from tourism in activities that will sustain protected areas, protected woodlands, beaches and other scenic resources.

Energy

- Reinvest profits from petroleum in new sources of clean energy;
- Progressively reconvert thermoelectric energy production to other forms of clean energy;
- Promote investment in research and technological development of clean energy, with a view to achieving the optimum exploitation of sources of hydroelectric, eolian and solar energy;
- Prohibit petroleum production in very sensitive ecosystems and apply rigorous environmental protection measures;
- Increase the exploration and exploitation of petroleum gas and natural gas;
- Pursue investment in and technological reconversion of the State Petroleum Company, the environmental recovery of degraded areas and improvement in fuel quality;
- Provide incentives for efficient energy use;
- Develop efficient systems of collective transport; and
- Establish and promote the Clean Development Mechanism as an additional incentive to investment.

Control and Improvement of Environmental Quality

The relevant policies of the State of Ecuador are listed here under four headings:

Clean Production

- Promote the use of clean technology in the production and service sectors and the minimization of waste generation;
- Stimulate the production and the consumption of environmentally friendly products;
- Regulate and monitor the use and the final disposal of dangerous chemical wastes;
- Promote, on the basis of proper land use, the establishment of industrial parks; and
- Facilitate the creation of markets for wastes, recycling processes, recovery and reuse of materials.

Transport

- Ensure that cargo transport complies with environmental safety and pollution standards;
- Establish a planning and management system for public transport, nationally and locally;
- Promote the development of a solid, efficient and safe system of public transport, through the application of standards, regulations and incentives;
- Promote the use of technical set-ups and of energy sources that are less polluting, and the systematic improvement of fuel quality;
- Establish a system of monitoring, certification and incentives for the reduction of emissions from mobile sources; and
- Comply with regional agreements on emission standards and the technical design of vehicles.

Infrastructure-building

- Make infrastructure-building compatible with the policies and regulations governing land use;
- Ensure that infrastructure-building complies with the Single Environmental Impact Assessment Regime;
- Diminish, by means of monitoring and control systems at the national and local levels, the risks arising from non-compliance with environmental standards during the building, operational life and abandonment of a piece of infrastructure; and
- Design and develop instruments to ensure timely application of mitigation measures, remedy and/or compensation for the environmental impacts of infrastructure-building.

Cities and Other Human Settlements

- Promote the formulation and execution of local agendas for sustainable development concerted among the national government, local government, the local community and the political partners;
- Support national efforts in favour of investment in sanitation and basic services;
- Establish mechanisms for pollution prevention and control, especially with respect to water and air quality;
- Strengthen actions to establish minibusinesses to handle solid wastes; and
- Support education and training of the general public in resource management for conservation purposes and reduce morbidity-mortality levels due to pollution.

Conservation and Recuperation of Sensitive and Threatened Ecosystems

The policies of the State of Ecuador cover five important ecosystems:

Galápagos

- Establish controls on immigration, by applying the Special Management Law for the Conservation of the Galápagos;
- Establish a system of inspection, quarantine and eradication to control the flux of introduced species;
- Provide the local and tourist populations with basic environmental sanitation services—drinking water, waste removal, garbage treatment;
- Support the sustainable development of tourism and its associated businesses under the management of the local community;
- Promote the sustainable exploitation of the marine resources and fishery;
- Strengthen environmental awareness and the cultural identity of the Archipelago's population; and
- Promote organic agriculture to contribute to food self-reliance of the local and tourist populations.

Mangroves

- Promote the improvement of mangrove environmental services, particularly as regards biodiversity, erosion and salination of the marine coastal fringe;
- Authorize, under the legal norms and municipal ordinances, the cutting of mangroves, especially that for the construction of shrimp boats and for urban growth;
- Promote the sustainable use of mangroves, granting concessions to the local population in certain areas; and
- Promote the development of small community businesses to increase production and reduce the impact of human activities on the mangrove resources.

Wetlands

- Set priorities for the conservation of wetlands according to the needs and socio-economic conditions of the country, taking into account their sensitivity and the environmental services they provide;
- Prevent the overexploitation of the wetland ecosystems (drainage and transformation);
- Protect the wetland ecosystems, which serve as refuges and resting places for migratory species;
- Promote research and the diffusion of national information on wetlands; and
- Use the framework of the Ramsar Convention to promote the conservation of wetlands of great natural value.

Andean Plains

- Create a special regime for the management and protection of the plains;
- Develop the proper use of the soil in the plains;
- Promote sustainable and economically viable activities to improve the Andean plains ecosystem for the local community;
- Stimulate the local population to get involved in projects on the reintroduction of native species of flora and fauna and on the modification of present extensive-grazing practices;
- Provide incentives for the adequate appraisal of the environmental services offered by this ecosystem, especially its role in the retention of water and carbon dioxide; and
- Discourage the setting-up of plantations of exotic species.

Arid and Drought-prone Areas

- Develop, with the participation of the local stakeholders, overall management and capacity-building plans for the sustainable management of the natural resources of the arid and drought-prone areas;
- Encourage efficiency and savings in the use of the natural resources, especially water;
- Promote the development of economically profitable and environmentally sustainable activities that allow exploitation of the productive potential of arid and drought-prone areas;
- Promote the study of human activities that lead to deterioration of the productivity of arid and drought-prone areas; and
- Pursue the fulfillment of the requirements of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.



Regions Requiring Special Attention

There are three major regions of Ecuador to which the State of Ecuador is giving special attention.

Amazonia

Ecuadorean Amazonia constitutes 40 per cent of Ecuador's land area. It is the main source of fresh water and contains most of the country's forests. It is of strategic national, regional and even global importance in the absorption of atmospheric carbon dioxide. Amazonia has a high biological and ethnic diversity. However, it also has sensitive ecosystems and lacks soils suitable for agriculture. It has suffered considerable environmental impacts from colonization and hydrocarbon extraction. In spite of some progress in environmental management, Amazonia is a site of social and environmental conflicts, and of great changes in the life styles of its ancestral populations and of the new colonizers. The relevant policies of the State of Ecuador are to:

- pursue proper land use in the region;
- promote participatory plans for the management and sustainable use of the natural resources;
- pursue harmonization of the situation of the indigenous peoples, and their ancestral rights to the land, with the protected areas, so as to improve their standard of living, their relation to the land and their technical knowledge;
- promote investment and the community management of the forests;
- support the transfer of alternative technologies appropriate to the region's typical ecosystems;
- promote agroforestry and related grazing programmes; and
- promote programmes that contribute to creating income and employment by the processing of natural products, non-ligneous production and ecotourism.

Esmeraldas

The sensitivity of rainforest and mangrove ecosystems, the serious environmental degradation, pollution and insufficient sanitation have combined to produce a new situation marked by the extreme poverty of a large part of the population and its feeble participation in the management of development. The policies of the State of Ecuador in this respect are to:

- combine efforts to deal with the needs of the population, based on planned exploitation of the natural resources and the strengthening of the management capacity of local institutions;
- promote proper land use in the Province, taking into account the vulnerability of the ecosystems, the cultural and social complexity of the population and the impact of mining;
- control indiscriminate exploitation of the forests and stimulate forestation and the recovery of degraded areas;
- develop a system in the Province for the prevention of man-made disasters and for mitigating the impact of natural disasters;
- conserve and manage the mangrove ecosystem with the participation of the local communities;
- conserve the Chocó Geographical Microregion so as to protect the rich biodiversity of the tropical rainforest;
- promote ecotourism and facilitate trade in the frontier zone; and
- control and reduce pollution levels due to industrial and domestic wastes.

El Cóndor Binational Park

This Park has a special significance in the country's history: it symbolizes the transformation of the frontier with Peru from a zone of division and conflict into a zone of integration, understanding and cooperation to maintain peace, security and life in all its forms. The policies of the State of Ecuador in this respect are to:

- develop the culture of peace by strengthening intercultural relations and guaranteeing the conservation of the biodiversity and the continuity of ecological processes;
- promote wide, transparent and democratic participation of the indigenous peoples, the communities, local government and other stakeholders in the overall management of the Park and its zone of influence;
- promote joint Ecuadorean–Peruvian initiatives in the design, negotiation and execution of alternatives for the sustainable use of El Cóndor Park in the two countries; and
- stimulate the organization of networks for collaboration and mutual help between the stakeholders of Ecuador and Peru in the area of the Park.

The Viability of the Strategy

National Progress in Environmental Matters

Given their horizontal character, environmental policies have an impact on all the other aspects of development strategy. So it is necessary that they be incorporated into national and local agendas by the various public and private partners concerned with environmental management in all its main dimensions: social, economic, political and cultural. On this basis, Ecuador has made important advances that allow confidence in the viability of the proposals contained in the Environmental Strategy.

First, there has been a steady increase in public awareness of environmental problems. Then, a growing disposition of the partners concerned with national development to concert their actions with respect to the environment. Ecuador has also made significant advances in the establishment of constitutional and legal norms for the conservation and sustainable use of the natural resources.

Besides the constitutional dispositions (Article 86), Ecuador has had, for more than two decades, specific environmental laws, notably the Law on the Prevention and Control of Pollution and the Law on Water. These two Laws are being updated. The Law on Environmental Management has been approved, and Laws on Forestry and on Biodiversity are being drafted and discussed.

The creation of the Ministry of Environment has facilitated relations between the national government and the other social partners in environmental management.

Environmental themes have been introduced into basic education and university research programmes and are an important concern of the media. And environmental parameters are increasingly being taken into account in production. The globalization of the economy, with its demands for export-product quality, contributes to these efforts.

Criteria of Viability

The criteria of viability are given under four main headings.

Social viability: Improvement in the standard of living in Ecuador depends mainly on the conservation and the sustainable management of the country's natural capital. Therefore, adequate management of the renewable resources and the reduction of risks due to pollution must allow an increase in efforts to guarantee food safety, improve health, increase employment and protect and promote wealth and cultural diversity. Sustainable development must achieve social equity in the distribution and use of the country's natural resources, so the Strategy requires the organization of land use for production, conservation and human settlements, and the development of know-how and production methods for the sustainable development of the ancestral peoples. Moreover, knowledge of the environmental problems, the principles and proposals of the Strategy must be made a significant and permanent element of education, public communications and research.

Political viability: Ecuador must urgently develop alliances amongst its various stakeholders to achieve consensus with respect to sustainable development, through agreements between civil groups and

governmental entities, aimed at facilitating public participation in decision-making. Environmental policies must establish shared responsibility by the various stakeholders and long-term security, while promoting self-management and social cooperation in the design of policies and actions for the conservation and the sustainable management of the resources.

Economic viability: This can be measured by the promotion of ways of exploiting the resources so as to allow the accounting of sustainable management and the options for profitability with which to promote investment, employment and an equitable distribution of the resources. The Strategy therefore proposes the establishment of environmental businesses based on the possibilities offered by the Clean Development Mechanism and on other related incentives. This requires the establishment of systems and networks to make known the impact of production on the environment, the technological alternatives for clean production and the opportunities for innovative investment in the sustainable exploitation of the natural resources.

Production investment and foreign trade must incorporate the environmental component and take advantage of the opportunities offered by the certification systems.

The Strategy therefore promotes the equitable social and regional distribution of access to opportunities for the sustainable use of the natural resources, especially in areas with populations with a low standard of living. It also stresses the decisive importance of investment in scientific and technological research, the results of which may offer economically viable alternatives in production.

To render viable the new model of development pursued by the Strategy, it is necessary that: the costs of prevention and environmental degradation be incorporated into the costs of production; investment incentives be created for sustainable management of the resources; the certification systems be consolidated to improve the efficacy and the competitiveness of national production; the market for internal and external environmental services be developed; a system of guarantees and securities for potentially polluting and degradative activities be set up; and the self-management of conservation areas be promoted through ecotourism

and the commercialization of environmental services. The Strategy therefore requires the fair valuation of the natural renewable and non-renewable resources which, at present, are undervalued or assigned no value at all (e.g., water, scenic beauty).

The national priority to be given to conservation and sustainable management of the natural resources should be expressed in the national budgets and in the organization of the agrarian and census regimes, with a view to developing alternative sources of income for national and local environmental management.

Institutional viability: Environmental management must be backed by a permanent coordination of the concerned institutions, by the widest possible public participation, by the submission of accounts and by decentralizing the administration of natural resources to local government, businesses, community and other non-governmental organizations, in a context of clear-cut policies, norms and follow-up and control mechanisms. The Strategy therefore promotes the design and establishment of the Decentralized Environmental Management System, taking into account the experience gained by local government, community organizations, business leaders, non-governmental organizations and educational institutions. The System will comprise all State institutions competent in this field and will be the mechanism for the execution of policies and for overseeing compliance with legal and technical standards.



Viability of the Strategy, Stakeholders and Ongoing Actions

The Strategy supposes a long-term policy of the State. The specific objectives and policies proposed for each field covered by the Strategy synthesize the principal national problems, needs and urgencies.

The pursuit of agreements and alliances needed to carry out the policies and guidelines in the Strategy calls for the creation of opportunities for dialogue amongst Ecuador's various social and political sectors. The Ministry of Environment is developing various mechanisms, such as fora on clean industry, fisheries and Amazonia, for increasing awareness of the problems, policies and urgent actions needed for the country's sustainable development.

Increased public awareness and a consequent commitment to meet the challenges posed by the Strategy will facilitate the achievement of sustainable development. Hence the importance of making the proposals in the Strategy widely known, discussed and appropriated by the various stakeholders. The means of social communication therefore play an important role in increasing awareness and civic culture, by actively directing public debate towards the main lines of the Strategy.

The Ministry of Environment is developing, jointly with other Ministries, various programmes related to the policies in the Strategy. It is also preparing an agenda for governmental actions deriving from the Strategy and for the consequent inter-institutional mechanisms.

Local government is central to environmental management. A major part of the planning, establishment of norms, control and monitoring contained in the Strategy's policies, as well as the provision of basic environmental services, are under local government management. The Ministry of Environment provides technical assistance, training, organization and design of local environmental management. Social participation and decentralization of environmental management are channelled by local government action.

The achievement of the objectives of the Strategy requires the full participation of all stakeholders. Thus, the indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian communities are key stakeholders in the policies on the management of the forests, the plains and Amazonia. So are the local communities, in the policies on mangroves, bays and beaches, and soils. The industrial sector plays a key role in clean-industry policies. The fishery sector does likewise with respect to living aquatic resources. The farming and cattle-raising sector plays the key role in land use, export products and the internal market in a certification regime. The tourist sector deals with ecotourism policies. The construction sector is concerned with infrastructure development. The transport sector and the automotive industry deal with environmental policies for transport.

The action of non-governmental environmental organizations has been of extraordinary importance for the country. They have pioneered in the field of public awareness of environmental problems, and have contributed greatly to ensuring that sustainable development becomes part of the national strategy.

Children, youth and women are particularly sensitive to environmental issues, and the Strategy's objectives and policies will find support in them, so long as the Strategy leads to sustainable development able to guarantee a better quality of life in the mother-child relationship and the prospect of a more worthy life for the young.

Economic growth will cease sooner rather than later unless attention is paid to its environmental implications. The natural capital, which is the basis of production, has already been degraded and will become completely exhausted unless the ways in which it is used are radically changed. The various attitudes and cultures discussed in this chapter are not, however, sufficient to ensure a change in the development model; investment is also needed in alternative production technology, as are the economic agents who can spot good business opportunities that are also environmentally friendly. And the policies in both fields—economic and environmental—must take into account their mutual impacts.

The Strategy aims not only to change the model for development, but also to bring about a cultural change which, in the long term, will have to be radical. The understanding that all forms of life constitute a network of interdependent elements necessary to human well-being must be pursued. The wealth of insight due to the ethnic and cultural diversity of Ecuador must also be recognized. Full valuation must be made of the nature of which we are part and must preserve to ensure our own survival. And a new ethic of solidarity with present and future generations must also be pursued.

Financing Sustainable Development

The implementation of the Strategy will require considerable financial resources. These will come from the State of Ecuador, from the reinvestment of profits derived from the execution of the policies foreseen in the Strategy and from international cooperation. The Government of Ecuador, and particularly the Ministry of the Environment, consider it appropriate to systematize the contribution that international cooperation makes to the implementation of the Strategy. The Strategy therefore foresees the progressive internalization of the environmental costs and benefits of productive activities, and the gradual reduction of the financial dependence of the actions taken. This comprehends the principle of national appropriation, in the long term, of the actions taken in the present with the help of the international community.

International Obligations and Cooperation

At the Galápagos meeting, at which the Strategy was presented, the importance of international support for the conduct of environmental policies was made clear. The sustainable development of the countries of the various regions of the planet was recognized as a common purpose of international organizations, in view of the global repercussions of extreme poverty and of environmental degradation.

The Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development of Ecuador incorporates the objectives and principles developed by the international community on the environmental question as the universal problem of our time. In this regard, Ecuador's foreign policy is based on

the pursuit of the objectives of its internal policy and the defence of national interests in this field. These are based on the principles in the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972), the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, as well as Agenda 21 and the other conventions signed at the “Earth Summit” (Rio de Janeiro, 1992).

Especially important to Ecuador is the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), since it monitors the execution of Agenda 21. Ecuador is also especially interested in the application of the norms and principles of the Biodiversity Convention, and in the respect and regulation of the norms embodied in Decision 391 of the Andean Community on access to genetic resources.

The State’s obligations under international agreements and conventions on the environment, come mainly from the following (besides those already mentioned): the Principles and Guidelines for Ecologically Responsible Forest Use (1995); the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (New York, 1992), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar, Iran, 1971; amended, Paris, 1982; Regina, 1994); the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Washington DC, 1973); the Convention to Combat Desertification (Paris, 1994); the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (1987); the London Guidelines; the Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (Rotterdam, 1998); and the Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal (Basle, 1989).

*Based on a paper
submitted by Ecuador*

Assessment of Sustainable Development Strategies—Jamaica

Introduction

Sustainable development is Jamaica's overall long-term objective. The policy behind this objective is to achieve economic, social and physical development that is fully cognizant of the need to protect and conserve the environment, while facilitating development. Linkage of the environmental, economic and social systems by a process of policy integration and action has therefore been established in an effort to achieve sustainable development.

The major environmental issues being faced by Jamaica are inadequate sewage disposal, improper management of solid waste, degradation of watershed and marine ecosystems, deforestation and destruction of biodiversity. These problems are exacerbated by other land-based activities, such as unplanned settlements, rapid urbanization and the attendant population pressures. There are also increased living costs and vulnerability, which are affecting the nation, especially the disadvantaged and low-income earners. These factors collectively bring pressure to bear on the terrestrial and marine environments.

Various actions are being taken by the Government to address the environmental problems of the country. Although a Natural Resource Conservation Department existed in Jamaica, the Government reinforced its position

in 1991 by promulgating the Natural Resources Conservation Act and creating the Natural Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA). This authority has the mandate to develop, monitor and enforce environmental legislation and regulations, as well as the overall management of the island's natural resources. This law is the first in Jamaica to bind Crown and Government.

As part of its mandate and in keeping with the requirements of Agenda 21 and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Programme of Action, the NRCA has instituted an environmental permitting and licensing system to monitor and minimize the negative impacts of development and industrial activity on the physical environment. This monitoring is done through the use of such environmental tools as environmental impact assessments, environmental management systems and environmental audits.



Major National Activities Leading to Sustainable Development

Policy Initiatives

Government has rationalized its policy framework and used a participatory process to produce a number of policy documents for the pursuit of this sustainable development initiative, while incorporating the goals and objectives of Agenda 21. Chief among these are:

- The Jamaica National Environmental Action Plan (JANEAP) (1995, 1996, 1997, 1998);
- State of the Environment Report (1997; earlier version: 1995-1996);
- National Land Policy (1996);
- National Industrial Policy (1996);
- Beach Policy;
- Mangroves Policy;
- Seagrass Policy;
- Policy for Jamaica's System of Protected Areas; and
- National Watershed Policy and a Programmatic Framework (1999).

The Jamaica National Environmental Action Plan

The Jamaica National Environmental Action Plan is the principal policy document aimed at achieving sustainable development. It is based on a three-year cycle, with annual updates, and is informed by the State of the Environment Report, in an effort to set targets and develop indicators of progress. At each triennial update of the document, an effort is made to make it more comprehensive in terms of the spheres of activity it addresses.

Review of Legal Basis for Sustainable Development

The Sustainable Development Council of Jamaica (SDC-J) was established in 1996 in the framework of the National Planning Council (as a component of a Caribbean Regional Capacity 21 Project administered by CARICAD). The SDC-J Secretariat, as a consequence of the importance attached to the legal basis for sustainable development activities, played a lead role in planning a Seminar on Sustainable Development Laws and International Treaty Obligations, which was held in mid-1998. The Seminar's objectives were to:

- review existing environmental, resource-management and planning laws and regulations and identify deficiencies or shortcomings within the existing legal framework;
- review commitments under international treaties where national legislation needs to be established;
- prioritize areas where national legislation or regulations need to be revised or developed to address identified shortcomings or deficiencies;
- identify administrative, legal and other criteria that should be included in priority legislation; and
- discuss and design an action plan to facilitate the development and drafting of priority national legislation or regulations.

Major recommendations made at this Seminar were:

- There is the need for increased rationalization across various ministries and agencies and for stemming the fragmentation of the laws;
- Policies and legislation need to be harmonized; the fragmentation of responsibility across the various ministries and agencies must be urgently addressed; and
- Legislative impact assessments should be conducted before undertaking the drafting of new legislation.

Following the seminar, efforts have been made to introduce a Regulatory Impact-Assessment System to improve compliance by the development of a "team" approach engaging members drawn from legal, regulatory and resource-management agencies, as well as civil society.

Jamaica's Sustainable Development Network Programme

The Jamaica Sustainable Development Network Programme was established in November 1997 and is part of a global initiative launched by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in response to Agenda 21, which articulated the need for improved information dissemination to support sustainable development. The programme is geared to facilitating communication between users and suppliers of sustainable development information in developing countries.

The National Land Policy

The National Land Policy is another critical policy that was tabled in July 1996. It recognized the finite nature of Jamaica's land resources and the need to correct decades of indiscriminate use and poor development practices. The Government coordinated the preparation of the policy by employing a broad-based participatory and consultative mechanism. Consideration was given to the terrestrial areas, some 10,991 square kilometres, and territorial waters, approximately 25 times the size of Jamaica, as well as to the atmospheric and subsurface areas.

The Policy recognized that, in addition to other factors, the failure to adopt appropriate rural and urban land policies and poor land administration and management practices were primary causes of inequity, poverty and inadequate economic development. The goals and objectives of the Policy are to reduce the causes of degradation; ensure the sustainable productive and equitable development, use and management of the country's natural and man-made resources; and promote comprehensive and integrated development in urban and rural areas alike. Measures to achieve these goals and objectives include equity in access to and distribution of land, economic diversification and the development of centres of growth, as appropriate.

The Policy aims to complement socioeconomic development plans and programmes, while challenging and seeking to remove inefficient, onerous and outdated legal, administrative, management and other barriers. The National Land Policy is being implemented through a

variety of projects and programmes, including the establishment of a national computerized and networked geographic information system. Other activities being undertaken are: programmes for making land affordable and accessible to the majority of persons for a variety of uses; a participatory approach to development planning; a local government reform programme; a land administration and management programme; and incentives for property development.

Environmental Treaties and Agreements

Jamaica is presently a party to the following multilateral environmental treaties and agreements, which are concerned with global issues, such as biodiversity, climate change, international waters and ozone depletion:

- International Convention on the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (London, 1973; ratification: 13 June 1991);
- Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone (Geneva, 1958; accession: 8 October 1965);
- Convention on the Continental Shelf (Geneva, 1958; entry into force: 30 September 1962; accession: 8 October 1965);
- Convention on the High Seas (Geneva, 1958; entry into force: 30 September 1962; accession: October 1965);
- Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources of the High Seas (Geneva, 1958; accession: April 1964; entry into force: March 1996);
- Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (as amended; London, Mexico City, Moscow [Washington], 1972; ratification: March 1991);
- Protocol of 1978 to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution From Ships (London, 1973; ratification: 13 June 1991);
- United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Montego Bay, 1982; ratification: 21 March 1983);

- Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena de Indias, 1983; ratification: 1 May 1987);
- Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Oil Spills in the Wider Caribbean Region (entry into force: 1 May 1987);
- Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer (Vienna, 1985; accession: 31 March 1993; entry into force: 29 June 1993);
- London Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (London, 1990; ratification: 31 March 1993);
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (New York, 1992; instrument of accession deposited: 6 January 1995; effective 5 April 1995);
- Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro, 1992; instrument of accession deposited: 6 January 1995; effective: 5 April 1995);
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES; accession: 23 April 1997; entry into force: 22 July 1997);
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitats (Ramsar Convention; accession: 7 October 1997; entry into force: 7 February 1998);
- The Copenhagen Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (accession: 12 November 1997; entry into force: 16 March 1998);
- Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (accession: 10 September 1997); and
- Cartagena Convention (ratified: 1999).

National Council on Sustainable Development

In Jamaica, the National Planning Council (NPC) has a broad mandate and the supporting institutional infrastructure built up over a number of years. It has the ability to take high-level strategic positions, to make it the most favoured candidate to integrate sustainable development issues into planning and to ensure that the functions of the National Council on Sustainable Development (NCSD) are carried out. The NPC was established in 1989 with the mandate “to bring together the nation’s top policy- and decision-makers from the private sector and management, trade unions, labour and Government to contribute to the formulation of economic policies and programmes, to assess economic performance, to identify measures designed to achieve broad-based development and growth in productivity, employment and the national product.” The NPC’s primary role is advisory.

The rationale and mandate for National Councils on Sustainable Development (or equivalent bodies) derive from the agreements reached at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) and the United Nations Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados, 1994). The Regional Capacity 21 Project ended in March 1998, and the activities of the Council over the period 1996–1998 were evaluated. Based on the evaluation, a plan of action involving the repositioning of the SDC-J has been developed. The SDC-J is being re-established within a national programme that has, as its main focus, capacity development for environmental management.

The National Environmental-Education Action Plan for Sustainable Development, 1998–2010

In January 1998, the multistakeholder National Environmental Education Committee (NEEC), which is coordinated by the NRCA and supported by the Government of Jamaica and the CIDA/ENACT Programme, completed the development of a National Environmental Education Action Plan for Sustainable Development, 1998–2010. The NEEC employed a participatory planning framework in the development and implementation phases of the plan. The National Environmental Education Action Plan for Sustainable Development focuses on identifying education, awareness and the environment, within a context of efforts to achieve sustainable development and to develop citizens equipped to participate in a sustainable society. In embracing environment and development, the Plan simultaneously identifies strategic environmental and developmental priorities for immediate attention, while creating room to set long-term goals and to develop collateral approaches with other economic and social initiatives seeking to move Jamaican society towards a sustainable future.



Participation of Civil Society and Economic Organizations in Planning/Decision-making

Civil society and economic organizations are accorded an opportunity to influence policy direction and implementation through fora such as:

- the island-wide “Live and Direct” meetings, which are face-to-face discussions with the Prime Minister and Parliamentarians in Jamaica, organized in each parish of the island with the citizens;
- public consultations to get inputs from a wide range of stakeholders on draft policy documents, such as: *The National Land Policy of Jamaica*, *A Beach Policy for Jamaica* and *A Policy for Jamaica’s System of Protected Areas*
- National Round Table Consultations that bring together representatives from all sectors of the society to discuss policy directions, projects, programmes and suggestions from the public; and
- the establishment of task forces and steering committees, and the involvement of the private sector, NGOs etc. to assist in the preparation of a number of government projects and programmes aimed at achieving sustainable development.

The ENACT Initiative

The Environmental Action Programme (ENACT), funded by the Government of Jamaica and the Canadian International Development Agency, is sensitizing the private sector to the importance of environmental protection, through the following projects:

- Awareness, Education and Training in Environmental Management;
- the Development of Environmental Codes of Ethics and Codes of Practice for Professional and Other Practitioners in the Private Sector; and
- the Formation of a Private-Sector Sustainable Development Forum.

Review of Other NCSDs and Jamaican Organizations

The review of studies of other National Councils by the ISP (Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision-making in Sustainable Development) and CARICAD team and an analysis of Jamaican organizations, to determine the most practical structure and position for the SDC-J for it to be most effective, are now complete. The Ministry of Environment and Housing, as the responsible Ministry, is now in the process of consultation and debate to achieve consensus on this revised and redesigned SDC-J. Activities slated for early 2000 include:

- consultation with the original Council members to discuss the lessons learned and the constraints and limitations that were encountered by the SDC-J between 1996 and 1998;
- a meeting to discuss the concepts of sustainable development and the SDC-J with influential stakeholders in all sectors of Jamaican society (public, private, civil society); and
- the development of appropriate indicators of sustainability related to ecosystems and to social and economic matters.

The Jamaican State-of-the-Environment Reports, which have incorporated indicators developed by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development and the Earth Council, have been particularly useful in measuring progress, identifying “hot spots” and in targeting the limited resources (financial and human) available for sustainable development programmes.

Links with Subregional or Regional Strategy/Action-Plan Framework

The SDC-J has established contact with the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development and the Earth Council and remains in close contact with the CARICAD initiative. It is anticipated that, as a part of the Caribbean-wide CARICOM/EU CARIFORUM project, CARICAD will be revising its facilitating work with the SDC-J.

At the hemispheric level, Jamaica has been linked with the OAS's Inter-American Strategy for Public Participation in Environmental and Sustainable Development Decision-making in the Americas, which is seeking to develop a hemispheric network of sustainable development initiatives.

This initiative is managed by the OAS, whose aim is to identify best practices and lessons learned from public participation in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Strategy proposes to distill lessons learned and, from the exercise, produce a series of recommendations for the institutionalization of public participation in sustainable development policies in the region. To oversee the work of the OAS on this project, and to recommend courses of action for the production of the recommendations, a Project Advisory Committee has been assembled.

*Based on a paper submitted by
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Report of Mexico on Sustainable Development

Introduction

The Mexican Government has assumed as a priority the need to promote development that preserves the environment and rationally exploits the natural resources to achieve the objectives of equity and social well-being, taking into account not only the interests of Mexicans today, but also those of future generations. This commitment is expressed in the National Development Plan 1995–2000, which defines the governmental strategy and establishes as one of its principal objectives the achievement of vigorous and sustainable economic growth.

In the preparation of a National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) a basis has been laid for the transition to sustainable development and some important advances have been made in the following fields: institutional and legal reforms; the adoption of new focuses, strategies and policies; the development of environmental regulation; an increasingly decentralized environmental management; an increase in governmental and social capacity at all levels of government; and the creation of new conditions for social participation.

The Secretariat of Environment, Natural Resources and Fisheries (SEMARNAP), created at the beginning of the present administration (December 1994), is the body responsible for guiding governmental actions towards sustainable development; it has done this through the following strategic guidelines:

- *Combine synergetically protection and conservation of the environment and the natural resources with sustainable and more diversified use;*
- *Undertake actions and programmes on the use of the resources that favour equity and overcome poverty;*
- *Prioritize the development of environmental regulation, especially through norms and actions of a preventive character, and through education to bring about changes in systems of production and patterns of consumption;*
- *Develop co-responsibility and social participation; and*
- *Articulate an active participation in international fora and agreements with the design of policies and the definition of internal priorities.*



Relationship with Development Plans and the System of Norms

Besides the link between sustainable development and economic growth, established in the National Development Plan, various sectoral programmes have been developed from the standpoint of sustainable development: on fisheries and aquaculture; on water, forestry and soil resources; and on the environment. They have the following main components:

- protection, conservation and restoration of the environment and natural resources;
- sustainable management and use of natural resources and of fish stocks;
- inspection, monitoring and control;
- education, training and diffusion of information;
- technological research and development; and
- institutional planning and development.

Similarly, special programmes have been elaborated and implemented to deal with specific problems:

- Regarding protected natural areas, existing programmes are being consolidated and the area in a protection status is being progressively extended. At present, there are 114 protected natural areas, with an area approaching 12.4 million hectares, terrestrial as well as marine.
- In the reduction and safe handling of dangerous residues, the priorities established in the Programme on the Minimization and Integrated Management of Dangerous Industrial Wastes are: the development of a system of standards; the preparation of regional inventories and inventories for some industrial sectors, together with their respective manuals to promote reduction in the generation of wastes; the modernization of the systems of direct regulation; and the promotion of integrated services and infrastructure for the proper handling of wastes by the Integrated Centres for the Management and Use of Industrial Wastes.

- The policies and programmes relative to the exploitation of forests (for wood and non-wood products), reforestation and commercial plantation, embodied in the forestry-development programmes, and to the development of commercial forestry plantations and of reforestation, have acquired priority in budgetary terms. Above all, they have been reoriented to include environmental determinants and a new focus on the exploitation of the country's big species diversity. Through such policies and programmes, forestry areas, particularly temperate woods, dry and humid tropical woodlands, and surfaces covered with arid-zone vegetation, have been covered, thus helping to halt deforestation and to recover tree-growing areas.
- Regarding air quality, programmes have been drawn up to improve it in the country's main atmospheric basins, and improvements are reported annually. Also, various official Mexican environmental-pollution standards have been developed.
- Under the Programme on Drinking Water, Sewerage and Drainage in Urban Zones, direct works have been carried out and the provision of basic services has been increased, the main agents being the local, municipal and state operating bodies. The policy and the actions undertaken have given preference to the drainage of the main water basin and promotion of the efficient use of water, and drainage-basin authorities have been established involving a more participatory administration.
- Under the regional sustainable development programmes, a decentralized and participatory regional planning model is being promoted, by which it has been possible to give attention to priority regions in marginal parts of the countryside, making rational use of the local natural resources. These regional programmes have contributed to overcoming poverty by promoting growth in production and augmenting the income of the population in the areas of concern.
- Regarding land surveys, a General Ecological Survey Map on a scale of 1:4 millions has been made, in which the national territory has been described with respect to natural resources, production activities and social aspects, making it feasible to incorporate soil-use policies and environmental variables in the design of federal land-use projects.

Various sectoral programmes already incorporate the environmental dimension into their policies and strategies: education, health, energy, agriculture, among others.

Article 25 of the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico was recently modified to show that the State assumes the direction of national development so as to ensure that it is integrated and sustainable.

Institutional Framework and Organic Structure for the Execution and Monitoring of Sustainable Development Strategies

With the aim of consolidating and promoting a policy for the use of the natural resources and the protection of the environment, which would contribute to improving the quality of life of the population and impede deterioration and exhaustion of ecosystems, the present administration combined under a single institution (SEMARNAP) the critical attributions needed for the transition to sustainable development.

It has a structure that covers the policies, the programmes and the administrative resources for forests, fishery resources, the conservation and recovery of soils, the environmental management with respect to federal laws and the planning of environmental policies. It also has five decentralized entities: the National Water Commission, the National Institute of Ecology, the Federal Attorney's Office for the Protection of the Environment, the National Fisheries Institute, and the Mexican Institute of Water Technology.

Intersecretariat commissions and committees have also been created for the coordinated execution of sustainable development strategies. Among them is the Committee on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which prepared the National Programme of Climate Action; and the National Biodiversity Commission, which coordinates the elaboration of these particular aspects of the National Strategy.

The efforts to integrate reforestation policies are important, in which various public-sector institutions, state governments and representatives of private enterprise have been brought together.

Procedure for the Adoption of Decisions and Consultations

In the last five years, the creation and consolidation of effective spaces for social participation at different levels have been promoted in Mexico, with a view to enabling public participation in planning, adoption and monitoring of environmental policy. Since 1995, there have been a National Consultative Council on Sustainable Development and four Regional Councils, with the following functions:

- to advise on the design, application and evaluation of national environmental strategies and use of natural resources;
- to propose and make recommendations on policies, programmes, studies and specific actions;
- to evaluate periodically the results of the programmes on the environment and the use of resources;
- to analyze the matters and specific cases that SEMARNAP may submit to its consideration;
- to promote public consultation, deliberation and cooperation on the necessary national strategies for sustainable development;
- to elaborate recommendations to improve relevant laws, regulations and procedures;
- to promote or carry out studies that contribute to the design, improvement or evaluation of SEMARNAP's policies; and
- to give its views on the guidelines that should govern SEMARNAP's participation in international fora.

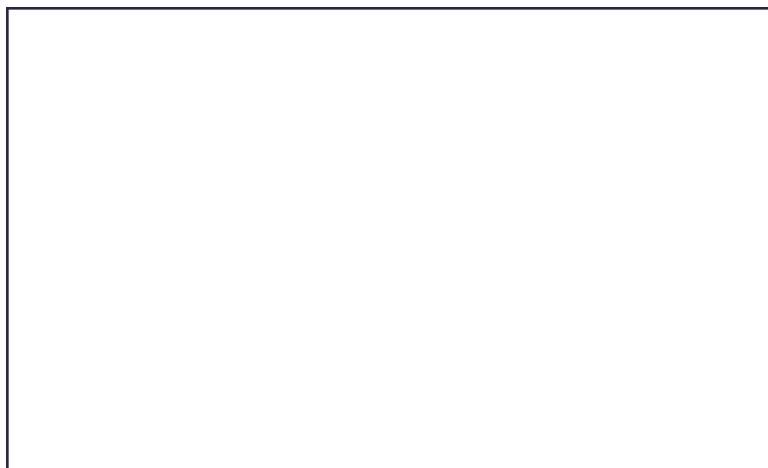
The National Consultative Council on Sustainable Development comprises 32 representatives from: the Regional Consultative Councils; the Congress of the Union; some federal offices; centres and institutions of higher education; business and social organizations and NGOs; and SEMARNAP itself. For its work, it depends on

commissions on the various themes and priorities of environmental policy, such as: legislation, education, science and technology, Agenda 21, sustainable development and economic policy, poverty, social policy and natural resources, the Treaty on Free Trade and financing.

Each Regional Consultative Council on Sustainable Development is made up of a state representative from each of the following sectors: academic, social, entrepreneurial, governmental and NGOs.

Moreover, there are also the Technical Consultative Councils for forestry, restoration and conservation of soils and of national protected areas; Drainage Basin Councils, for the integrated management of water resources; the Consultative Council for Environmental Standardization; and Metropolitan Area Councils for the management of air quality.

Among the most relevant themes that have been successfully dealt with, with the participation of the Consultative Councils, are: the modification of the General Law on Ecological Balance and Environmental Protection; the projects on the saltpetre beds of San Ignacio, Laguna de Términos and Canal Intracostero; the elaboration of the Frontier XXI Programme; the project on the delivery of the La Venta-Colegio Militar highway in Mexico City; the environmental problem of the Presa de Silva in Guanajuato; and the problems in the Gulf of Mexico and the Atasta Peninsula.



Factors of Success or of Difficulty in the Execution of the NSSD or its Equivalent

Factors of Success

Since Mexico participated in and assumed the commitments of the Earth Summit, the planning of development and its institutional structure have been reinforced and developed with the aim of moving towards sustainable development. In this sense, the following elements can be identified as contributing positively and explicitly to this objective:

- the creation of SEMARNAP, integrating the functions of environmental protection, monitoring and standard-setting in the ordered exploitation of the natural resources; before this, these functions were dispersed in several Secretariats;
- recognition of the need to move towards the sustainable development embodied in the National Development Plan 1995–2000, and in several of the sectoral medium-term and special programmes, thus helping in the construction of a general institutional scenario favourable to the principles and actions of sustainable development;
- institutional evolution in terms of the standard-setting and regulatory framework, and the development of instruments;
- new visions of and instruments for: conservation—use, competition—clean industry, public health—economic purposes;
- advances in the establishment and definition of the extent of the private-sector responsibility in the field of environmental impacts, as well as in the use and exploitation of the natural resources;
- the creation of Consultative Councils on Sustainable Development; and
- the modifications of the General Law on Ecological Balance and Environmental Protection, and of other laws.

Factors of Difficulty

- Although there have been important changes in governmental management with respect to the incorporation of environmental themes in its programmes and activities, it is not yet possible to speak of assimilation into work agendas and into the political debate.
- The social and economic evaluation of the importance of environmental services is still rare.
- Hitherto, the environmental question has not represented a priority for the municipal and local governments.
- The social interaction spaces aimed at the execution of sustainable development policies are incipient.
- Regarding financing, environmental questions are at the bottom of budgetary priorities.
- The strategies, activities and actions contained in Agenda 21 require the integration of public policies; however, the advances and efforts notwithstanding, sectoral views persist.
- The design of a national sustainable development strategy requires more committed and responsible decisions at the highest levels of Mexican government, of the private sector and of society as a whole.



How is Mexico's NSSD Linked to the Framework of Strategies or Subregional or Regional Action Plans?

During the first five years of the 1990's, Mexico and the United States of America were partners in the Free Trade Treaty, in a binational process of coordination of plans, formulation of policies, establishment of priorities and actions in the field of environment, which is reflected in the signature of a parallel agreement on environment called the North American Environmental Cooperation Agreement.

One of the most important consequences of this Agreement was the creation of the North American Commission on Environmental Cooperation, in 1994, whose mission is to promote cooperation and citizen participation in the conservation, protection and environmental improvement of North America, thus becoming the only regional organization responsible for the environment based on increased economic integration in the region.

The work of this Community addresses fundamental aspects of the environment, economy and trade, conservation of biodiversity, pollutants and health, environmental legislation and policies; it proposes projects in these fields, and supports the goals of the Cooperation Agreement, among which are the promotion of sustainable development based on cooperation and mutual support for the economic and environmental policies.

In compliance with the agreements reached at the Tuxtla II Meeting in San Jose, Costa Rica, in 1996, Mexico participated in the action plan subscribed to with the other governments of Central America to develop the Regional System of Protected Natural Areas, and took part in the project via the protected natural areas of the states of Campeche, Chiapas, Quintana Roo, Tabasco and Yucatán. In this project, the regional criteria for the development of integrated strategies for the protection and conservation of the biodiversity were unified, with the participation of all the bodies concerned with the management of natural resources.

Mexico also participated in the process being promoted by the Organization of American States for the formulation of the Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision-making in Sustainable Development.

Specific Complementary Plans or Ideas for the Future

The challenges implicit in the implementation of policy on the environment and natural resources in the immediate future are:

- consolidation of the policies of the sector that go beyond a purely environmental view, such as that having to do with regional sustainable development programmes, policies dealing with poverty, or with the promotion of sustainable production;
- continuation of the promotion of sustainable development through the integration of environmental aspects into economic and social decisions, through the coordination of, and participation in, intersecretariat commissions dealing with specific themes;
- achievement of synergies that allow not only a proper use of Mexico's human, economic and natural resources, but also the transformation of patterns of consumption and production; this will be achieved to the extent that Mexico recognizes, re-evaluates and uses existing capacities and identifies those that will have to be built or strengthened to allow exploitation of scarce resources and to direct them towards the stated objectives; and
- with the participation of the relevant actors, definition of the suitable mechanisms to make available to society and the decision-makers more and better information reflecting the general level of knowledge and the technological possibilities available to bring about change in the patterns of production and consumption.

With the purpose of advancing the elaboration of Mexico's Agenda 21, SEMARNAP has developed a method for this purpose; it proposes the strategies to be followed by Government in coordinated action at the federal, state and local levels with the principal actors and includes a proposal for the institutionalization of these processes. This process is outlined in the diagram here below.

Methodology for the Formulation of the Mexican Agenda 21

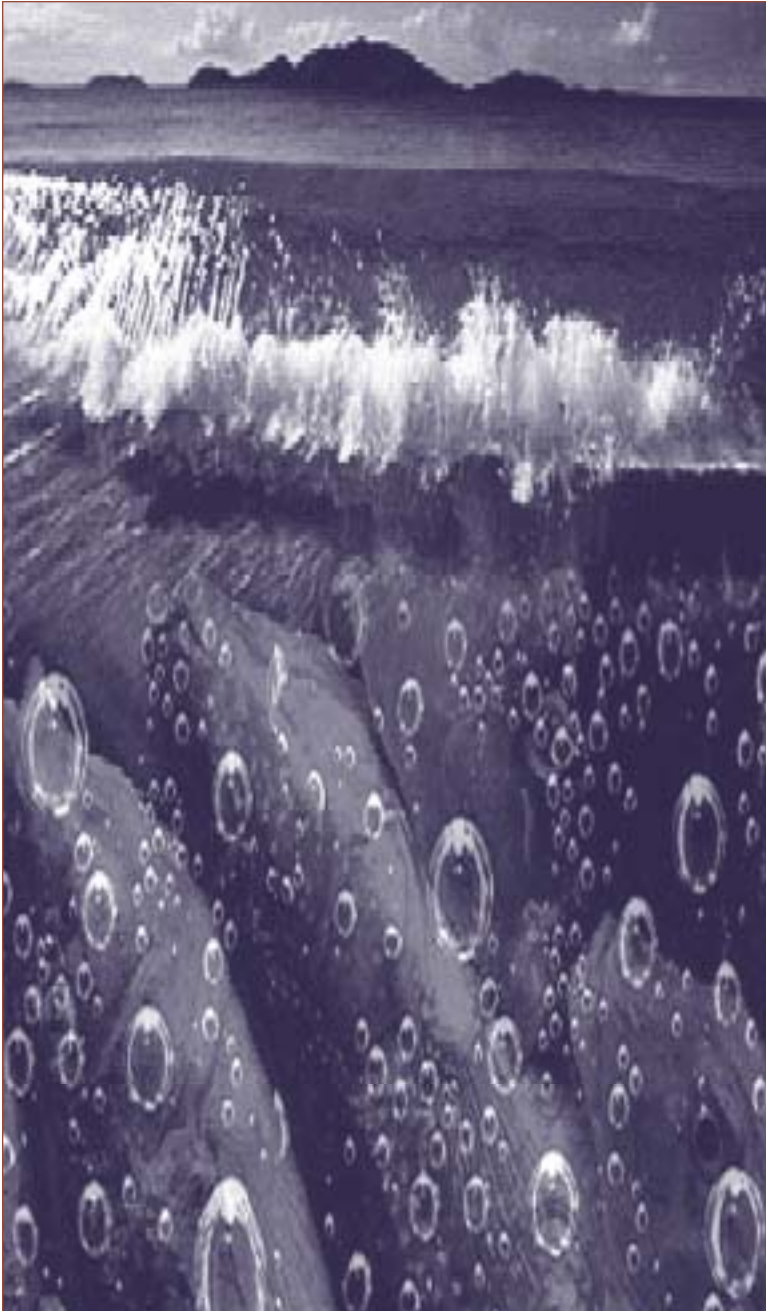
Planning → ←		Implementation → ←	Follow-up and evaluation ←
International commitment →	Recommendations for inclusion in policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategic guidelines • sectoral and regional priorities and themes • key stakeholders and participation 	Development of instruments for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning, programming and budgeting • economic and financial measures • juridical and regulatory measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy recommendations • Instruments • Implementation mechanisms
Context and scenarios →		Mechanisms for implementation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordination • international cooperation • cooperative planning and involvement 	Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • Objectives–results • Cost:benefit ratio • Sustainability • Qualitative evaluation
National and sectoral policies and priorities →			
Review of progress →			
Stakeholders and civil participation →			

Given the complexity of Agenda 21 and the impossibility of dealing simultaneously with all its themes, a methodology for the review of thematic priorities and guidelines for the elaboration of Governmental and municipal Agendas 21 has been developed, with the consequent need to institutionalize these processes.

Following the methodological guidelines mentioned previously, Mexico's progress has been systematized with respect to: environmental information management; compliance with international commitments to sustainable development; identification of environmental, economic and sociodemographic scenarios for the medium and long terms; response to the requirements of Agenda 21 by the various sectors of the public administration; and the identification of the actors and the review of social participation and of participatory planning with a long-term view under the impulse SEMARNAP on national, regional, state, municipal and microregional scales. For each of these themes, the pending tasks have been identified.

This proposal on the articulation of the expanded environmental sector and some other sectors of the Federal Executive Power, the Legislative Power, the academic and research sector, business organizations, social organizations and social and environmental NGOs seeks to serve as an example for the environmental and natural-resource sectors and as an indicator for the other interested sectors to become part of these efforts in the transition to sustainable development. It also seeks to provide planning elements to the three levels of government in the framework of Agenda 21 at the international level.

*Based on a paper
submitted by Mexico*



Development and Implementation of Sustainable Development Strategies in Saint Lucia

Introduction

Saint Lucia is one of the Windward Islands located in the eastern Caribbean, lying approximately 62 degrees West and 13.6 degrees North. It is a small country in terms of area and population. It has a land area of 616 square kilometres and is of volcanic origin, with a rugged and mountainous topography, particularly in the central area. It has a population of about 150,000 of whom, 60,000 live in the capital city of Castries. The rate of population growth has been around 1.7 per cent in recent years. The country's natural resources are its people, climate, scenic beauty and fertile valleys.

Saint Lucia gained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1979 and is a member of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

The economy is very open and heavily dependent on foreign trade. This economy, which was heavily oriented towards agriculture in the 1970s and 1980s, has made some progress towards diversification. In particular, the growth of the service sector, spurred primarily by the recent growth in tourism, has contributed to the structural transformation of the economy from one based on primary

commodities to one based more on services. Operations in the banana industry are being rationalized to enable it to compete more effectively in the global market, with greater focus on alternative uses of the banana production. The banana industry, however, still represents one of the major employers and accounts for 40 per cent of exports.

The main economic constraints facing the country include:

- problems confronting the banana industry;*
- deterioration in the merchandise terms of trade;*
- slow-down in the pace of the construction industry;*
- sluggish performance of the manufacturing sector; and*
- diminishing aid from donor agencies.*

In this new era, characterized by the progressive liberalization of international trade and decline in aid flows, the Government of Saint Lucia recognizes that the economy needs to undergo major adjustment if it is to respond to the challenges and opportunities presented. In this regard, the Government has embarked on a programme to promote tourism as the leading sector of the economy; rationalize the operations of the banana industry to enable it to compete more effectively; and promote the growth of other sectors, notably, international financial services, information technology and agro-industry, as a means of broadening the economic base.

In summary, Saint Lucia's medium-term development priorities are to:

- *increase the rate of economic growth;*
- *reduce the level of unemployment and poverty;*
- *increase the level of savings and investment;*
- *increase the level of productivity;*
- *improve the standard of living and quality of life of the population;*
- *optimize the contribution of biological resources to economic, social and cultural development;*
- *promote the sustainable use of the country's natural resources; and*
- *promote the use of science and technology as a tool for achieving policy objectives.*



Background

Owing to its small size, rugged topography and increasing population, Saint Lucia faces significant spatial constraints to its economic, social and cultural development. These constraints are manifested in the competition for land space for a multiplicity of uses, including agriculture, housing, commercial and industrial activity and tourism. Because many activities have not given sufficient consideration to environmental issues, depletion of water resources, loss of marine and terrestrial biodiversity, and land degradation have occurred.

Over the past decade, Saint Lucia has enjoyed a rapid pace of development. Concurrently, general recognition of the essential link between economic growth and environmental quality has generated an awareness of the need for a comprehensive policy and strategic plan to protect the country's natural resource base, while balancing economic and social development. This concept is particularly critical in light of the relationship between tourism, as a major economic force, and environmental quality, as the attracting force for tourism.

Historically, spatial, environmental, social and cultural dimensions of development plans, programmes and projects have been given limited consideration. Despite recent efforts to address environmental problems in the country, much remains to be done, particularly in the areas of institutional coordination for sustainable development, the development of an adequate regulatory and enforcement regime, and ensuring an entrenchment of environmental stewardship in all aspects of development planning and execution.

Departments with developmental functions are often scattered throughout several sectoral agencies that generally act in isolation. This is compounded by the fact that no formal structure exists to involve partner organizations in planning. In addition, short- to medium-term economic strategies are generally developed by combining the plans of various sectors without an attempt to identify methodically the intersectoral links and develop plans that integrate the efforts of supporting organizations.

If sound environmental management and sustainable development are to be achieved, Saint Lucia needs to establish an integrated multisectoral approach to all planning and resource management, recognizing, integrating and balancing a broad range of economic, social and environmental concerns, needs and limitations.

Sustainable Development Achievements

Despite the lack of a clearly articulated national policy in the past, Saint Lucia has achieved notable accomplishments in the area of sustainable development. These include:

- establishment of a Sustainable Development, Science and Technology Unit in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Sustainable Development;
- efforts at economic diversification;
- development of a comprehensive National Environmental Action Plan;
- small-enterprise development;
- development of localized integrated marine management plans;
- development of the Saint Lucia Nature Heritage Tourism Project;
- establishment of a National Solid-Waste Management Authority;
- establishment of fiscal targets and budgetary reforms;
- development of a proposed Watershed and Environmental Management Plan;
- ongoing reforms in education, health and local government;
- establishment of a National Council for Science and Technology; and
- ratification of several regional and international environmental conventions.

Objectives and Priorities of the National Sustainable Development Strategy (Proposed)

Saint Lucia has sound reasons for developing national sustainable development policies and strategies. Although it is a small country with limited financial capacity, it has a wealth of natural resources and a rich cultural heritage to protect. Establishing a national policy for sustainable development will assist Saint Lucia to more easily identify and implement solutions to the complex problems it faces.

The government of Saint Lucia, in providing the necessary framework to facilitate the implementation of a sustainable development strategy, is committed to ensuring that adequate provisions are made to protect the environment and to ensure sustainable and rational use of its natural-resource base. The following represent some of the ongoing priority activities:

- strengthening environmental institutions and interagency committees;
- introducing cost-recovery mechanisms for environmental protection;
- increasing public awareness through education and training;
- providing an adequate legal and regulatory framework, by revising and developing new environmental and planning legislation;
- strengthening monitoring and enforcement mechanisms and institutions;
- using appropriate technology and new investment; and
- ensuring that the environment becomes a pillar of integrated development planning.

Integration of Sustainable Development Strategies into National Development Policies and Plans

The United Nations Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), in Barbados in 1994, and the resulting Barbados Programme of Action (POA) encouraged leaders to advocate a more integrated approach to the management of natural resources by taking policy, strategy-formulation, programme design and implementation fully into account. Saint Lucia recognizes the POA as providing a framework for activities geared to its sustainable development, with particular emphasis on the environmental dimension. The effective operationalization of the POA, even within a wider range of sustainable development issues, should be the hallmark of future implementation.

The need for such an integrated approach has been recognized in many of the country's recent policy papers on budgetary reform, coastal-zone management, forestry, parks and protected areas, waste management and poverty alleviation, to name just a few examples.

Policy papers relating to the three dimensions of sustainable development include:

- economic
 - financial statements and budgetary proposals; and
 - medium-term economic strategy (now medium-term development strategy).
- environmental
 - Saint Lucia National Environmental Action Plan; and
 - National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.
- social
 - integration of health and environment into national planning for sustainable development;
 - poverty-assessment report;
 - education development-strategy paper; and
 - health-sector reform.

Irrespective of whether the policy paper originated in the economic, environmental or social sector, the solutions to any of these issues were not exclusively associated with any one sector and suggested the need for an integrated multisectoral approach to national development planning.

To address deficiencies in present planning, Saint Lucia is introducing an integrated approach to national development planning.

This will seek to:

- involve the widest possible cross-section of the population in defining a long-term vision for Saint Lucia's development;
- use the long-term vision to develop short- to medium-term plans, each of which will take the island closer to achieving the long-term objective;
- introduce an integrated approach to programme budgeting under the Planning, Programming and Budgeting System by facilitating cross-sectoral dialogue in the determination of specific programmes and projects for inclusion in the national budget;
- introduce a formal system of priority-setting for programme and project development for the public and private sectors; and
- establish an institutional framework for integrated development planning for sustainable development, including use of development indicators.

Sustainable Development Indicators

Although many activities relevant to the SIDS/POA have been undertaken at the national level, they were neither conceived nor implemented in direct response to the adoption of that international instrument. Significantly, though, the SIDS/POA has had an impact on these activities, imparting greater focus and renewed emphasis on them in a comprehensive sustainable development context, thereby contributing to an integrated approach to their management and to the development of new projects and programmes in response to national needs.

Although specific sustainable development indicators have yet to be developed, more detailed and rigorous programme and project evaluation, as part of the annual budget cycle, is likely to form an effective basis for the future development of such indicators.

There has also been an enhanced understanding, at the national level, of sustainable development issues and the improved identification of environmental as well as socio-economic concerns, programmes and projects.



Institutional Framework for Implementation and Monitoring of Sustainable Development Strategies

The uncoordinated approach to the implementation of the Barbados Small Island Developing States Programme of Action is a reflection of the absence of a formal institutional structure to ensure that it is factored into development planning. There are several agencies that undertake activities aimed at sustainable development in Saint Lucia. They include:

- Department of Environment Sustainable Development, Science and Technology Unit;
- National Disaster Preparedness;
- Saint Lucia Solid-Waste Management Authority;
- Department of Fisheries;
- Department of Forestry;
- Local Area Management Authorities;
- Saint Lucia National Trust;
- Water and Sewage Company;
- Department of Physical Planning;
- National Council for Science and Technology;
- Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities;
- Ministry of Education, Human Resources Development, Youth and Sports;
- Ministry of Health, Family Affairs and Gender Relations; and
- National Conservation Authority.

A Sustainable Development Council has been proposed and is now under consideration; it will facilitate the incorporation of sustainable development strategies into national development planning. It will have the following mandate:

- management of development and periodic review of the long-term vision for national development;

- coordination of interagency discussions at all stages of the process;
- preparation of a medium-term development strategy;
- management of priority-setting;
- development of achievement indicators; and
- evaluation of achievement of development goals.

It should comprise “core membership” with expertise in finance, planning, economics, environmental management, social planning and cultural development.

Public Participation in Decision-making and in the Implementation of Sustainable Development Strategies

There has been an enhanced understanding of sustainable development issues by the general public as the country seeks a more integrated approach to national development. The role of civil society, including the private sector, in identifying and achieving the objectives of the SIDS/POA has been recognized and encouraged through various systems of co-management of natural resources, setting standards, and in preparing environmental policies and action plans.

Further work is required to enable full and informed participation in overall decision-making at the national level.

Lessons Learned in Implementing NCSDs

At the national level, the following lessons have been learned with respect to National Councils on Sustainable Development:

- need for broad-based cooperation;
- need for conflict resolution and resource conservation;
- early involvement of stakeholders in decision-making;
- critical need for an integrated approach to environmental management;
- inextricable linkage of environmental, economic and social considerations in the pursuit of sustainable development; and
- importance of the critical area of institutional strengthening (capacity-building; enactment of environmental legislation; application of management tools, such as environmental-impact assessments; and the adoption and implementation of environmental action plans).

Saint Lucia has also recognized that, although the Barbados Programme of Action has formed the basis for the implementation of sustainable development in small island developing states, issues such as increasing poverty, crime, the AIDS pandemic and concerns about globalization and liberalization of international trade could hinder such implementation. These issues must be given higher profile in international fora and be addressed through appropriate mechanisms.

The constraints experienced in implementing a comprehensive and integrated sustainable development strategy reflect deficiencies in financial, institutional and human resources.

Financial Constraints

They are major handicaps in the establishment and strengthening of infrastructure, institutions and capacity-building, among other important development imperatives.

Institutional Constraints

These have also been identified as a critical factor retarding the pace of implementation of sustainable development. Specific elements include:

- the need for, inter alia, enhanced awareness, capacity-building, training, information management and adjustments in organizational behaviour;
- the widespread lack of expertise in the preparation of project proposals and in the implementation and monitoring of projects; and
- the need for a permanent, adequately resourced and dedicated mechanism for coordination at the national and regional levels.

Human Resource and Training Constraints

The shortage of relevant skilled and experienced human resources affects all aspects and levels of implementation. More specifically, there continues to be a:

- lack of comprehensive plans and policies;
- weak institutional capacity for pursuit of sustainable development objectives;
- lack of formal mechanisms for intersectoral coordination on sustainable development;
- lack of and/or suboptimal use of human and technical resources;
- lack of research and data-management projects and programmes;
- scarce investment capital and support for development projects;
- poor history of information management and use of information for management and decision-making;
- absence of consultative planning at the national level;

- lack of sustained public awareness at the national level;
- lack of sustained public awareness and sensitization through community consultation; and
- inadequate legislative, regulatory and enforcement framework.

At the wider international, institutional level, Saint Lucia has ratified relevant international conventions, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Characteristics of the NSSD

There is a need to develop and implement a dynamic and fully participatory approach to development planning by integrating and coordinating the economic, social, cultural, environmental and population aspects, and financial and spatial relationships, to ensure the sustainable and efficient use of human, financial and natural resources.

In Saint Lucia and other small island developing states, sustainable development must involve the integration of the following, among others:

- business and private-sector investment;
- science and technology;
- environmental sustainability;
- community participation and empowerment;
- agricultural diversification;
- tourism development;
- education and human resource development;
- provision of health and social services;
- legislative reform;
- utility development; and
- institutional strengthening and capacity-building.

Visions for the Future

In an effort to coordinate the programmes of the several public and private agencies and non-governmental organizations involved in sustainable development, the Government is introducing an integrated approach to national development planning. The goal is to ensure that the resources invested by these agencies are coordinated and focused on the achievement of national development goals defined through wide consultation. This will ensure that the general thrust of the development effort is towards the achievement of the sustainable development goals defined by the Barbados Programme of Action.

Saint Lucia recognizes the significant contribution that regional and international institutions can make in support of its development goals. As a reflection of this, Saint Lucia is an active member of a number of regional and international institutions whose goals are congruent with its own. It is recognized, however, that weak national planning capabilities and institutional capacity mitigate the benefits that might otherwise accrue. In response, the Government is currently reorganizing its planning machinery to embrace an integrated approach to national development planning. However, even with this initiative, there is need for external support to build capacity, if the effort is to succeed.

The following will have to be done to improve on achievements in sustainable development at the national level so far:

- integration of the SIDS/POA into national planning and decision-making;
- adoption of more rigorous approaches to sustainable development;
- acquisition of financial resources; and
- effective programmes of education and public awareness.

Some of the key thematic areas and the activities that should be addressed in the future are:

- the economic system—strengthening the link between economic development, environmental sustainability and international trade;
- scientific and technological innovation—promoting environmental research and development and the commercialization of indigenous technology;
- institutional structures—improving the coordinating mechanisms and institutional structure for sustainable development and strengthening of partnerships between the public sector, NGOs, the private sector and community in policy development and implementation;
- financial management—prudent management of scarce financial resources, including those from donor agencies, to achieve national development targets;
- policies and legislation—reviewing, harmonizing and/or developing legislation and sustainable development policies;
- information systems—establishing mechanisms for data compilation, sharing and dissemination, and the use of performance and sustainability indicators;
- planning systems—developing national sustainability plans and strategic sectoral plans; and
- values and beliefs—fostering a shared long-term vision of sustainable development through consultation, collaboration, education and training of all stakeholders.

The high vulnerability of small island developing states to natural and man-made disasters remains a key concern in the formulation of a sustainable development strategy and must form one of the cornerstones of such a strategy in the future. Mechanisms to be developed should include those aimed at improving pollution and waste controls and at using appropriate technology to improve efficiency and reduce unnecessary consumption. Natural resources must be used more efficiently, so that the long-term productive capacity of ecosystems is ensured and environmental degradation minimized.

The refinement and application of sustainable development indicators will enable citizens and decision-makers to have access to summarized and relevant information that would guide national policy development and programme implementation.

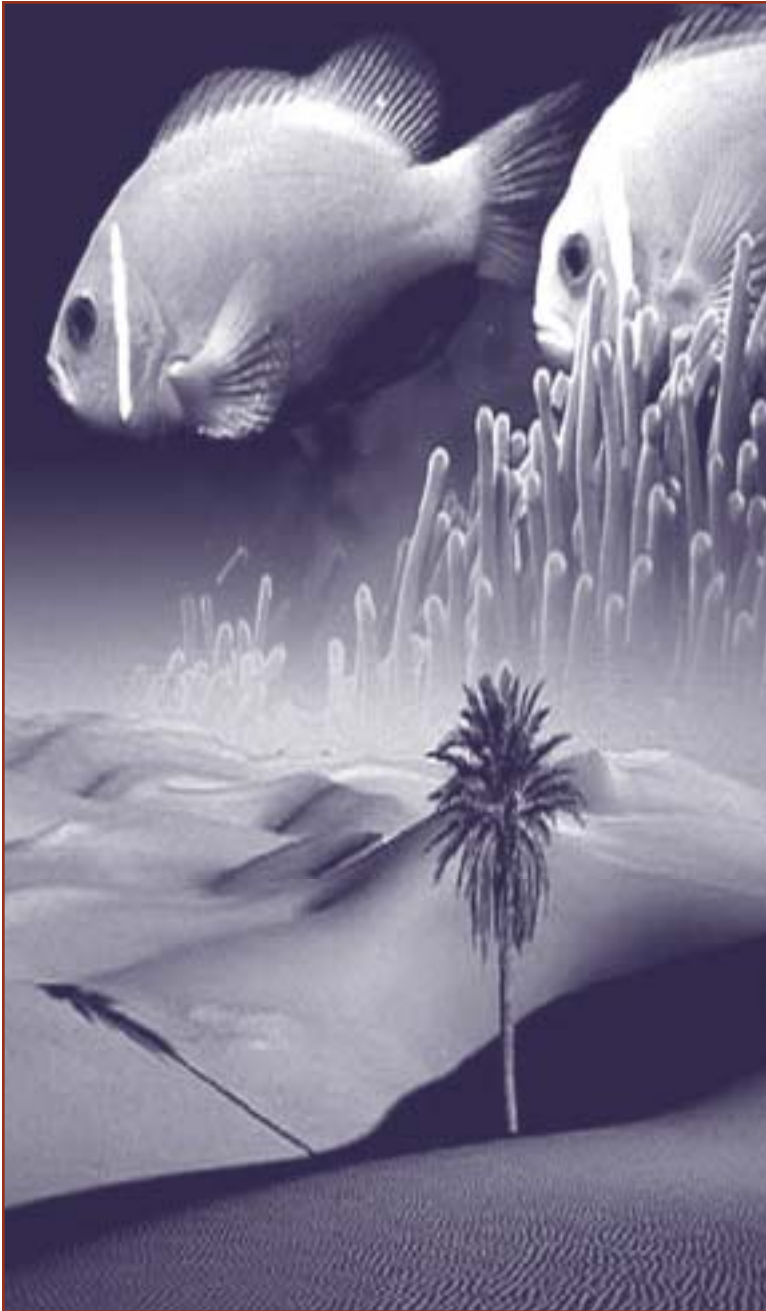
Donor support for institutional strengthening, including capacity-building and training, will be critical if the philosophy of sustainable development is to become a practical reality in small island states such as Saint Lucia.

*Based on a paper by
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Section II:

Role of IGOs and NGOs in
Promoting Regional/Subregional
Cooperation in Sustainable
Development in Latin America
and the Caribbean



Sustainable Development and Much More—ALIDES

Introduction

There is no reference to the Alianza Centroamericana para el Desarrollo Sostenible (ALIDES; The Alliance for Sustainable Development in Central America) in the principal discussion paper for the present Regional Consultative Meeting. The novelty is that, for the first time, and in accordance with Agenda 21, an integrated sustainable development strategy in Central America has been conceived to promote the political, economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability of Central American societies.

Since the principal conclusions show that the political discourse in Rio de Janeiro (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 1992), Barbados (United Nations Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, 1994) and Santa Cruz de la Sierra (Summit of the Americas, 1996) have not yet been translated into effective policies and practical initiatives at the national level, it is hoped that this working document on ALIDES will contribute positively to the deliberations in the present meeting, as well as in the network of institutions and persons that will be created to strengthen links between the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, the OAS's Inter-American Commission on Sustainable Development and the sub-regions of the Caribbean and Central and South America.

The regional evaluation of the sustainable development strategies in Latin America and the Caribbean in the global context, prepared as the principal input to the present meeting, analyzes the vulnerability indicators and the principal indicators of human development and sustainable development in this region, emphasizing the eco-efficiency of industry and sustainable tourism, especially in the strategies of the Caribbean, Mexico, Argentina and Colombia.

Structurally, Agenda 21 contains 40 chapters divided into four areas of action:

- *the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development;*
- *the conservation and management of the resources for development;*
- *the strengthening of the main groups in which sustainable and equitable development action is proposed; and*
- *the forms of implementation.*

These areas of action will provide data on:

- *financial resources and implementation mechanisms;*
- *diffusion of appropriate environmental technologies;*
- *generation of science and technology for sustainable development;*
- *promotion of environmental care;*
- *development of national management capacity for sustainable development;*

- *establishment of instruments and mechanisms of international law; and*
- *improvement of access to information for decision-making and the generation of sustainable development indicators.*

To complement the analysis of chapters 8, 28 and 37 of Agenda 21 in the principal discussion paper for this meeting, we must recall that the first action area of Agenda 21 proposes the following seven obligations of sustainable development with respect to the economic and social dimensions:

- *Accelerate sustainable development in the developing countries by international cooperation, with the establishment of an open, fair and safe commercial system;*
- *Integrate the development policies with sustainable management and eradicate poverty;*
- *Modify consumption patterns to make them sustainable;*
- *Strengthen population research, including environmental, cultural and technological questions;*
- *Protect and promote human health;*
- *Promote sustainable human settlements; and*
- *Develop the integration of policies, planning and management for sustainable development.*

In this context, the second action area, referring to the environmental aspect of conservation and management of resources for sustainable development, includes:

- *protection of the atmosphere;*
- *establishment of an integrated focus on sustainable use of soils, including the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities;*
- *conservation and rational use of forests;*
- *resistance to desertification;*
- *protection of mountain ecosystems;*
- *integration of the need for farm products with actions that avoid the destruction of arable lands;*
- *protection of biological diversity;*
- *sustainable use of biotechnology;*
- *protection of the oceans and their resources;*
- *care for the freshwater systems;*
- *promotion of the safe use of toxic products;*
- *proper disposal of toxic substances;*
- *identification of viable and sustainable solutions to the problems of refuse; and*
- *proper manipulation of radioactive wastes.*

To achieve these environmental objectives of Agenda 21, two important international conventions have been adopted:

- *The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (New York, 1992), which sets out the principles by which the signatory countries may reduce the emission of greenhouse gases or at least stabilize such emissions at 1990 levels. This Convention was complemented by the Kyoto Protocol, adopted in 1997, and the Conferences of the Parties, in Buenos Aires (1998) and in Bonn (1999), which point out the necessity of taking into account the repercussions that political and economic decisions have on the environment and on global warming, especially in the field of energy.*
- *The Convention on Biological Diversity, which imposes on States the obligation to protect biological diversity and to use it in a sustainable manner. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in 1992, also issued the Rio Declaration which contains 27 principles that serve as a framework for governmental action in the field of environment and development. According to the first of these principles, “Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.”*

The Concept of a Sustainable Development Strategy

A strategy is a set of directions by which to achieve defined objectives. A strategy, as a coherent, unifying and integrating guide to decisions, leads to plans for achieving objectives in the long run and priorities in the distribution of resources.

Strategy, as a response to opportunities, threats, internal strengths and weaknesses, to achieve sustainable competitive advantage in the long term, is supported by modern analyses that presuppose a full knowledge of the internal and external factors that affect an organization.

The principal long-term economic strategies of globalization are: import substitution, generally combined with commercial protectionist measures; and the promotion of exports, accompanied in most cases by an effort of economic liberation. The import-substitution strategy was dominant in the 1950s and 1960s in Latin America and promoted the creation of trade blocks, such as the Central American Common Market, the Andean Pact and the Latin American Free-Trade Association, with a view to achieving economies of scale.

Industrialization and development by way of import substitution was in crisis in the 1970s, leading to changes in economic strategy in the search for efficiency, efficacy and free markets.

The strategy of export promotion contemplates policies aimed at liberalizing trade, improving the efficiency of the public sector by reducing its size through privatization of services or State enterprises. The reduction of custom charges on foreign trade is one of the bases for a development strategy through export promotion.

However, to combat poverty and achieve sustainable human development, a good strategy for action attempts to identify the obstacles; that is, the problems that are difficult to solve and which constitute an impediment to success. To this end, the first thing to be done to formulate good strategies is to possess the necessary information and a good diagnosis of the situation, with adequate sustainable development indicators.

Then it is necessary to consider that the strategies adopted for particular areas or zones are not independent and are in fact interdependent. For example, the specific strategies for rural and urban areas and for the private sector, contained in the Proposal for an Integrated Development Framework by the President of the World Bank, are interrelated and make up a matrix and/or network for the analysis of prerequisites of sustainable development, the reduction of poverty and associated activities that could help in the process.

The Analytical and Descriptive Review of the National Sustainable Development Strategy of Honduras, provided as reference material for the present meeting, presents the matrix of an institutional sustainable development framework in accordance with the proposal of the President of the World Bank, taking into account the structural, human, physical and strategic aspects specific to Honduras.

The concept of a sustainable development strategy is recent and its antecedents are linked to a development designed to overcome the backwardness prevailing since the Second World War, in the form of economic growth based on the evolution of the gross national product and income per inhabitant. This concept of development as being synonymous with growth, progress, evolution and industrialization gave rise to the foundation, in 1948, of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), better known as the World Bank (WB), and later to the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), in 1959, and other regional and subregional banks.

In this context, the United Nations, for the first Development Decade, from 1961 to 1970, set as an objective a 5 per cent increase in gross domestic product and a 6 per cent increase for the second Development Decade, from 1971 to 1980. Thus, in the Charter of Punta del Este, the basis of Alliance for Progress, annual economic growth rates greater than 5 per cent were planned but not achieved.

In the Limits to Growth Report, presented to the Club of Rome in 1972, the idea that abusive exploitation of the environment was a threat to economic growth was exposed for the first time. Subsequently, at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, in

Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972, the concept of ecological sustainability was presented, together with the concept of economic and social development. Since then, it has become increasingly clear that sustainable development is a political and social process that embraces all aspects of life, in a harmonious and balanced way with the conservation of the environment and the natural resources, in a three-dimensional idea of development.

As was stated in the Introduction, Agenda 21, besides being a programme of action for sustainable development, also calls for the strengthening of public participation of the principal social groups in sustainable development and the means for its implementation. In this context, the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, the Earth Council, and the National Councils on Sustainable Development in many countries were created.

ALIDES and Agenda 21

At the Central American level, these international commitments gave form to ALIDES as an integrated strategy for the promotion of political, economic, environmental, cultural and social development in the region. In the context of ALIDES, the concept of sustainable development is defined as a process of progressive change in the quality of human life, placing it at the centre and as the primordial subject of development, through economic growth with social equity and the transformation of production methods and consumption patterns, based on ecological equilibrium and the vital basis of the region. This process implies respect for the ethnic and cultural, regional, national and local diversity, as well as the strengthening of the participation of the citizenry, in pacific cohabitation and in harmony with nature, without compromising, and indeed guaranteeing, the quality of life of future generations.

The Declaration of Guácimo, signed by the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama and by the Prime Minister of Belize, in Guácimo, Limón, Costa Rica on 20 August 1994, proposes a firm commitment to a strategy of sustainable

development and to a programme of concrete actions with well defined objectives and timetable. Later, in the Central American Ecological Summit on Sustainable Development, in Managua, Nicaragua, in October 1994, the Presidents of Central America and the Prime Minister of Belize adopted the concept of sustainable development mentioned above and the principles, with the bases, general objectives and instruments of ALIDES, such as, at the national level, the National Councils on Sustainable Development (NCSDs) and the Central American Sustainable Development Council (CASDC), made up of the Presidents or their Presidential Delegates.

The specific objectives of ALIDES, with respect to their political, economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects, are contained in the Annex to the Managua Declaration (October 1994). Also, later, during the International Conference on Peace and Development in Central America, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, October 1994, the political, social, cultural, economic, environmental and natural resource commitments has been adopted.

In this, the principles, bases, objectives and instruments of ALIDES tend to relate the political, social, cultural and economic commitments to those on environment and natural resources, as an intergenerational responsibility in sustainable development. In the same way, following Agenda 21, governments agreed to create National Councils on Sustainable Development with representation of the public sector and of civil society, and created the Central American Council on Sustainable Development, with a view to linking the regional element of integration in a harmonious and coherent way with the national objectives and priorities.

In the Presidential Summits in Miami; Santa Cruz, Bolivia; and Santiago, Chile the Central American Presidents, jointly with the Chiefs of State of the Americas, adopted, in the face of the challenges of globalization, an agenda for institutional reform, for sustainable development, for transparency and public participation in the democratic process. The Consensus of Santiago (a term coined by the President of the World Bank), and the corresponding Plan of Action approved in April 1998, contains ambitious goals for education and sustainable

development, stipulating to governments the obligation to promote—with the participation of civil society—democracy, justice, economic integration, free trade, eradication of poverty, and transparency, according to national priorities and the pertinent and successful experiences of the National Councils on Sustainable Development, and the Inter-American Public Participation Strategy, of the Organization of American States (OAS).

To this end, the Presidents called upon the OAS to promote sustainable development programmes, and on the IADB and the World Bank to develop, together with interested States and other institutions, hemispheric financial mechanisms for the implementation of programmes oriented to sustainable development, transparency and public participation. This new focus on good government and transparency, as a basis for sustainable development, had also been proposed in October 1998 in Washington, D.C., by the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the President of the World Bank, as part of the Washington Consensus.



The Washington Consensus, Democracy and the Bases and Political Objectives of ALIDES

At the end of the 1980s, the seriousness of the underlying macroeconomic disequilibrium in Latin America led the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank to decide on a series of concerted adjustment actions known as the Washington Consensus. The priorities of the Consensus concentrated, in a first phase, on responding to the disequilibrium in the balance of payments and to contributing to fiscal, institutional and juridical reforms.

In a second phase, starting in the 1990s, the basis of the Washington Consensus was widened to cover the social, environmental and related areas. Thus, a combination of new lending operations was initiated to reduce poverty and to finance programmes of social investment, educational and health reforms, as well as to improve social services and to realign the practice of subsidies with protection, ecosystem development and the like.

In this context, the State reform programmes and institutional reform in the markets were widened to include legislative and judicial functions. Using a different paradigm and standpoint based on incentives to reorient public-sector reform, the new agenda of the IMF, WB and IADB was aimed at achieving the 11 goals for sustainable economic growth adopted by the IMF and the World Bank in September 1996 in Washington, D.C.

These goals are more ambitious and daring in terms of fiscal reform and general structural reform, with a view to increasing the efficacy of macroeconomic policy, promote job creation and neutralize the risks of globalization. Regarding State reform, governments must demonstrate that they will not tolerate any corruption and will concentrate on the essential tasks so as to instil confidence in private savers and investors, thus facilitating the orderly working of the economy with a view to achieving sustainable development.

The Declaration on the Alliance for the Sustainable Growth of the World Economy reflects a universal consensus on the democracy, ethics and transparency of sustainable development, affirming that promoting good government in all its aspects, guaranteeing the rule of law, ensuring that the public sector becomes more efficient and accounts for its actions, and fighting corruption, are fundamental if countries are to achieve a lasting economic prosperity.

Subsequently, the World Bank's Report on Global Development 1997, which was entirely devoted to the role of the State, provides a good view of the "state of the art" in State reform within an institutional perspective and a realism with respect to the problems of governance and democracy. On reconsidering the role of the State, what it "produces" and "how it produces", the democratic State should, if possible, be a market facilitator providing the electorate the products it demands in an effective, efficient and honest way.

This characterization covers what a political scientist could hope for from a good government in terms of decision-making capacity, response capacity and skill, and what an economist could hope for in terms of macroeconomic stability, the establishment of strategic priorities and the efficient and opportune provision of services.

In October 1998, in his statement to the Board of Governors of the World Bank and the IMF, the President of the Bank argued that "development is more than reform" and continued: "We see that in today's global economy countries can move toward a market economy, can privatize, can break up state monopolies, can reduce state subsidies, but if they do not fight corruption and put in place good governance, if they do not introduce social safety nets, if they do not have the social and political consensus for reform, if they do not bring their people with them, their development is endangered and will not last. We see that in today's global economy, countries can attract private capital, can build a banking and financial system, can deliver growth, can invest in people—some of their people—but if they marginalize the poor, if they marginalize women and indigenous minorities, if they do not have a policy of inclusion—their

development is endangered and will not last... We must never stop reminding ourselves that it is up to the government and its people to decide what their priorities should be.”

The Inter-American Development Bank, as the principal source of financing for Central America, has also renewed its commitment to sustainable development. The report of the Working Group on the Institutional Strategy of the IADB raises the need to group and consolidate a large number of existing sectoral strategies, to form a smaller ensemble, so that the countries themselves set their own priorities. For this purpose, the Bank should stress country programming more in its operations and develop and promote wide dialogue on policies and strategies. Likewise, the IADB is coordinating the follow-up of the meetings of the Consultative Group on the Reconstruction and Transformation of Central America; these meetings were held in Washington, D.C., in December 1998 and in Stockholm, Sweden, in May 1999, with a view to reconstruction and transformation with an emphasis on transparency and good governance.

As a forerunner of the good ideas we have in Central America, the bases of ALIDES, adopted in October 1994 at the Central American Ecological Summit on Sustainable Development, in Managua, Nicaragua, require that public policies and the citizens' means of producing and living together be wide and participatory. Likewise, to succeed in the fight against poverty, it is necessary to have economic growth and, for this, action must be taken to improve the quality of the human resource and the economic opportunities of the least favoured, through a social policy.

Democracy, as a basic form of human community life, constitutes, in the view of ALIDES, one of the focal points of sustainable development. In that context, the political objectives of ALIDES are to:

- support the processes of peace and reconciliation among the countries of the region;
- promote the full enforcement of human rights;
- strengthen the state of law and the democratic institutions;
- combat corruption and impunity;

- strengthen administrative capacity and municipal government, with a view to attending directly to the problems of each locality;
- perfect the mechanisms of political and electoral participation;
- support diverse forms of community organization that preserve national identity in the framework of its cultural plurality and ethnic diversity;
- combat the causes of violence and criminality, including drug-trafficking; and
- modernize the institutions of the State so that they efficiently fulfil their functions.

Bases and Objectives of Sustainable Economic Development According to ALIDES

Sustainable economic development is, according to ALIDES, based on liberty, dignity, justice, social equity and economic efficiency. Beyond the Washington Consensus, ALIDES and, later, the Santiago Consensus, tell us that per capita increase in income is only one of the many objectives of development. To raise the standard of living it is necessary to attain other specific objectives, such as the improvement of education and health services, a greater participation in public life, the decontamination of the environment and intergenerational equity.

As small economies open to the outside, the countries of Central America must enjoy the benefits of globalization, international trade, financial movements and the opportunities arising from the crisis due to Hurricane Mitch. To this end, according to ALIDES, the bases for sustainable economic development are to:

- develop a rational and efficient administration, macroeconomic and sectoral policies, as well as maintain clear, coherent and consistent rules, to achieve sustainable conditions of economic and social stability;

- bring to bear on economic regulation all that is essential for peaceful human society and the humanization of the economy, as well as the integration of cost-benefit criteria and all aspects of environmental deterioration and the rational use of the natural resources;
- improve the economic infrastructure, especially in the fields of electrical energy, telecommunications and transport, not only to increase the productivity of the economies of the region, but also for the very development of economic activity in general;
- redefine the role of the public sector, in the central government as well as in municipal government, stressing the function of facilitating favourable conditions and formulating concerted policies rather than being involved in the execution of the policies;
- reduce vulnerability and the persistent external breach in international trade, by way of better access of the products of the Central American countries to the industrialized economies;
- find a lasting solution to the problems of external debt, in order to diminish the debt burden, especially in Honduras and Nicaragua;
- develop financial strategies to ensure the resources for sustainable development, from internal as well as external sources. The use of the mechanisms of relief, conversion and reprogramming of bilateral and multilateral debts could be considered, depending on the circumstances of each country, the establishment of revolving and trust funds, as well as the restructuring and redistribution of national budgets, giving due priority to the objectives of sustainable development and revising defence and security spending in accordance with the realities of the countries and the climate of peace that is spreading in the region;

- stimulate the growing participation of the private sector and the full development of its creative capacity, by promoting investment in social capital, so as to increase productivity and competence, as well as combat poverty. The development of human resources is, at the same time, a basic condition for the increase of productivity and an important vehicle for greater social equity. Special emphasis should be placed on investment in education and health, especially for the most needy groups, as a means of increasing productivity, improving competition and reducing poverty in the region;
- develop initiatives in the rational use of renewable-energy sources, promotion of trade, sustainable productive investment, stimulation of savings and debureaucratization of public administration. In addition, support research and development of clean technologies by establishing research centres to facilitate, in Central America, the development of technical environmental standards and of export products; to assist the industrial reconversion that is taking place in the region; and to further the use of sustainable production methods, such as continual environmental-impact assessments, thus incorporating preventive measures rather than reactive ones;
- promote tourism in the region, ensuring a dynamic equilibrium between the protection and the conservation of the environment and its development with respect to the natural and cultural patrimony of the Central American peoples. The culture is the link between the environment and sustainable development; and
- strengthen and consolidate Central America's commitments to integration, as basic elements for improving the quality of life of the population; to increasing intraregional trade; to opening up new markets; and to inserting Central America into the global economy. This insertion requires that all the countries meet their commitments to reduce protectionism and open up access to markets even more, especially in the sectors of interest to the developing countries. It is therefore urgent to improve the access of basic products to the markets, particularly by the gradual suppression of barriers to Central American imports and the considerable and steady reduction of production and export subsidies.

On this basis, the specific economic objectives of ALIDES are to:

- promote a sustainable development strategy and inward and outward integration based on the growth of the internal market and the promotion of national and foreign investment;
- promote policies to reduce intraregional imbalances that affect the sustainable development of the region;
- raise the economic growth rates that would allow reduction of poverty and thus guarantee the social and political sustainability of the processes of economic openness and democratization of the countries of the region;
- search for joint solutions to the handling of external debt;
- foster regional harmonization of macroeconomic and sectoral policies;
- stimulate investment and sustainable production processes;
- promote a wide study and debate on economic and institutional reforms that should push the countries of Central America to negotiate jointly a free-trade and investment treaty with the other countries of the hemisphere;
- promote the creation and transfer of clean technologies to improve productivity and the development of technical environmental standards and to stimulate production without causing environmental deterioration;
- promote and develop sustainable ecotourism;
- formulate policies to improve efficiency and stimulate agriculture and cattle-raising so as to promote rural development, consolidate intraregional trade in farm products, guarantee food safety and increase and diversify exports, thus consolidating the articulation of the production, commercial and service chains;
- strengthen the incorporation of science and technology into the processes of production, by improving the technological qualification of the human resources, strengthening and creating centres of technological innovation and developing new businesses and technological packages; and
- drive the reconstruction, rehabilitation and modernization of the regional infrastructure, especially in matters of transport, telecommunications and energy, so as to increase the efficiency and competitiveness of the productive sectors, at the national, regional and international levels.

Bases and Objectives of Sustainable Sociocultural Development According to ALIDES

According to ALIDES, social development within the sustainable development of Central America is based on the criteria of solidarity, co-responsibility, self-management and attention to the basic needs of the population, as well as the training and participation of the communities.

To overcome the levels of extreme poverty in Central American countries is the most important social challenge. Poverty, as proof of serious backwardness and underdevelopment is also a testimony of inequality, an obstacle to harmonious national conciliation and a threat to democratic society and to definite and lasting peace.

The ALIDES priority areas are:

- investment in human resources; in this sense, priority will be given to basic education, preventive health care, environmental clean-up, training and capacity-building;
- execution of programmes of support for the family and vulnerable groups, with a view to making possible the integrated development of minors, adolescents, women and the old;
- improvement of the access of low-income groups to social services and to the social and economic infrastructure; and
- creation of opportunities for access to jobs and thus the creation of productive activities, by increasing the amount of credit available for small businesses, technical assistance and other actions to increase appropriate economic opportunities.

The development of public awareness of the importance of promoting sustainable development is a fundamental element of sociocultural development. The community and its organizations, the intermediary institutions and the local and municipal governments carry the main responsibility. So the success of sustainable development lies in training and in strengthening the municipal structures responsible for community organization and participation and for social services based on the principal of decentralization with the full participation of the beneficiaries.

In the framework of the cultural plurality and ethnic diversity of the region and under the ALIDES principles, respect for life in all its forms and for its natural base, the Earth, implies a set of values, attitudes, habits and life styles favourable to the development of national identity and which increase solidarity. Thus, for the promotion of sustainable economic activities, proper use should be made of the cultural, historical and national patrimony, with a view to promoting creativity in art, science and technology.

Social commitments place the human being at the centre of ALIDES, in a framework of equity, solidarity and equality of opportunity and full participation in the society. A fundamental part of these commitments is to ensure the access of the population to all the basic social services, the quality of which should be steadily improved.

Overcoming the structural causes of poverty by strengthening the means to fight it, and the appeal to international financial institutions to support this Central American effort and, among others, the Central American Programme on Social Investment against Poverty, have become even more necessary since the disaster caused by Hurricane Mitch.

In this context, ALIDES' specific sociocultural objectives are to:

- eliminate all forms of discrimination, by act or law, against women, so as to improve their social status and standard of living;
- reduce extreme poverty, especially through job creation;
- reinsert appropriately the refugee, displaced and banished populations in a safe and stable Central American setting to enable them to benefit from all the rights of citizenship and to improve their quality of life and equality of opportunity;
- incorporate the criteria of community solidarity, co-responsibility and self-management into policies addressing poverty, by development, community participation and economic and administrative decentralization;
- give priority to investment in human beings for their integral development;

- promote a morality of life that would fortify sustainable development;
- strengthen national identity, in a framework of cultural and ethnic diversity;
- promote, protect and use appropriately the cultural and natural patrimony;
- promote cultural expression that supports a suitable relationship with the environment;
- promote education in the care for and sustainable use of the natural resources; and
- support the restitution of cultural objects that have been exported illegally.

ALIDES' sociocultural bases and objectives confirm the importance of the role of culture in sustainable development. The conservation of the natural resources and of the environment is a problem for everyone, and culture is the link between the environment and sustainable development. If we do not preserve the culture and the history of our peoples, we shall not have the pride and the national civic spirit to apply the legacy of our predecessors, the Mayas and the Lencas, to the national strategy for sustainable development.

As a positive example of the promotion of the role of culture in sustainable development, we have the project supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in the southern part of the Department of Lempira, where the environmentally friendly growing techniques applied in the sustainable hillside agriculture are the same as those used by the Lencas a long time ago. This culture of conservation of the highland water basins of the rivers of southern Lempira ensured that the crops in these rural areas were not affected by Hurricane Mitch in October 1998.

The proposal of an integral development framework, broadly based, transparent and responsible, with a long-term integral and strategic view in which are included all the components, requires a greater knowledge of the social and cultural commitments of ALIDES and of the vision of sustainable development, including public participation as an indispensable element of such development, on the threshold of the new millennium.

ALIDES' Social and Cultural Commitments

The social and cultural commitments of ALIDES require the elaboration of a strategy for their follow-up and allow monitoring and periodical reports on compliance with the conventions, treaties and protocols and other instruments subscribed by the Central American governments in the field of sustainable development.

The commitments are to: overcome poverty; combat discrimination; rehabilitate populations affected by armed conflicts; promote health and education as fundamental assets of the region's sustainable development; improve food and nutritional safety; promote the family as the axis on which public policies, and the programmes derived from them, turn; integrate women into development; preserve the cultural patrimony; and evaluate the juridical basis of sociocultural integration. To meet these commitments requires follow-up mechanisms and strategies for sustainable development.

The instruments of ALIDES for maintaining, in each country, policies, programmes and national projects that are coherent and consistent with the sustainable development strategy are the National Councils on Sustainable Development (NCSDs). Their link with the regional element is through the Central American Sustainable Development Council (CASDC), made up of the Central American Presidents and the Prime Minister of Belize, or their delegated representatives.

Following the ALIDES initiative adopted at the Central American Ecological Summit on Sustainable Development (Managua, October 1994), the CASDC will adopt the mechanisms to ensure the participation of civil society in the whole process of sustainable development.

At the International Conference on Peace and Development in Central America, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, in October 1994, a cycle of dialogues was completed which opens up a new stage in the links among the governments of the region and among these and the various stakeholder groups in Central America, the organizations of integration and the international community. Also, as an important annex to the Tegucigalpa Declaration, a series of political, social, cultural, economic, environmental and natural resource commitments was adopted.

The majority of the ALIDES commitments in the political, economic, environmental and natural resource fields have been met or are being implemented. Nevertheless, the majority of the commitments in the social and cultural fields are still not being met in a framework of equity, solidarity and equality of opportunity and the full participation of society.

As the President of the Republic of Honduras stated in October 1999 at the meeting of the Consultative Group on the Reconstruction and Transformation of Central America, in Stockholm, the natural disaster due to Hurricane Mitch destroyed many years of sacrifice in the success story of Central American integration and progress in the programmes to achieve macroeconomic stability as basis for meeting the social and cultural commitment of ALIDES.



Objectives and Challenges of the Master Plan for the National Reconstruction and Transformation of Honduras

In the context of the ALIDES concept of sustainable development, the vision of the Master Plan for the National Reconstruction and Transformation of Honduras is to create in Honduras a society with equality of opportunity, with a continual improvement in the standard of living of the population to satisfy its economic, social, cultural, environmental needs and population policies, without compromising the capacity to meet the needs of future generations. A large part of this vision of a new country is embodied in the Plan.

The objectives of the Plan, for 2001, are:

- to achieve a level of GDP per capita equal to that of 1998, in an environment of macroeconomic stability, a reduced public administration that is trained and efficient, a strengthened regional integration and a reduced external debt;
- sustainable human development with the positive results of the early phases of the educational, health and housing reforms;
- regulation of the occupation and use of the land and promotion of the sustainable management of the resources, giving more importance to the conservation and protection of the environment, incorporating environmental themes and educational programmes; and
- democratic participation based on the complementarity of the State and civil society, consolidating public participation with an efficient and trustworthy system of justice, citizen safety, decentralization and equity without differentiation of class, age, religion or ethnic origin.

These short-term objectives of the Plan are being complemented by the National Council on Sustainable Development (NCSDD) with a National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD), based on the management of the water basins and the fight against corruption and poverty, giving priority to the organization of a national system of integrity and to decentralization and deconcentration of State services.

Following the postulates of the President's Decalogue and the National Commitment to Integrity in the Sustainable Development of a New Honduras, for the implementation of ALIDES and the Plan, the NCSDD, in agreement with the project signed with the Executive Secretariat for Integrated Development (OAS/ESID) and the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), is revising and consulting the National Strategy for Sustainable Development with the main stakeholder groups, with a view to identifying the problems, transforming them into objectives and defining solutions.

This Strategy is designed to promote, develop and strengthen general processes in the political, environmental, economic and sociocultural fields, in the pursuit of sustainable development. The pillars on which the Strategy rests are:

- a national system of integrity to combat corruption in all its forms, in conformity with the National Commitment to Integrity in the Sustainable Development of a New Honduras;
- a national system of sustainable development, as the organizational entity that brings together all the institutions and organizations that make up the NCSDD and that subscribe to the National Commitment to Integrity in the Sustainable Development of a New Honduras, with the aim of formulating a long-term country project within the Comprehensive Development Framework; and
- a National Sustainable Development Foundation as an implementation mechanism for the financing of the Strategy.

As established in the National Commitment, sustainable development, the strengthening of a State based on law, the full observance of human rights, the strengthening of governance and the judicial system, the promotion of sustained economic growth as the best antidote to poverty, external debt relief, financial cooperation in a programme of sustainable development that includes the mitigation of natural disasters, and the implementation and follow-up of Agenda 21, ALIDES and the Interamerican Convention on Corruption cannot succeed without transparency.

In this context, the seven principal challenges of the Master Plan for the National Reconstruction and Transformation, may be summarized as follows:

- sustained economic growth to eliminate or reduce the structural causes of macroeconomic instability;
- reconstruction priorities that consider the environmental impact and the capacity to overcome future natural disasters;
- elimination of distortions and impediments to the efficiency of real investment;
- social equity and improvement of the human resources;
- institutional reforms and the opening up of trade compatible with Central American and hemispheric integration;
- reinforcing the sustainability of development; and
- reducing poverty and alleviating its most critical effects.

Public Participation: Indispensable Element of the Sustainable Development Strategy of Honduras

The Action Plan for the Sustainable Development of the Americas called on the OAS to give priority to the formulation of an inter-American strategy for the promotion of public participation in decision-making in sustainable development and, whenever necessary, to support the establishment and functioning of the National Councils on Sustainable Development, using the experience in Central America and that of other such Councils in the hemisphere.

With the support of the Earth Council and the Central American Commission on Environment and Development, National Councils on Sustainable Development of Mesoamerica and the Caribbean have been meeting to promote public participation in the Americas. Of these meetings, the following may be mentioned: that of 8–12 June 1998, in San José, Costa Rica; that of 30 November–3 December 1998, in Mattogrosso, Brazil; that of 3–5 February 1999, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; that of 4–5 March 1999, in Mexico, D.F.; that of 22–23 March 1999, in San Salvador; that of 22–23 April 1999, in New York, during the Seventh Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development; and that of 23–25 November 1999, in Managua, Nicaragua, at the level of the National Councils on Sustainable Development, of Central America and Mexico.

These meetings of the NCSDs have allowed follow-up and implementation of the Action Plans of the Presidential Summits of Rio de Janeiro; Santa Cruz de la Sierra; Santiago, Chile; and other Central American Summits with the United States of America, Europe, Mexico, Japan and the People's Republic of China on the subject of sustainable development.

On the basis of existing mechanisms, such as the dialogue in San José with the members of the European Union and other interested States, public participation is based on cooperation, exchange of knowl-

edge on the prevention of natural disasters, strengthening of democracy, good governance, political pluralism and peace, by fighting against corruption and poverty.

The proposed actions to promote public participation in a transparent, effective and responsible way in decision-making and in the formulation and execution of policies relative to sustainable development are to:

- strengthen and support the creation of fora on sustainable development themes at all levels of decision-making;
- promote alliances between governmental institutions and various sectors of civil society; and
- take advantage of public consultation embodied in current law and procedures.

In the meeting of the Consultative Group on the Reconstruction and Transformation of Central America, in Stockholm in May 1999, the President of the Republic of Honduras stated in the inaugural session, with reference to the Master Plan for National Reconstruction and Transformation: “We are going to undertake the reconstruction and transformation of the country, according to a model that the people of Honduras wishes to be superior to that which we have had and built with the assistance of all the most representative sectors of the nation. A country of consensus, not the one reconstructed, but a better one, because we merit it, have suffered for it and are working for it.”

The main part of this vision of a new country is embodied in the short- and medium-term objectives of the Master Plan for National Reconstruction and Transformation, but the impact of Hurricane Mitch raised the need for a strategy of sustainable development in the long term and an agenda for the transformation and reconstruction of Central America, under the principles, bases, objectives, instruments and commitments of ALIDES.

According to the Declaration of the Second Session of the Consultative Group on the Reconstruction and Transformation of Central America, adopted in Stockholm in May 1999, regional priorities were based on the following principles and objectives:

- to reduce the ecological and social vulnerability of the region;
- to reconstruct and transform with a focus based on transparency and good governance;
- to consolidate democracy and good governance by encouraging the decentralization of the functions and faculties of government, with the active participation of civil society;
- to promote respect for human rights, as a permanent objective; the equality of social class, the rights of children, of ethnic and other minorities, also merit special effort;
- to coordinate the efforts of donors, guided by the priorities established by the receiving countries; and
- to intensify efforts to reduce the external debt of the countries of the region.

In agreement with these regional priorities to reduce ecological and social vulnerability, the short- and medium-term aim of the Master Plan for National Reconstruction and Transformation, and the conflict between the present style of development and the environment, we are faced with the need for an integrated focus on the principal water basins of our country and for the implementation of the Governmental Plan for the New Agenda for Honduras, pursuant to the Decalogue of the President and the National Commitment to Integrity in the Sustainable Development of a New Honduras, of November 1998.

To have reconstruction and transformation with a focus based on transparency and good governance, this commitment represents an authentic national consensus on the most sensitive themes of ethics and transparency in sustainable development, with a view to reinforcing decentralization of governmental functions and faculties, with the active participation of civil society.

For this purpose, the analysis of the water basins of Honduras and the sustainable development situation following Hurricane Mitch represent a fundamental aspect of the National Strategy for Sustainable

Development, which the NCSD is harmonizing with the support of the Honduran College of Economists, the National Defence College, and other professional colleges, under an agenda of decentralization and land-use regulation, to promote respect for human rights as a permanent objective of the Master Plan.

A large part of the damage done by Hurricane Mitch is linked to the high vulnerability of Honduras, due mainly to inadequate styles of development, disorderly occupation of land, and deficiencies in the design and placement of infrastructure.

In this context, the National Strategy for Sustainable Development presents a proposal on the nation, within an alliance between the NCSD, the Honduran College of Economists and other academic, professional and business sectors, based on an integral view of the principal water basins of the country and on sectoral strategies, mechanisms of implementation, institutional framework, operative premises, follow-up and evaluation.

To analyze and harmonize this Strategy, through the project between the NCSD and the OAS/ESID on National Public Participation in Sustainable Development, several seminars and workshops were held with members of the NCSD and civil society groups subscribing to the National Commitment to Integrity in the Sustainable Development of a New Honduras.

In the Workshop on National Public Participation in Sustainable Development of the Forestry Sector, in September 1999 in La Ceiba, members of the two professional university forestry colleges, staff of the State Forestry Administration, the mayors of the Department of Atlantida, the Regional University Centre of the Atlantic Coast, and representatives of academia, business and private development organizations that make up the NCSD took part. The report of this Workshop, published by the NCSD, presented the principal conclusions and recommendations, with strategies for action in the forestry sector and the role played by the drainage basins in sustainable development within an integrated plan for forestry resources.

Subsequently, the Workshop on National Public Participation in Sustainable Development of the Agricultural Sector, in October 1999 in Juticalpa, Olancho, provided an opportunity for the analysis and harmonization of the National Programme of Sustainable Rural Development and the role of the agricultural sector's National Strategy for Sustainable Development. This Programme is the basis of a new approach to rural development that marks a change of strategy based on:

- citizen participation as an operational mode;
- decentralization as a support mechanism for good local government and people empowerment;
- sustainable management of the resources as a new way of rural investment to strengthen national development; and
- a new institutional arrangement to define the policies and strategies of rural development, incorporating promotion, cooperative planning, technical and financial support and standardizing interventions throughout the cycle of rural development projects as a function of local demands.

Finally, in the Workshop on National Public Participation in Sustainable Development of the Mining and Industrial Sectors, in San Pedro Sula in November 1999, the strategy for the private sector and for cities with high urban growth in Honduras, such as San Pedro Sula, Choloma, Progreso, Puerto Cortés and Villanueva, was analyzed.

These three Workshops also allowed time to validate the National Strategy for Sustainable Development in the context of the sectoral theme and the economic (agricultural) section of the Eighth Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development in April 2000.

In this context, the integrated sustainable land management to guarantee the conservation of biodiversity is one of the principal objectives of ALIDES. Urban planning and the adoption of suitable measures for sustainable economic development, together with the promotion of trade and investment to promote employment, are basic aspects of economic policy for the new millennium.

The proposal of a broader focus with respect to associations and the management of sustainable development demands greater coordination of the efforts of national and municipal governments, multilateral and bilateral organisms, civil society in all its forms and the private sector, national and foreign.

So that the Economic Strategy for Sustainable Development, in as far as the policy of sustainability of the foreign debt and the sectoral economic policies are compatible with the fight against corruption and poverty and the analysis of the drainage basins, it is necessary that the macroeconomic policies contribute to resolving the microeconomic problems, with clear proposals to overcome territorial imbalances and the socio-environmental crisis. For example, the proper management of the drainage basins should guarantee the diverse uses of the water resources, in quality and quantity, giving priority to the uses of renewable energy resources (hydroelectric power) with a greater participation of the private sector and local government in power generation and distribution.

On the other hand, the set of elements that make it possible for the various components of the State and civil society to organize themselves and act with transparency, efficiency and efficacy are represented in the national integrity system that the NCSD, in a strategic alliance with Transparency–Honduras, the Citizens' Council, the Honduran College of Economists, the National Defence College and other professional colleges, is implementing under the National Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Honduras.

Sustainable Development at the Threshold of the New Millennium

On the threshold of the new millennium, reflections on sustainable development should renounce debates on the functions of the State and of the market and aim at finding an integrated framework or a global solution to questions of strategy and policy. For example, in the case of industrial policy, after experimenting with fiscal incentives and export subsidies, many countries in development, including those of Central America, came to the conclusion that incentives and subsidies enrich the businesspeople, contributing little to sustainable economic development and to creating jobs.

As indicated in the World Development Report 1999–2000, *On the Threshold of the 21st Century*, the World Bank adopted an integrated framework of development with the following aims: to promote a more selective search for major goals; to bring out the integrated character of policy formulation; to stress the indispensable institutional factors; and to coordinate initiatives in this field.

As the President of the United States of America noted at the 54th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group, in Washington, D.C., in September 1999, “As we approach the 21st century we must also ask ourselves, however: is it enough just to fix the market that is? Should we accept the fact that, at a time when the people in the United States are enjoying perhaps the strongest economy in their history, 1.3 billion of our fellow human beings survive on less than a dollar a day? Should we accept the fact that nearly 40 million people—after the Green revolution, when most of us discuss agriculture and food as a cause for international trade conflicts because we want to fight over who sells the most food, since there are so many places that can produce more than their own people need—are we supposed to accept the fact that nearly 40 million people a year die of hunger? That’s nearly equal to the number of all the people killed in World War II. Are we supposed to accept the fact that even though technology has changed the equation of the role of energy in the production of wealth; even though technology has changed the distances

in time and space necessary for learning, and for business, as well as educational, interchanges—are we supposed to face the fact that some people and nations are doomed to be left behind forever? I hope we will not accept that. I hope we will start the new millennium with a new resolve: to give every person in the world—through trade and technology, through investments in education and health care—the chance to be part of a widely shared prosperity, in which all the peoples' potential can be developed more fully.”

The answer to these questions should be found in a new integrated framework for development that would contribute to the globalization of solidarity in the new millennium, with the firm decision to provide humanity, through the market place and through technology, food security, the reduction of dire poverty, and the necessary investments in education and health, to achieve sustainable human development.

In response to the commitments established in Agenda 21 and in ALIDES, for the countries of Central America, a sustainable development strategy, especially after the grave damage caused by Hurricane Mitch, should be based on the environment and, much more, on the political, economic and socio-cultural aspects. For this, it is important to strengthen the National Council on Sustainable Development with representation of the public sector and civil society to maintain the coherence and consistency of national policies, programmes and projects through a sustainable development strategy.

The NCSD of Honduras was the initiator of the process for implementing Agenda 21 and ALIDES at the national level. Subsequently, in August 1996, the NCSD of El Salvador was created and has achieved a large public participation in the validation of the sustainable human development strategy of the United Nations Development Programme. In Nicaragua, the NCSD was created in June 1997 as a forum for analysis, discussion, evaluation, dissemination, cooperative planning and follow-up, with the participation of the State and civil society, with the aim of promoting the adoption of a model of sustainable development.

Likewise, in Costa Rica, since October 1994, the National Sustainable Development System was created and, within this System, the NCSD, as a mechanism for the various sectors of the Costa Rican civil society to participate in the creation of a solid basis for sustainable development. In April 1998 it was reformed with a view to broadening the membership and to form Regional Councils on Sustainable Development.

In Guatemala, since 1987, the Law on Urban and Rural Development Councils created a national system of sustainable development comprising a National Council and Regional, Departmental, Municipal and Local Councils. At present, important legal reforms are being made to guarantee better citizen participation in the sustainable development strategy. However, it is important to point out that, to a large extent, the Guatemala Peace Treaties are inspired by the principles, bases, objectives and the political, economic, social, cultural and environmental commitments of ALIDES.

In Panama, the National Council on Sustainable Development was established and is attached to the Office of the President of the Republic. Its object is the development of change in the quality of life of the Panamanian citizen. The Council was later reformed so that the number of members could be increased by decision of the majority of the members of the NCSD of Panama.

Lastly, in Belize, important consultations and meetings were held to promote the NCSD, which was established at the end of 1999.

The positive experiences of the Central American NCSDs were acknowledged in the Action Plan of the Summit of Central American Presidents, in Santiago, Chile. The renewal of the commitment to sustainable development and the establishment of strategies for the reduction of poverty raise the need to make the coming decades a period of promises met with respect to a series of declarations, conventions and commitments made at the world and regional levels by the countries of Central America.

The need to humanize globalization within a social dimension of sustainable development derives from the speech made by the Managing-Director of the IMF at the last meeting in 1999 of the Board of Governors

of the IMF and the World Bank. After referring to international monetary and financial reforms, he gave us, with fine humanism, a message of solidarity by pointing out that finances and markets belong to the people and should be at their service.

So it is imperative to have the necessary financing for sustainable development and to meet the commitments made in the various Declarations of several international meetings to cut dire poverty by half by 2015 at the latest, to: make primary education universal; reduce by two-thirds the mortality of new-born babies and infants; achieve a 75 per cent reduction in maternal mortality; make access to perinatal health services available to all; and eliminate inequality of the sexes in primary and secondary education.

These seven commitments to sustainable development are:

- *The reduction of dire poverty*: The proportion of the world population living in dire poverty in developing countries should be reduced by at least half by 2015 at the latest (World Summit on Social Development. Copenhagen, Denmark, 1995);
- *Universal primary education*: Primary education should become universal in all countries by 2015 at the latest. (World Conference on Education for All. Jomtien, Thailand, 1990; World Summit on Social Development. Copenhagen, Denmark, 1995; Fourth World Conference on the Advancement of Women. Beijing, China, 1995);
- *The equality of the sexes*: There must be demonstrable advance towards equality of the sexes and the empowerment of women by the elimination of discrimination by reason of sex in primary and secondary education, by 2015 at the latest. (International Conference on Population and Development. Cairo, Egypt, 1994; World Summit on Social Development. Copenhagen, Denmark, 1995; Fourth World Conference on the Advancement of Women. Beijing, China, 1995);
- *Neonatal and infant mortality*: The mortality of new-born babies and infants less than five years old in all developing countries should be reduced to two-thirds of the 1990 level by 2015 at the latest (International Conference on Population and Development. Cairo, Egypt, 1994);

- *Maternal mortality*: This mortality should be reduced by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015. (International Conference on Population and Development. Cairo, Egypt, 1994; Fourth World Conference on the Advancement of Women. Beijing, China, 1995);
- *Reproductive health*: There should be free access to perinatal health services through a system of primary health care for all persons of the relevant age groups by 2015 at the latest (International Conference on Population and Development. Cairo, Egypt, 1994); and
- *The environment*: All countries should have a national sustainable development strategy under execution before 2005, in order to reverse the present trends in loss of natural resources world-wide and nationally by 2015 at the latest (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1992).

These commitments are a challenge for the developing countries and for the donor countries on the threshold of the new millennium. Donor countries should achieve the objective of giving 0.7 per cent of GDP for development assistance. A practical means of verifying that promises are being met would be to check sustainable development indicators that would show this and, if necessary, help in the development of mechanisms for meeting such promises.

These same indicators could be applied to verify compliance with the strategies, bases and political, economic, social, cultural and environmental objectives of ALIDES. As the Managing-Director of the IMF said, "The objectives have been defined. The commitments have been made. The goals have been set. The moment has arrived to act. Let us do it".

To do it, as Pope John Paul II said in his message for the celebration of the World Day of Peace (1 January 2000), we must urgently reconsider the models that inspire development options in the light of a new and deeper reflection on the sense of the economy and its aims. This means to insert solidarity into the networks of reciprocal relations between economics, politics and social affairs that globalization is now

tending to widen. “These processes call for rethinking international cooperation in terms of a new culture of solidarity. When seen as a sowing of peace, cooperation cannot be reduced to aid or assistance, especially if given with an eye to the benefits to be received in return for the resources made available. Rather, it must express a concrete and tangible commitment to solidarity which makes the poor the agents of their own development and enables the greatest number of people, in their specific economic and political circumstances, to exercise the creativity that is characteristic of human beings and on which the wealth of nations too is dependent. These processes demand a reorientation of international cooperation, in terms of a new culture of solidarity. Thought of as a source of peace, cooperation cannot be simply reduced to aid and assistance, and even less, a search for advantage in the yield of the available resources. Indeed, cooperation must express a specific and tangible commitment to solidarity, in such a way that it makes of the poor the protagonists of their development and allows the greatest possible number of persons to stimulate, in the concrete economic circumstances in which they live, the very creativity of the human being, on which the wealth of nations also depends.”

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CARICAD's Role in Promoting Regional and Subregional Cooperation in Sustainable Development

Introduction

Over the past decade, CARICAD has intensified its efforts in promoting cooperative strategies for development among its partners and within its member countries. To this end, the Agency has collaborated with various development organizations and associations on related initiatives. To date, activities such as the implementation of the UNDP/CDB (Caribbean Development Bank) Capacity 21 Project, the commissioning of case studies in best practices within the region and a SIDS/Technical Assistance Programme Needs Assessment Survey have been undertaken. The Agency, under its over-arching theme and area of focus of public-sector reform for sustainable human development, continues to promote and undertake related activities.

This paper is intended to provide an overview of CARICAD's experience in implementing initiatives aimed at strengthening regional/subregional cooperation. In particular, focus will be on the implementation of the UNDP/CDB Capacity 21 Project which has, as a major component, the establishment of sustainable development councils as coordinating units for national sustainable development efforts.

National Councils on Sustainable Development

The foundation of the National Councils on Sustainable Development (NCSDs) may be traced to several initiatives in the 1990s which sought to bring into focus the importance of integrating environmental issues into the mainstream of development planning. The watershed, the Rio de Janeiro “Earth Summit” of June 1992, produced a series of agreements on sustainable development at the local, national and international levels. Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, stresses the importance of establishing national coordinating structures to follow up its programmes of action.

Chapter 38 of Agenda 21 points to these coordinating structures as part of a system of international organizations within the United Nations system. The genesis of the National Councils on Sustainable Development can be seen, in essence, as counterparts of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, facilitating the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national level.

In the aftermath of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), a critical assessment of Caribbean institutions and development strategies became necessary if the concept of sustainable development were to be a cornerstone of development policy. Two broad principles can be said to have emerged:

- There was global consensus that environment and development issues should be integrated into policy, planning and management; and
- SIDS should formulate and implement planning to take account of sustainable development.

Application of these principles in practice meant a search for institutional innovations that would provide a critique of resource allocations, determine constraints in policy implementation, review decision-making and promote the active involvement of the social partners—workers, employers and governments—in setting the goals of national development.

To address these challenges, negotiations with the special funding facility of the United Nations Development Programme, Capacity 21, resulted in the design of two pilot projects for the Pacific and Caribbean regions. The latter involved Barbados, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica and Saint Lucia, which were chosen to illustrate a variety of population size, environmental issues, political status and approaches to natural resource management and experiences with NGOs and community organizations. The focus of the project, Strengthening Capacity for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean, was therefore capacity-building. The intention was also to facilitate the replication of best practices, determined by the Project, in all CARICAD member countries.

The basic approach of the Caribbean Capacity 21 Project was centred on:

- the need to establish and institutionalize a participatory mechanism to formalize social participation in national decision-making;
- the need to promote development that is people-centred;
- the need to provide greater opportunities (through a formalized structure) for citizens and their organizations to play a more productive role in the complex task of promoting the transition to sustainable development; and
- the need for greater intersectoral dialogue and linkage, particularly between agriculture, tourism and the environment.

In particular, the project sought to reorient national development planning and to make it more relevant and sustainable. In this regard, emphasis fell on establishing a mechanism that broadened decision-making by building consensus and facilitating greater collaboration between government and its social partners—the business and commercial sectors and civic groups in society—with a view to promoting sustainable human development in the Caribbean.

The focal point of this capacity-building effort has been the establishment of the National Council on Sustainable Development or some similar coordinating mechanism. To this end, NCSDs have been established in each of the six participating countries. The membership is broad-based and cross-sectoral, and includes representatives from a diverse group of stakeholders.

Sustainable development councils are envisioned as multi-sectoral catalysts for policies that integrate economic, environment and social goals across sectors and agencies. This vision is built upon the understanding that sustainable development is everybody's concern and making it work requires everybody's engagement. These councils established with the intention of providing a single forum to ensure widest participation by stakeholders in sustainable development strategies, plans and projects, while creating mechanisms to follow up the Rio Agreements.

Although the mechanism is formally referred to as an NCSD, it is the guiding principles in operation rather than the actual name of the entity that are important. For instance, in Saint Lucia, the mechanism was called the National Economic and Social Consultative Council; in Barbados, it is the Commission on Sustainable Development; in Dominica, the National Commission for the Follow-up of UNCED. The common threads are the analytical, collaborative and participatory attributes of these bodies. The overriding defined role of the councils is to analyze, evaluate and formulate sectoral and intersectoral strategies for the promotion of sustainable development and to advise policy-makers thereon.

Defining Terms of Reference

Although the key features of general concern have been the adoption of appropriate terms of reference for an NCSD and its location in a position of influence in the government machinery, the formulation of and agreement on the Council's terms of reference reflect certain commonalities:

- to serve as a vehicle for facilitating the adoption of an integrated approach to development, offering the opportunity for the widest possible participation by all relevant social, economic and environmental groups in the discussion of issues of national interest, and ultimately for the involvement of these groups in the process of economic management and social advancement;
- to establish well defined roles for public and private-sector agencies, community-based and other functional groups, charged with the responsibility for, and integrally involved in, the development of the various social sectors;
- to ensure inter-agency coordination of policies and programmes geared to playing the above-mentioned role, so as to minimize duplication of effort and to promote the greatest possible complementarity;
- to formulate appropriate joint strategic responses to changing social and economic conditions and prospects, both domestic and international;
- to provide a forum for monitoring agreed action and for review and/or revision of mutually agreed policies and strategies;
- to advise government on measures required to integrate environmental and economic considerations into decision-making and on issues of sustainable development; and
- to promote greater understanding and public awareness of the cultural, social, economic and policy approaches to attaining sustainable development.

An assessment of the Caribbean NCSDs' experience has shown them to be useful mechanisms for coordinating sustainable development activities at the national level and promoting civil involvement, as recommended in the SIDS Programme of Action. The NCSD encourages the establishment of subcommittees to review and analyze specific issues.

This, in particular, has greatly enhanced the possibility of developing a bottom-up approach to decision-making. As a result of the implementation of the Caribbean Capacity 21 Project, it has been recognized and it is now clearly accepted that the focus, structure and composition of the Council make it suitable and favourably positioned to fulfil a broader role in coordinating national planning for sustainable development.

In addition, the role that social partners now play in the pursuit of sustainable development is gaining acceptance within the region as a framework for defining economic policy. There is now a greater trend to solicit the views and participation of non-state stakeholder groups in issues of sustainable development. Not only technical knowledge, but local knowledge as well is utilized.

However, the NCSD, as a new entity within an established institutional framework, must ensure that links within the existing system are sufficiently effective to enable it to carry out its mandate. At the completion of the three-year pilot phase of the Capacity 21 Project, none of the NCSDs had been institutionalized. A pressing need for NCSD management is therefore to open channels for dialogue with government to resolve critical issues that affect their long-term growth and development.



Critical Issues Facing the Caribbean NCSDs

Institutionalization

The broad cross-sectoral composition of an NCSD's membership allows them to promote interagency collaboration on national planning for sustainable human development. However, an examination of the government structures in which the NCSDs are placed and the factors required to strengthen their operational capacity has indicated that the lack of a legislative and appropriate institutional framework has hindered the ability of NCSDs to function properly. As the Dominica National Commission for the Follow-up of UNCED is now experiencing, the recommendations of an NCSD will lack impact on and significance for decision-makers if they are not supported by appropriate legislation to ensure that the deliberations of the members are not in vain. The fear of wasting time and energy deliberating issues and making recommendations that are only shelved has led to frustration among some Caribbean NCSD members. The Dominica experience may be cited as an example of frustration leading to non-participation and the declining interest of NCSD's members.

In the Capacity 21 Project, it soon became evident that a clearly defined legal status of the NCSD within the government structure, together with adequate support and resources, was needed for the NCSD to carry out its mandate effectively. The Council is mandated to discuss and make recommendations on issues that may at times go against the grain of popular thought; for example, recommendations on issues such as the confiscation of agricultural land by government to construct an airport or a hotel. The Council may find that its recommendations run contrary to the decisions taken by individual agencies represented on the Council. In such a case, it is not difficult to understand the complexities involved in deciding on where a member's loyalty lies.

Without legal grounding, it can become an exercise in futility when real decisions are to be made that go against the status quo. The identification of an NCSD with the decision-making structures of government would enable it to have a greater impact on policies related to sustainable development.

Legal Status within the Government Structure

It is believed that legislating the arrangements would in theory add greater certainty and transparency to the overall process while dispersing much of the distrust that characterizes the relationship, in some countries, between government and its social partners. The passage of legislation to govern the process will, by itself, have limited effect if the political culture does not support it.

The ideal arrangement would therefore be to establish the national body and its supporting arrangements by law. If the principle of sustainable development is adopted, then consideration might have to be given to the legal establishment of an environmental authority or agency (as was done in Jamaica—the National Resources Conservation Authority—and in Trinidad and Tobago—the Environmental Management Authority) as well as to the redrafting of existing environmental laws that do not take account of the development perspective.

At a consultation on Policy and Legal Considerations for Sustainable Development, in Barbados in September 1997, as part of the Capacity 21 Project, representatives of government, the private sector and NGOs from seven CARICOM countries recommended that Caribbean countries give consideration to enacting legislation similar to the Sustainable Development Bill passed by the Government of Fiji. The Government of Jamaica acted on this recommendation, setting in train an initiative to review and evaluate the island's legislative framework for sustainable development. This resulted in a series of discussion papers that have identified priority areas where legislation needs to be revised, improved or developed in order to establish a comprehensive framework for sustainable development in Jamaica.

Conflict Resolution—Team Building

From the outset it was recognized that some difficulties were likely to be encountered in assisting people to come to grips with the meaning of the term “sustainable development” and what it meant to their respective countries. The endemic threats to the conscientious pursuit of sustainable development were also acknowledged. Therefore the close monitoring and nurturing of the guardians of the process in each territory was pursued within the limitations of the mandate and resources of the implementing agency.

The very foundation of the NCSD is arguably in a constant state of compromised resolve. NCSDs comprise a diverse set of persons representing various interests, economic as well as environmental. Being cognizant of these tensions, the implementing agency sought, by team-building exercises, to strengthen the commitment of NCSD members to its central objective: the promotion of an integrated approach to sustainable human development.

Cooperation and Collaboration

The experience of the Caribbean NCSDs has shown that not only is it necessary to include important interest groups in NCSD membership, but that communication among members is also critical, to ensure a proper flow of information and a more efficient use of member resources for the achievement of NCSD goals.

The Councils represent an excellent mechanism through which programmes of external donor agencies may be filtered. In Dominica, the National Commission for the Follow-up of UNCED was given the lead to assess and in some cases oversee the implementation of projects being proposed by external agencies which impact on the environmental management of the country's natural resources. This coordinating function has also served to curtail the duplication of effort at the international level, thereby reducing the chances of recipient fatigue.

Capacity-building

The NCSDs lack the capacity to implement recommendations and decisions. What has become clear is that appropriate mechanisms are needed for moving the process forward, and indicators to measure progress are also needed.

Public Awareness

The NCSD provides a forum for the exchange of information and ideas relevant to sustainable development across sectoral boundaries. However, there are indications of a need for greater public awareness of sustainable development issues at policy, leadership and community levels, and of the role of the NCSD in this process.

Further Challenges

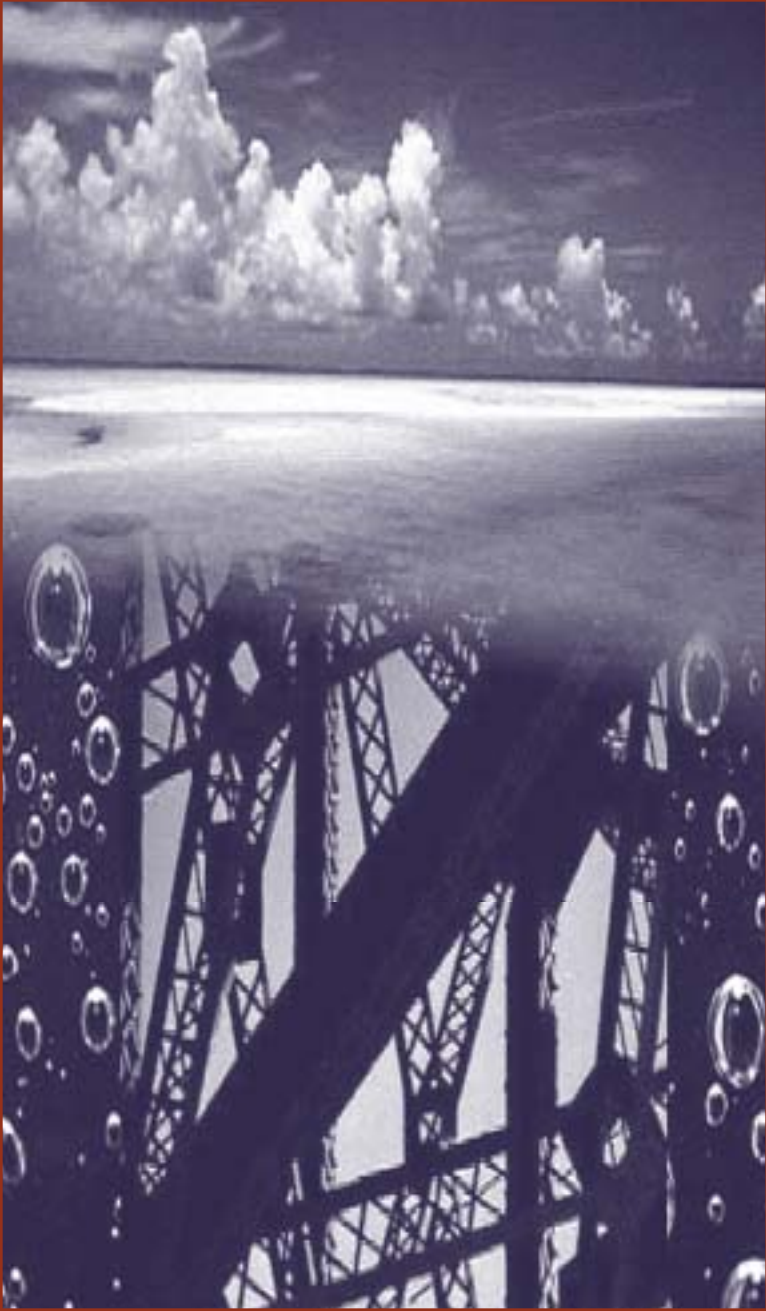
- maintaining the interest of members in the work of an advisory body; members need the assurance that their work would have an impact;
- the inability to gain support of the private sector, of youth and of communities;
- limitation of the scope of the National Councils on Sustainable Development to influence national policy;
- limited knowledge of the functions of the NCSD, its relation to the wider public and all government departments;
- the lack of appropriate, effective public-awareness programmes targeted to all sections of society;
- limited time of members to devote themselves to a Council's business, owing to their other commitments;
- lack of capacity to disseminate information in a timely manner;
- limited human and technical resources, which limit a Council's ability to reach its objectives;
- lack of financial resources; and
- absence of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of interventions made by the NCSD at the agency and national levels.

At the national level, therefore, the Councils of the English-speaking Caribbean have fulfilled their mandate to serve as the primary mechanism for: coordination and information exchange; elaboration and implementation of sustainable development plans; stimulating public awareness of sustainable development issues; and formulating sustainable development policy and advising government thereon.

As a result of the implementation of the Caribbean Capacity 21 Project, it has been recognized and is now clearly accepted that the focus, structure and composition of an NCSD make it suited and favourably positioned to fulfil a broader role in coordinating national planning for sustainable development.

It is envisaged that, in time, the NCSD could be challenged to expand its role by taking an active part in activities such as shaping national trade and environmental policy, promoting training and research on negotiation techniques and economic valuation of environmental resources. The idea being promoted is one of sustainable management of natural resources and the incorporation of environmental concerns into the entire development process on an on-going basis.

*Based on a paper prepared by
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Sustainable Development Programme of the Caribbean Community—CARICOM

Introduction

The establishment of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) was the result of a 15-year effort to fulfil the hope of regional integration, which was born with the establishment of the British West Indies Federation in 1958. It was a Federal Government drawn from ten member islands. Although a plan for a Customs Union was drawn up, emphasis was not placed on the economic aspects of the Federation during the four years of its existence. Economically, the Region remained as it had been for centuries and free trade between the member countries was not even introduced during this period. The West Indies Federation came to an end in 1962, but its end must be regarded, in many ways, as the real beginning of what is now the Caribbean Community.

The end of the Federation meant the beginning of more serious efforts by the political leaders in the Caribbean to strengthen the ties between the islands and the mainland, by providing for the continuance and strengthening of the areas of cooperation that existed during the Federation.

CARICOM was established by the Treaty of Chaguaramas, which was signed by Barbados, Jamaica, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago and came into effect on 1 August 1973. From its inception, the Community

has concentrated on promoting the integration of the economies of its member states, on coordinating the foreign policies of the independent member states and on functional cooperation, especially in various areas of social and human endeavour.

Member States

The member states of the Caribbean Community are:

- *Antigua and Barbuda*
- *Barbados*
- *Dominica*
- *Guyana*
- *Jamaica*
- *St. Kitts and Nevis*
- *St. Vincent and the Grenadines*
- *Suriname*
- *The Bahamas*
- *Belize*
- *Grenada*
- *Haiti*
- *Montserrat*
- *Saint Lucia*
- *Trinidad and Tobago*

The Bahamas is a member of the Community but not of the Common Market.

Implementation of Regional Sustainable Development Strategies in the Caribbean: the CARICOM Experience

Introduction

The “Earth Summit” in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 led to an increased focus on existing multilateral environmental agreements aimed at guiding sustainable development at the local, national and international levels. Among these agreements are: the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, New York, 1992); the Convention for the Protection and Management of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena de Indias, 1983); the Convention on the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Pesticides in International Trade (Basle, 1989); and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS/POA). The countries, for the most part, have used these agreements as a basis for implementation of national programmes and activities to promote national, regional and global sustainable development.

Presently, the programme pursued by the CARICOM Secretariat, the regional organization charged with the development and coordination of its member states’ sustainable development policies and strategies, has two major objectives:

- regional sustainable development policy formulation and coordination; and
- regional natural-resource management.

This programme is the Secretariat’s policy mechanism for integrating global, hemispheric and regional mandates on sustainable development. The main mission is to coordinate institutional capacity-building projects and technical-support services to member states for the formulation and implementation of local intersectoral plans and programmes to advance national sustainable development.

In seeking to accomplish this interdisciplinary mission, the programme strives to harmonize disparate development goals, such as natural resource and environmental management, with social equity and economic growth. The programme focuses on the key areas of environmental management, disaster management, human settlements, meteorology, renewable energy and science and technology infrastructure. Special emphasis is placed on formalizing and participating in multi-agency Wider Caribbean coordination mechanisms for regional sustainable development policy formulation and implementation in key areas.

Disaster Management

Caribbean small island developing states are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters. This vulnerability has heightened awareness of the importance of disaster planning and mitigation as part of national development efforts. The regional mechanism is the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) which, over the years, has evolved into a regional central guiding agency in which the major work undertaken includes:

- institutional capacity-building through human resource capability development (including technical support and training);
- standardization of organization and codes and the establishment of model programmes, model legislation, etc.; and
- improved structures for cooperation with other interested parties and expanded networking within the region and internationally.

To date, CDERA has developed a comprehensive network of national emergency-management institutions to provide assistance when necessary in times of emergency. CDERA has also assisted the region through the Disaster Emergency-Response and Management Systems Project funded by the United Nations Development Programme. This Project aims to improve the region's ability to manage the impact of natural and technological disasters through a process of regional capacity-building in the field of disaster management.

The work of CDERA has, however, been limited by the economic conditions of the Caribbean. The level of investment in disaster planning at the national level is constrained by a lack of financial resources. This, combined with a lack of adequate technical personnel, has created major obstacles to strategic planning and the routine functioning of CDERA, resulting in the inability of the Agency to meet the growing demands of its member states.

However, in the evolutionary process, the Agency fully embraces the concepts of comprehensive disaster management with a view to:

- the development and adoption by the member states of national disaster-mitigation plans and programmes as part of development planning;
- the establishment of appropriate institutional arrangements to facilitate national coordination of hazard-mitigation programmes and to foster collaboration and cooperation between the national disaster-management officials and development planners; and
- the adoption of vulnerability assessment as a tool for the appraisal of proposals for new development, where appropriate.

A second project, the Caribbean Disaster-Mitigation Project, is implemented by the Organization of American States' Unit of Sustainable Development and Environment, for the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and the Caribbean Regional Programme. This project aims to bring the concept of disaster-vulnerability assessment and mitigation to participants. Through public awareness programmes, this project ensures that disaster-mitigation information and technical skills are accurately and effectively transmitted to project participants. This is done through appropriate workshops, technology transfer and training sessions, the drafting and distribution of manuals and other publications and/or the establishment of public information campaigns.

Freshwater Resources and Coastal-Zone Management

The availability of fresh water in the region is governed to a large extent by the geology of the islands of the Caribbean. Most of the member states, as a result of a combination of geology and expanding populations, particularly in the coastal zone, are particularly susceptible to shortages of fresh water. This susceptibility is increased by the general lack of appropriate policies governing its use.

The Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI), in collaboration with other regional and hemispheric agencies, has submitted a project proposal to the Global Environment Facility for Block B funding to prepare a freshwater management project for the region.

Waste Management

A number of focal areas have been identified under this subprogramme referring to the implementation of the SIDS/POA and the Convention for the Protection and Management of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena de Indias, 1983). These include:

- land-based sources of marine pollutants—pollutants originating on land and reaching the sea by coastal disposal, discharge from rivers, estuaries, coastal establishments and outfalls;
- agricultural non-point-source pollutants—pollutants associated with agricultural sediments, nutrients, pesticides, pathogens and solid waste;
- sewage pollution control—domestic and industrial sewage (waste water);
- solid-waste management—development of appropriate solid-waste management policies and techniques for waste minimization in member states, and the use of cleaner technologies; and
- trans-boundary movement of hazardous waste—transshipment of waste through regional waters.

Awareness of the impacts of pollution on the coastal and marine environments of the Wider Caribbean Region has increased.

CEHI is a member of the technical committee developing the Protocol on the Control of Land-based Sources of Marine Pollution and has assumed a lead role in the development and implementation of the Protocol in the region, most recently for water-resource management and waste management under the SIDS/POA.

To date, most Caribbean territories have either developed or are developing national effluent standards that are in line with those proposed in the Protocol. However, these should be continually reviewed and refined with the objective of continual improvement and with a view to achieving zero discharge in sensitive areas. In this regard, CEHI, in collaboration with UNEP, has been working on the promotion and implementation of sewage and industrial-effluent guidelines for the Caribbean.

A number of solid-waste management programmes have also been developed in an attempt to control and minimize solid-waste generation in member states. One such programme is the Solid Waste Management Project funded by the World Bank. This project consists of interventions at national and regional levels and addresses infrastructural and institutional capacity-building in the participating countries.

Additionally, the concept of appropriate solid- and liquid-waste management techniques in the tourism sector has also been given some attention in the member states; however, this area has still to be appropriately explored.

In the area of public education and awareness with respect to pollution-control strategies, a number of training programmes have been conducted in the Caribbean, in which the issues of sewage-treatment and solid-waste management plans were addressed.

Coastal and Marine Resources

The development and management of programmes designed to achieve the ecologically and economically sustainable utilization of coastal and marine resources have generally remained a major challenge for the states of the Wider Caribbean. The lack of an integrated approach to coastal and marine-area management has limited the effectiveness of past and present management practices.

The CARICOM Secretariat, through this subprogramme, has supported applied-research initiatives on the management of coastal areas in the Caribbean. This is with the aim of supporting programmes of research that would seek to restore, maintain or develop a better equilibrium between biodiversity, economic viability and social equity in coastal area management.

One such initiative is the development of a programme that will encourage and support multistakeholder approaches to coastal-zone management in the Caribbean. This particular programme identifies the differences between the disciplines, countries, institutions and economic activities involved in coastal-zone management, and attempts to reduce the distortions they generate, in an effort to achieve integrated coastal-zone management.

Another such initiative is the proposal by the CARICOM Secretariat to have the Caribbean Sea internationally recognized as a special area in the context of sustainable development. This proposal is based upon the concept that the Caribbean Sea is a highly vulnerable semi-enclosed area shared by a number of countries and must be protected if it is to be developed on a sustainable basis. The aim is to provide an integrated approach to the management of the activities that have an impact on the Caribbean Sea. The proposed instrument will be informed by, *inter alia*, the concepts, definitions and approaches adopted in the Barbados SIDS/POA.

Several agencies are taking useful collaborative initiatives in the execution of this programme. These include:

- CIDA/CFRAMP (CARICOM Fisheries Resource Assessment and Management Programme), in partnership with the CARICOM Fisheries Resource Management Project, to promote regional integrated coastal-zone and fisheries management; and
- integrated coastal marine-resource management, including vulnerability assessments and policy planning for sustainable use of coastal areas, particularly coral reefs, mangroves and Exclusive Economic Zones, and fishery-resource management and marine management.

Sustainable Development Indicators

To pursue the development of an environmental vulnerability index consistent with the Barbados Programme of Action, the United Nations agencies have begun to pursue the development of an environmental vulnerability index (EVI) for small island developing states.

The EVI Project aims to develop a simple and robust EVI focusing on factors such as biodiversity, climate change and sea-level rise and exposure to oil spills. The EVI could be combined with economic vulnerability to give a composite index incorporating the environmental and economic concerns of a state.

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), in March 1999, prepared a report on economic vulnerability indicators. This report uses parameters such as export concentration, energy-import dependence and reliance on external finance to determine the economic vulnerability of small island developing states.

The major constraint to effectively producing the index has been the lack of adequate data and particularly the failure to collect and collate environmental/economic statistics. There is also need for greater collaboration among the various initiatives.

The CDB has taken the lead role in the region in the development of sustainable development indicators. Collaborative partnerships could be initiated to assist the CDB in their research on, and development of, these indicators, in the design and coordination of an effective regional sustainable development information infrastructure.

Meteorology

Forecasting climactic change is of great importance to the Wider Caribbean region. The population, agricultural lands and infrastructure of most of these states tend to be concentrated in the coastal zone, making the need for adequate forecasting measures imperative.

The CARICOM Secretariat, through this subprogramme and its involvement at the board level of the Caribbean Meteorological Institute and the Caribbean Meteorological Organization, has supported a number of initiatives to improve the forecasting capabilities of the regional forecasting network. There has been great emphasis on the training of meteorologists and the regulation of the work of meteorologists and meteorological technicians in the region.

There has also been support for a number of programmes to upgrade the technical capacity of the network by the introduction of new computerized support systems and other advanced technology. There has also been support for the IADB-funded project on El Niño, through the subregional office of the World Health Organization.

Another such initiative in the region is the support for the project on Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Global Climate Change; CARICOM chairs the Project Advisory Committee. This project is implemented by the Organization of American States and backed by the Global Environment Facility, which assists the region in developing the institutional capacity to predict and deal with the impacts of climate change. The objective of the project is to assist in the strengthening of the region's institutional capacity with the overall goal of preparing participating States to cope with the adverse effects of climate change.

Currently, mechanisms are being investigated to ensure sustainability of the programmes undertaken for the project. In that regard, the transformation of the project into a regional climate change centre is being considered. The centre will be the coordinating mechanism for the Caribbean region in the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in the Caribbean region and will provide technical backstopping in all aspects of coping with adaptation to climate-change impacts. Therefore, the centre will provide

assistance to participating countries in fulfilling their commitments and responsibilities under the UNFCCC.

It is expected that the centre will play the following roles:

- collect and disseminate climate-change information and serve as an authoritative source in the negotiation of international agreements;
- advise CARICOM governments and the private sector on climate change and related issues;
- develop special programmes targeting key issues such as coastal-zone management and hurricane preparedness, and sectors such as tourism, health, insurance and the oil and petrochemical industries;
- assist in resource-sharing, technical cooperation and information exchange, regionally and elsewhere throughout the world;
- link with other SIDS initiatives; and
- execute regional and national projects.

Human Settlements

The aim of this subprogramme is to contribute to sustainable human development through support for the efforts of member states to improve the quality of life in human settlements in the region. This is done through the implementation of a Caribbean Human Settlements Plan of Action, which was developed after presentations at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul (1996). Other objectives include:

- facilitation of the development, harmonization and implementation of macroeconomic policies, with a view to identifying sustainable and socially just policies consistent with the macroeconomic objectives adopted by the respective countries;
- facilitation of access to land and security of tenure for all socioeconomic groups, through the improvement of land management and the adoption of the necessary legal and regulatory frameworks; and
- establishment of networks of governments of the region to ensure best practices, technologies and methods of capacity-building.

The CARICOM Secretariat has facilitated initiatives in these areas through the Caribbean Human Settlements Plan of Action, which aims to support the efforts of member states to improve the quality of life in human settlements in the region. It also provides direct support to the establishment and strengthening of a Caribbean subregional office.

Science and Technology

The aim of this subprogramme is to ensure that the region develops and retains a critical mass of science and technology professionals. Thereby, and through the development, adaptation and acquisition of appropriate technologies, the economic performance of the region can be improved.

Currently, there is collaboration with the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology and UNESCO in:

- the popularization of science and technology;
- enhancement of the capacity of the education system in the teaching of science;
- enhancement of the capacity, particularly in non-campus territories, to undertake research and development; and
- strengthening of regional institutional arrangements and resource mobilization for the popularization of science and technology.

Energy

The aim of this subprogramme is to promote more widespread and efficient use of energy, particularly renewable sources, to the fullest extent possible. The region, although possessing renewable energy sources, has not utilized them in any meaningful way. To date there has been a heavy reliance on fossil fuels, which exacerbates the balance-of-trade problems. Solar water heating has been the most widely used renewable energy technology in the region.

Despite the fact that agriculture is a major sector in the economy of most of the islands, renewable energy is not used to increase productivity in agriculture. The Secretariat is collaborating with the Caribbean Energy Information System and the University of the West Indies Centre

for Environment and Development in the implementation of the Caribbean Renewable Energy Development Project. The principal objectives of this project are to address the issues of:

- poor financial mechanisms to fund renewable-energy projects;
- lack of comprehensive energy policies; and
- insufficient information on renewable-energy technologies.

The consultants have presented a preliminary report and the final report was completed in January 2000.

*Based on a report by
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Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development in the Amazonian Basin—COICA

Introduction

The evidence of the magnitude of the problems with which the indigenous peoples of the Amazonian drainage basin are faced has given rise to various organizational processes initiated by the native Indian peoples themselves. The Coordinator of the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazonian Basin (COICA) is the expression of greater organizational development; it is a macroregional organization bringing together the indigenous organizations of Brazil, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador and Colombia.

COICA, in its consolidation, has carried out a series of consultative and lobbying activities with its member organizations on the organizational aspects of economic development, indigenous peoples' lands, the environment, natural resources, biodiversity and human rights of the indigenous peoples. On the international scene, several of COICA's resolutions support the revitalization of the organization's efforts to achieve compliance with the norms that protect the rights of the indigenous peoples in these areas; that is, rights relating to their recognition as peoples, to the use and exploitation of the natural resources, revitalization and evaluation of indigenous knowledge, forms of self-government and administration of justice and, specifically at the level of the Amazonian basin, to contribute to the design of sustainable development policies.

COICA's Defence of Collective Rights

The defence of the collective rights in relation to traditional knowledge and biodiversity is one of the most important actions of COICA and has provided effective responses to bioprospecting, investigations and dealing in vegetal material for directly commercial purposes, among others. The recent revocation of the Ayahuasca o Yagé patent by the US Patent Office, for example, was unprecedented in the defence of these collective rights and was led by COICA. [Ayahuasca o Yagé is a woodland plant found throughout the Amazonian drainage basin and is considered sacred by the shaman and traditional medicine men; it is used by the indigenous peoples as a medicine for corporal and spiritual cleansing. A variety of the plant, *Banisteriopsis caapi* (Da Vine), was patented by a North American citizen, Loren Miller, in June 1986.]

The Impact of Globalization and Technological Change

To speak of sustainable development in the countries of the South and specifically of the Amazonian drainage basin, raises more questions than answers, because, in the region, the economies are centred on the extraction of primary products, the models of which, have broken down with the very rapid increase in poverty and with a clearly out-of-date technology. And, what is worse, this has led to economic dependence. The growth of these extractive activities has been justified by the requirements of debt servicing, fiscal deficit and the demand for basic state services, such as education, health and housing for a large number of the poorest and of persons displaced as a result of political violence. The most serious is the fact, that the governments of the region do not see their way to change policies in the so-called globalization of the economy.

In these circumstances, one way to financial consolidation in the states of the North is to see the resources of the Third World as a source of cheap raw materials that allow them to maintain their own economies and to provide an acceptable standard of living to their peoples.

This situation implies very complex questions, because, on the one hand, it obliges the countries of the North to develop technologies that allow improvement in industrial processes and mining, and then, on the other, to plan development in terms of globalization, so as to articulate this new model with the dependent economies of the Third World. The standardization of the international conventions and their implementation are aimed at putting pressure on developing states to solve single-handedly by themselves.

This leads to a tortuous process of economic, social and cultural transformation with unforeseeable political implications, given the conditions of growing poverty, consolidation of corrupt social entities, violence, increasing drug trafficking, etc., thus compromising the permanency of the present model of the state.

The Negative Forces

The indigenous peoples have seen the Earth being destroyed and their traditional thinkers are trying desperately to “arrange” the spiritual and material world. But so great and powerful are the negative forces (poverty, ambition, power, war, ignorance) that the plains, the jungle, the forests and the animals are being razed every day; the seas and the water of the rivers and creeks are being polluted by wastes of all kinds; and the land is being scarred by mining and hydrocarbon extraction. The Amazonian drainage basin is receiving the impact of all these ravages of megadevelopment, so that we may ask ourselves how can we implement a model of sustainable development when economic interests are placed above environmental and sociocultural interests.

The indigenous peoples never tire of saying that the Earth is tired. Their wise men try desperately to look after the sick Mother Earth, but they too, more and more, find the spiritual roads closed to them, in as much as the wise men die and their peoples are destroyed, displaced and reduced, not knowing what are their collective and human rights. There are many examples of megaprojects that are displacing whole populations throughout the Amazonian drainage basin and outside it; the most critical in this respect are the hydroelectric, mining and petroleum projects.

The indigenous peoples have been marginalized from decision-making with respect to the major projects affecting the integrity of their land and their survival as peoples. They are therefore fighting in international fora for the right to be consulted and to participate in the relevant decision-making, and for these rights to be respected as prescribed in international instruments for indigenous peoples.

Concepts of Sustainable Management

Cultural diversity in Amazonia is intimately connected with the biodiversity. This culture is equivalent to the creation of knowledge that is transmitted from generation to generation and constitutes a collective patrimony of the indigenous peoples. On this basis, to speak of economic alternatives amounts to working within the concept of sustainable management. This concept has two views whose effects are completely different. The first conceives sustainable management as the production and reproduction of limited elements, which assumes their availability over time; and the second conceives sustainable development as the interchange of elements in an open system which generates for itself alternating use of the resources, allowing the natural flux of the biological cycles in the wild.

The first view generates a strategy directed to proposing the realization of closed economic cycles that almost always coincide with the generation of goods, which is what economists call capital accumulation or wealth, by, for example, management of forests by cutting and replanting them with species of a commercial type. This construct also generates the notion of control; for example, when eliminating forest life that is seen as preventing the reproduction of useful tree species, is considered necessary.

The second view generates the development of a strategy of cyclical utilization of a great variety of natural resources and of many kinds of knowledge and materials of limited use. It is therefore difficult for this strategy to lead to the production of goods or the accumulation of capital which, by their volume, can be used for trade and become converted into sustainable economic goods the way first view envisions.

These differing conceptions arise from two ways of seeing things and demonstrates the contrast between the occidentals (the first) and the indigenous peoples (the second).

For this reason, to speak of economic alternatives is likely to be very complex if it has to be articulated with conservation of biological diversity, in which case, it turns to raising discussion on the determination of the parameters of the quality of life, depending on whether these are considered for an individualistic or a collective culture.

The question becomes converted into a cultural notion if the view of collective or individual rights is determined on this basis and not simply as a juridical concept.

For this reason, for the indigenous peoples, cultural diversity must also be reflected in the development of economic alternatives. It is therefore important to develop ideas and build capacity for sustainable use of natural resources in areas of concern to indigenous peoples.



Indigenous Peoples Set Goals for Implementing Development Strategies

The realization of these ideals is a long-term process, but while waiting for this to happen, the indigenous peoples propose to implement the following strategies:

- promote cultural re-evaluation and recuperate their members in all processes relevant to the policy of conservation and sustainable development;
- develop mechanisms to ensure the equitable participation of indigenous women in all processes relevant to the adoption of development policies in the indigenous peoples' lands;
- develop and coordinate internal control mechanisms on the indigenous Amazonian peoples' lands so as to ensure a fair distribution of the benefits based on the maintenance of biological diversity;
- develop instruments for the protection, management and development of indigenous knowledge that supports the objectives of conservation;
- develop instruments for maintaining up-to-date information for the prevention of biopiracy and for the monitoring and follow-up of bioprospection and access to genetic resources on the indigenous peoples' lands;
- require that research in the field of traditional knowledge, innovation and practices of the indigenous peoples be given the same political and financial support as development and "formal scientific" research, with the conservation of indigenous and traditional codes;
- establish agreements on coordination and form alliances with other organizations at the national and international levels, as well as with non-indigenous organizations and their programmes, to defend the rights of indigenous peoples and to promote the implementation of agreements beneficial to them;
- strongly denounce agreements, policies, programmes and activities that might negatively affect the social, economic, political and cultural patrimony of the indigenous peoples of the Amazonian basin;

- denunciate and oppose the entry of mining companies that operate against the cultural survival of the indigenous peoples and the integrity of their lands and the environment of those lands; and
- strengthen the participation of COICA in relevant fora so that international instruments and the policies adopted by multilateral organizations, such as the IADB, OAS, the World Bank, the European Union, and the agencies of the United Nations system, in which the existence of a direct link between cultural and biological diversity exists, can be oriented towards full recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples and will support the implementation of truly sustainable development models.

For such reasons, COICA calls on the governments, multilateral organizations and NGOs present at this Regional Consultative Meeting to take steps to institutionalize the participation of the representatives of the indigenous peoples in decision-making within the plans and programmes concerning indigenous peoples.

COICA, as an indigenous Amazonian organization, is getting stronger day by day, with the help of some governments and NGOs; and of other organizations or networks such as the Global Alliance of the Indigenous Peoples of Tropical Forests, the Amazonian Alliance and the European Cities' Climate Alliance, with which COICA maintains permanent contact so as to follow closely any intervention in the Amazonian drainage basin.

It is evident that COICA will not back away from its adopted positions. Therefore it will increase its level of organization, self-determination and the defence of human rights, with the objective of improving the quality of life of indigenous peoples. It will continue to raise its voice and to defend the basic rights of indigenous peoples, while seeking actions and activities that will contribute ideas to ensure the duration of indigenous culture and the Amazonian environment.

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Experience of IUCN–South America in the Implementation of Sustainable Development Strategies

Introduction

The International Conservation Organization (IUCN) has assisted in the formulation of policy and its follow-up in at least five South American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru.

The national biodiversity policies have been formulated with the participation of non-conservationist sectors. The project on National Biodiversity Groups (NBGs), backed by the Bundesministerium für Zusammenarbeit (Ministry of Cooperation, Germany) has supported most of the work to achieve the goals of these policies. The development of National Biodiversity Strategies (NBSs) is a key challenge, politically and institutionally, for the future of conservation and the countries' sustainable use of their biological diversity. This is why the NBSs are efforts in national planning to identify priorities and establish plans, programmes and policies that incorporate consideration of conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity in various sectors. Decades of experience have shown us that the solution of environmental dilemmas is more than a strictly ecological matter and is more a question of the mobilization of political, economic, social and cultural agents.

The work plans of the five countries in which the idea of establishing National Biodiversity Groups in support of the development of the National Biodiversity Strategies has been adopted have reached different levels of development, depending on the participation of the IUCN National Committees and on the readiness of the governments to establish joint work plans, to satisfy the interests not only of the IUCN but also of the governments themselves.



National Biodiversity Project Activities

IUCN–South America and the Commission on Education and Communication organized a regional workshop on Effective Communication and Involvement of Key Actors in the National Biodiversity Strategies (Galapagos, 8–12 February 2000). Directors of the NBSs, coordinators of IUCN National Committees and focal points of the NBGs of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador and Peru attended the workshop. The key results were:

- increased integration of the governmental and the non-governmental actors in the NBSs; and
- draft communication strategies for the NBSs of the five countries.

A document has been prepared on methods for the preparation of communication strategies for the NBSs and was published at the end of 1999; it was sponsored by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development. This publication will be Volume II of the new series, *Biodiversity Strategies: Advances in South America*.

Planning workshops were held with the IUCN focal points and the NBGs of Argentina and Peru. By June 1999, NBGs were operating in Argentina, Ecuador and Peru, and negotiations were well advanced in Bolivia (project activities will complement the efforts of the Biodiversity Directorate and UNDP). Difficulties in the establishment of NBGs in Brazil and Colombia were encountered. The implementation of this project is slow, owing to the necessity of linking these activities to the national agendas for the preparation and financing of the NBSs by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) executing agencies. An additional limiting factor is the importance that the governments attach to the preparation of NBSs and the contributions of non-governmental actors. The project has concentrated on the development of NBGs through the IUCN National Committees, which brings great benefits (e.g., set up the National Committees in the country and provide a better follow-up).

Several obstacles were met: a close working relationship with the governments was not achieved; the programmes of work were constantly modified and did not meet the initial aspirations of the project, and then had to be adapted to the interests of each country; the objectives were too ambitious and it was difficult to meet them within the established timetable; and, in so complex a region, with a highly variable environment and governmental instability, etc., such factors were considered to be extremely difficult to foresee.

However, the NBGs in the five countries in which they were established (Ecuador, Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina, Peru) have achieved recognition through their work and their outputs; in some cases, good networks of experts have been set up to support the development of biodiversity agendas in their countries, and not just for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

These advances no doubt constitute a platform for the development of a large part of the planned activities, and the analysis made by the donors and partners to develop a proposal for the continuation of the project can be considered a success in spite of the obstacles.

The IUCN has encountered a good balance between the overall work on policy and the practical implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The experiences and the priorities of the regions are channelled into policy development and activities at the global level. In particular, the GEF involves members and staff of the secretariat at all levels, thus helping to develop capacities and competences.

The UNDP and the Government of Ecuador called on IUCN–South America to provide technical assistance and to administer the project financed by GEF for the preparation of Ecuador's NBS. The preparation of the project started in May and the Memorandum of Understanding was signed in June. The project itself started in July and will end in September 2000.

The project was conceived as a dynamic process involving broad public participation; so far, it has organized several workshops to discuss the Law on Biodiversity and has strengthened the National Biodiversity Groups, consolidating a new group on Economy and Biodiversity. Several subgroups have also been created on the coastal zone, with special reference to marine biodiversity, wetlands and arid woodlands.

It is expected that by May 2000 there will be a first proposal on biodiversity policies and their respective strategies.

Relevant Sectors Take Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity into Account

Concerned sectors take conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into account in their policies and action plans.

Three relevant activities have been carried out:

- *Argentine Forum on Sustainable Fisheries (FAPS)*: In 1998, the project on Supporting Global Policy to Conserve Biodiversity and Sustainable Use of Biological Resources–Phase II backed the development of intersectoral dialogues to support the implementation of NBSs. One of these dialogues was held in Argentina in December 1998 in cooperation with the IUCN National Contacts, the Foundation for the Sustainable Human Development of Patagonia, and the Foundation for Patagonian Nature. The meeting brought together the private sector, governmental organizations and NGOs. One result was the creation of the Argentine Forum on Sustainable Fisheries. This is the first initiative in the region to form an intersectoral group to analyze and propose solutions to key problems in the conservation of the fisheries. IUCN–South America has followed the development of FAPS; unfortunately, the Forum might collapse owing to the conflict of interests within the fishery sector itself.

- *Conservation and sustainable use of the natural resources of El Chaco:* With funds from the World Forestry Programme, and in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy [of the UK] and the IUCN members from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, the initiative on the conservation and sustainable use of El Chaco was started. During the first half of 1999, national reports on Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay were prepared. They identified themes and the key actors involved in the use and conservation of the resources and the preparation for a meeting to consolidate understanding of the environmental themes of the bioregion. Many uncoordinated initiatives of some national and international organizations were being developed. To avoid unnecessary duplication of effort, IUCN–South America concentrated its efforts on facilitating the synergy of all these activities. It was possible to develop a framework for subregional cooperation, with the help of FAO, UNDP, FIDA (Finnish International Development Agency) and the Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (of Germany).
- *Facilitation of a uniform approach to access to genetic resources in the community:* The countries of the Andean Community are the home of a large part of the most remarkable biodiversity in the world. These countries are also home to the largest indigenous population of Latin America, covering an exceptional range of cultural diversity, representing one of the largest archives of indigenous knowledge of the use of the biodiversity and traditional practices.

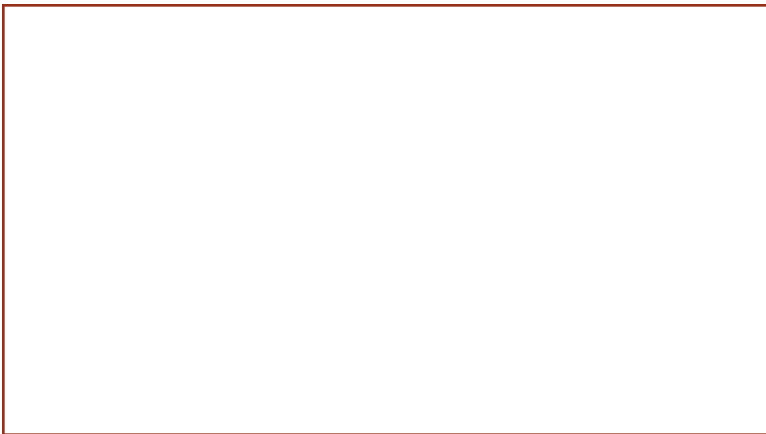
The Andean Community has a common regime of access (Decision 391), which would facilitate the negotiations on access to genetic resources through a transparent procedure and would prevent conflicts between neighbouring countries that share the valuable resources of interest to the biotechnology industry.

IUCN–South America has taken the lead in the implementation and regulation of Decision 391, and in November 1998 began the preparation of a regional GEF project to strengthen capacity in the field of access to genetic resources in the Andean Community. A strategic alliance has been made with UNDP which has kindly planned support and assistance in the preparation of the project through its national offices in the region and the UNDP–GEF in New York.

A proposal for a PDF–A was prepared in January 1999, with a view to a medium-sized project, and revised by the IUCN National Contacts and UNDP staff in the five countries. Bolivia and Ecuador immediately approved the proposal. In May, the UNDP–GEF unit recommended that IUCN apply for a PDF–B and prepare a proposal for a large project. This proposal is in preparation, and additional approval has been obtained from Colombia and Peru. It was submitted to the GEF Secretariat at the end of 1999.

In June, IUCN–South America presented the proposal, *Access to Genetic Resources: Strengthening, Understanding and Participation in Ecuador and Peru*, to the MacArthur Foundation under the Collaborative Research Competition in the Programme on Global Security and Sustainability. The proposal is aimed at developing a test case with local strategic groups in Ecuador and Peru to make sure that they understand the implications of Decision 391 and participate actively in the political processes in the development of national regulations.

Local collaboration in the handling of genetic resources is urgently needed, not only because the resources continue to be exploited, but also because of the resurgence of the idea that sites of greater biological diversity should be isolated (i.e. establishment of systems of closed parks) instead of being managed for multiple rational uses, including conservation.



The Link Between National Biodiversity Policies and Multilateral Environmental Agreements

National biodiversity policies have established links with such multilateral environmental agreements as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES, Washington, D.C., 1973), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (New York, 1992), the Convention to Combat Desertification (Paris, 1994), and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitats (Ramsar, 1971), and with the relevant trade framework, such as the World Trade Organization, MERCOSUR, and the Andean Community.

The work of the National Biodiversity Group of Ecuador and Access to Genetic Resources in the Andean Community cover this objective.

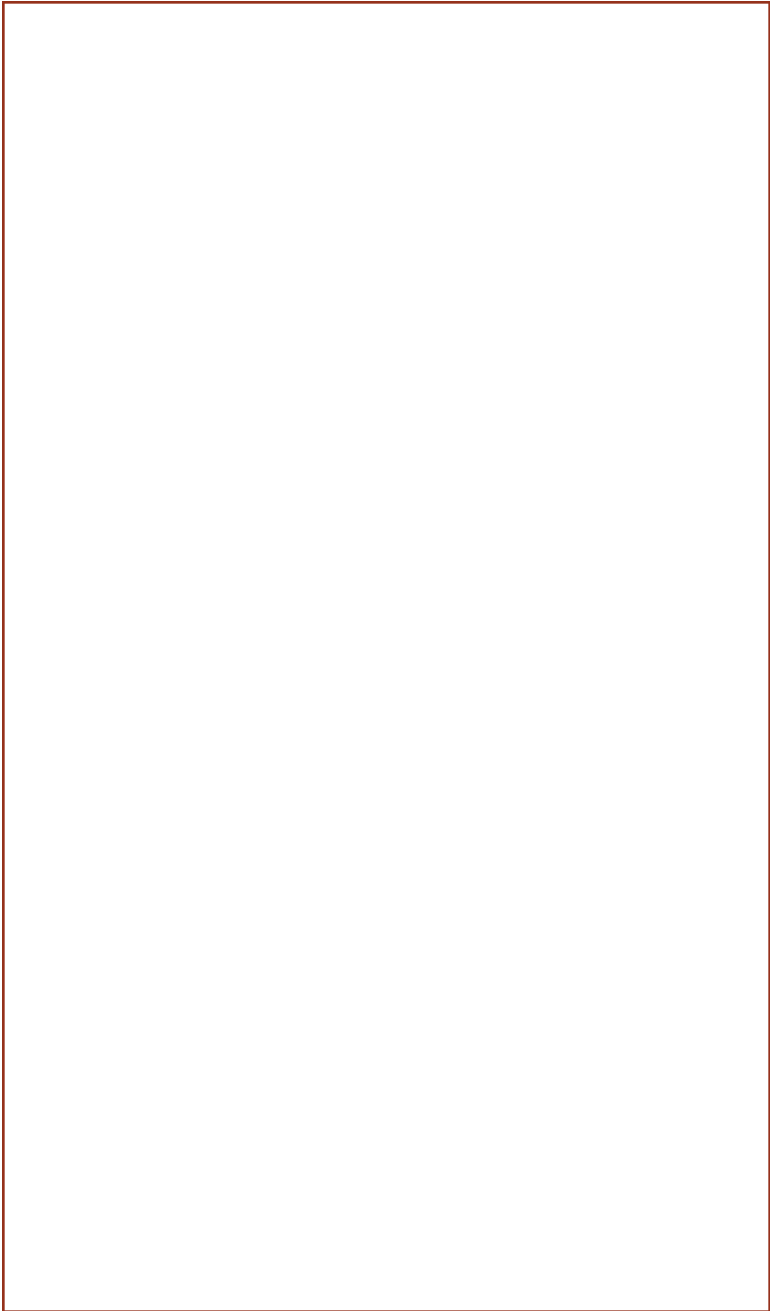
IUCN–South America has promoted the elaboration of national policies on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity divided in a coordinated way in countries that share ecoregions in at least three bioregions.

Four activities have been carried out:

- conservation and sustainable use of the natural resources of El Chaco (see above);
- sustainable use of the natural resources of Amazonia. This activity started in August 1998 and is the continuation of a project executed in 1995–1996. It is now being carried out in collaboration with Intercooperation and financed by Canton Devoud (Switzerland). Action plans have been agreed upon with focal points in Ecuador (EcoCiencia) and Peru (Pro-Naturaleza). The work in Ecuador is well advanced: a consolidated view was given in the document, *Amazonia Ecuatoriana Siglo 21*, which is now under the consideration of the Ecuadorean Government for its approval. Progress in Peru has been slow owing to the focal points' administrative problems. There was a delay of two years in activities which generated uncertainty about the progress of a regional programme for Amazonia.

- Land, Territory and the Right to Resources Initiative (LTRR-I). A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with LTRR-I Global. During the first half of 1999, a review was carried out of the current themes of landholding, access and rights to the resources in South America. The document has been analyzed and was made public in the second half of the year. One factor that limited this activity was the long process of approval and transfer of funds agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding.
- conservation and sustainable use of the Atlantic forest. IUCN-South America supported the Technical Secretariat of the three-nation initiative (Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay) in the organization and conduct of the Third Workshop on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Atlantic Forest. The goal of this initiative is the establishment of a biological corridor linking the three countries. A great limitation is that there is still no strategic plan and therefore the countries have not yet made any commitments to this idea.

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Strengthening of Regional and Subregional Cooperation in Sustainable Development—UNEP

Introduction

The overall mission of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is to provide guidance on, and to promote participation in, environmental care through measures to stimulate, inform and permit nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without endangering that of future generations.

The execution of UNEP's activities in the region are carried out through its Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, in Mexico. Moreover, the UNEP Environment Programme for the Caribbean, in Jamaica, executes activities in support of the Cartagena Convention.

The main objectives of the UNEP Regional Office are to:

- *serve as the Secretariat of the Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean, and of the Forum's Intersessional Committee;*

- *coordinate the Interagency Technical Committee, which is composed of representatives of UNEP, the United Nations Development Programme, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; and*
- *execute priority projects established by the Forum of Environment Ministers and the Executive Council of UNEP.*



UNEP-Supported Regional Environmental Mechanisms

Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean

The Forum comprises all the countries of the region. Its main function is the examination and coordination of agreements, the evaluation and follow-up of important questions on sustainable development within its sphere of competence, as well as the formulation of guidelines and the evaluation of regional cooperation on environmental matters in the context of sustainable development. The Forum also deliberates on and seeks consensus on the regional position with respect to the themes of the international environmental agenda and examines questions of international financing relative to compliance with the dispositions of Programme 21 for the region.

To have a means of executing its priority programmes, the Forum has put in place, since 1998, a Regional Action Plan. It includes environmental priority themes of regional interest and project profiles for each priority theme broken down into objectives, goals, activities to be undertaken, financial and institutional agreements for execution and follow-up mechanisms.

Finally, the Forum guides and evaluates the activities of UNEP in Latin America and the Caribbean pursuant to the decisions of the Executive Council of UNEP.

The Forum of Environment Ministers has been convened 11 times since 1995. The next meeting of the Forum will be in Barbados in March 2000.

Interagency Technical Committee and Other Bodies

The Interagency Technical Committee is another of the bodies associated with the Forum of Environment Ministers and includes the following organisms:

- United Nations Environment Programme (Coordinator);
- United Nations Development Programme;
- Inter-American Development Bank;
- United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; and
- World Bank.

The Committee coordinates the activities of the participating bodies relating to the Forum's priority programmes, presents options for compliance with the decisions adopted by the Forum relative to the Regional Action Plan and carries out activities aimed at obtaining technical assistance in the preparation, formulation and financing of projects.

The Forum also has other associated bodies that provide assistance in the execution of its priority programmes in the intersessional periods; namely: the Intersessional Committee, which deals with fulfilment of the decisions adopted in the meetings of the ministers and the presentation and promotion of regional interests in the various international fora; the national focal points designated by the environment ministries, who interact with the UNEP Regional Office and with the other members (UNDP, IADB, WB, ECLAC) of the Interagency Technical Committee in the coordination of the national procedures required for the preparation of projects and their follow-up, and for the execution of the Regional Action Plan; and the ad hoc working groups that collaborate with the governments, the United Nations, the international agencies, the private sector, the NGOs and the Secretariat in the preparation of projects and in the provision of support to the Intersessional Committee in the execution and follow-up of the projects in the Regional Action Plan.

UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

This Office serves as the Secretariat of the Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean. Its main tasks are to coordinate and execute all the necessary activities to allow the Forum and the Intersessional Committee to carry out their functions, and to assist in the execution of the Forum's priority activities in the region.

The Regional Office also coordinates the activities of the Interagency Technical Committee.

Priority Programmes of UNEP in Latin America and the Caribbean

Establishment of Regional Priorities

The representatives of the governments that participated in the IX. Meeting of the Forum of Environment Ministers of the region determined the functions of the Forum and agreed on the following themes which they considered to be of priority interest to the Forum:

- *institutional framework, policies and instruments for environmental management*: these include the themes relative to education and environmental training, citizen participation, the integration of the environmental aspect into governmental policies, the relation between trade and environment, innovative financing mechanisms, economic and juridical instruments and the exchange of experience in decentralization of environmental management;
- *integrated management of the drainage basins*: this also takes into account the environmental management of the coastal zone and the oceans;
- *biological diversity and protected areas*: this includes institutional strengthening of the national park services and those for other protected areas in the region, as well as bioregional planning and management of selected protected areas in critical ecological areas of the region; and
- *climate change*.

Establishment of Global Priorities

At its 20th session, in February 1999, the Executive Council of UNEP determined the spheres of concentration of UNEP's global activities, which in the case of Latin America and the Caribbean, are:

- *information, evaluation and research in the environmental sphere*: this includes environmental evaluation, increasing capacity for environmental information management, environmental emergency response, elements relative to biological diversity and protected areas and desertification;
- *improvement of the coordination of the conventions on environment and the preparation of policy instruments*: this addresses environmental management; environmental law; multilateral policies and agreements; climate change; and the follow-up of, and compliance with, conventions;
- *fresh water*: this takes into account the integrated management of the water resources and the execution of the global action programme in the region; and
- *technology transfer and industry*: this includes ozone, education and training in environmental matters, the environmental management of coastal zones and marine areas, environmental citizenship, and trade and the environment.

Execution of the Priority Programmes in the Region

The UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean executes the priority programmes established by the Forum of Environment Ministers and the UNEP Executive Council through various spheres of activity, such as:

- *programme on environmental evaluation, information and early warning*: This programme includes supporting activities aimed at increasing the capacity for carrying out integrated environmental assessments and producing reports on the state of the environment at regional and national levels. It also covers the execution of the UNEP programme on World Environment Perspectives, the formulation of environmental indicators and the development of environmental information and early-warning systems in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- *programme on environmental law and conventions*: This programme is centred on the strengthening of environmental policies and management in the region, the provision of assistance in the evaluation and application of multilateral, international and regional environmental agreements, and the publication of information on environmental law.
- *programme of environmental education and training*: This programme formulates, promotes and supports integrated regional mechanisms of environmental education and training as a basic instrument for environmental management and sustainable development. As a part of its functions, the programme carries out the following activities: promotion and provision of advisory services to incorporate the environmental aspect at all levels of the educational system; formulation of a system of postgraduate courses on the environment and sustainable development; assistance in the training of teachers for the educational system; support of environmental training at the community level; elaboration of a programme of publications; and the production of basic texts and manuals on environmental training in priority themes for the region.
- *programme on natural resources*: This programme promotes the conservation and sustainable use of the natural resources of the lands, shores, seas and fresh water and of their respective ecosystems. To this end, activities relevant to protected areas, the reduction of the vulnerability of the environment to natural disasters, the strengthening of institutional capacity, the promotion of sustainable use of the forest ecosystem and the elaboration of strategic action programmes for the drainage basins are considered regional priorities. The programme also includes the execution of projects of the World Environment Fund, as well as projects and programmes arising from various conventions.
- *programme on industry and environment*: This programme promotes cleaner and safer methods of industrial production and consumption in Latin America and the Caribbean. Through the coordination of activities with all the units of UNEP, notably the International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals, the programme addresses its associates in trade and industry, national and local governments, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs. It also acts as a catalyst by serving as a forum for dialogue and by contributing to replacing confrontation with cooperation, in word and deed.

- *programme on environmental citizenship*: This programme contributes to increasing public awareness by increasing the level of understanding of the world environmental questions and by mobilizing support in the countries of the region for the operational programmes of the Global Environment Facility. The assistance the programme provides to activities aimed at increasing public awareness helps to ensure public participation and fosters the adoption of efficacious decisions on the important questions of the global environment. The environmental citizenship project in the region will be executed through six recognized Latin American bodies that comprise parliamentarians (PARLATINO), consumer organizations (Consumers International), local authorities (IULA), educators (CEC-IUCN), radio stations (AMARC), religious authorities (CLAI) and environmental authorities of the seven pilot countries.
- *programme of communication and public information*: This programme helps to publish, in the region, the results and conclusions of UNEP's work in special projects, such as the supplement *Tierramerica*, which is published in newspapers; the publication *Misión Rescate; Planeta Tierra*, aimed at children; and celebration of the World Environment Day.



Global Environment Outlook: an Example of the Creation of Networks and Cooperation

What is the Global Environment Outlook Programme?

This programme (GEO) is UNEP's response to the call of Programme 21 to present environmental reports and to the decision of the Executive Council of UNEP, adopted in May 1995, calling for a new overall report on the state of the environment. The programme has two principal components:

- the evaluation of the world environment, the GEO process, which is cross-sectoral and participatory and is based on the regional points of view. It also allows a consensus on priority questions and activities to be reached by dialogue between the standard-setting authorities and the scientists at the regional and global levels.
- the results of the GEO process, published in paper and electronic formats, include the report series on Global Environment Perspectives, in which are presented periodic examinations of the state of the world environment, as well as the preoccupations, trends and the new questions that are the most important in the field of environment, together with the causes and their social and economic repercussions. The reports also provide guidance on the adoption of decisions, such as the formulation of environmental policies, the planning of activities and the assignment of resources.

The GEO Process

The GEO process is carried out with the collaboration, participation and support of various associates throughout the world. The following tabulation summarizes the process's various elements and links.

Governmental standard-setting authorities	Policy experience	UNEP coordination	GEO technical reports
GEO Working Group	Methodology		GEO information notes
GEO collaborating centres	Regional perspectives	GEO procedure for evaluating the global environment	GEO report series
Centres associated with the GEO	Specialized inputs		GEO subregional reports
United Nations agencies	Substantive data and information		GEO for the young

The process is based on a coordinated network of collaborating centres that are multidisciplinary, have a regional perspective and serve as a link between science and policies. The studies carried out by these centres have a dual aim: to keep under constant scrutiny the state of the regional and global environment; and to provide guidance on the formulation of policies and the planning of sustainable development at regional and global levels. The centres cooperate with other institutions in their area so as to bring together the specialized knowledge necessary to deal with all the environmental factors pertinent to sustainable development. The collaborating centres of Latin America and the Caribbean are:

- Brazilian Environment and Renewable Natural Resources Institute;
- University of Chile—Centre for Analysis of Public Policies;

- University of Costa Rica—Centre for the Observation of Development; and
- University of the West Indies—Centre for Environment and Development.

As the GEO process advances, the collaborating centres have carried out an ever more important function in the preparation of regional inputs to the reports on Global Environment Perspectives. At present, they are looking after nearly all the regional data, with which they combine “top-down” integrated evaluation with the presentation of “bottom-up” environmental reports. To promote these activities and improve regional capacity, a training component on integrated environmental evaluation and the presentation of reports has been established.

Associated centres also participate in the GEO process; they contribute, according to their specialization, in evaluation and analysis, as well as provide specific inputs to the Global Environment Perspectives reports and other related products. The GEO associate centres in Latin America and the Caribbean are:

- Latin American Association of Environmental Law, México;
- Earth Council, Costa Rica; and
- International Centre for Tropical Agriculture, Colombia.

An essential component of the GEO process is the participation of the standard-setting governmental authorities through regional consultations and other advisory mechanisms established to promote and contribute to the periodic dialogue between the scientists and those charged with formulating policies. These consultations help to orient the GEO process and, in the context of the Global Environment Perspectives report, to examine the preliminary material and to ensure that the report helps in the formulation of policies and the planning of activities. Moreover, the consultations are a means of ensuring that national governments help in guiding the GEO process and of guaranteeing its usefulness to those charged with policy formulation. The regional consultations on the GEO process in Latin America and the Caribbean, so far, were held in Santiago, Chile, May 1998, and in Kingston, Jamaica, January 1999.

Four Working Groups of experts from all over the world, specialized in modelling, theory, policies and data, provide advice and support to the GEO process.

Other United Nations organizations provide to the GEO process data and information on various environmental questions within their respective mandates, for which they make use of the Global Watch programme throughout the United Nations system, coordinated by UNEP.

Products of the Global Environment Perspectives Programme

The series of reports on the Global Environment Perspectives is the principal product of the GEO process. The first such report, *GEO-1*, published in January 1997, examined the most important environmental problems from the regional and global standpoints and carried out a preliminary evaluation of the solutions offered by existing policies on priority environmental questions. The second report, *GEO-2000*, covers three principal areas: the state of the environment; the trends and progress in policy formulation, including the multilateral environmental agreements; and the situation in the future, which is centred on new environmental questions and alternative policies for each region.

Other products are being prepared, including technical reports and meeting reports, pamphlets and newsletters, some of which appear in English on the Internet (<http://www.unep.org/geo2000>) or in printed form, or are available in another of the official languages of the United Nations; namely, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, French and Russian. Related products of particular importance to GEO-2000 include:

- environmental perspective for the small island developing states, including the Caribbean;
- *Pachamama: Nuestra Tierra, Nuestro Futuro* (a book for the young based on GEO reports); and
- technical reports on alternative-policy studies for specific regions, global data bases and new environmental questions in the 21st century.

Successes and Challenges in the Execution of the UNEP Programme in Latin America and the Caribbean

The execution of this programme has advanced with greater speed in recent years. The broad mandate conferred by the Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the additional orientation by the Executive Council of UNEP, have combined to provide a defined policy direction to UNEP programmes in the region.

From the operational standpoint, the increased coordination with other organizations in the region through the Interagency Technical Committee helps to ensure harmonious execution of the programme. The Committee is a mechanism that provides an excellent framework for the coordinated execution of projects in the region by avoiding duplication of effort.

Besides the mandate and the interagency structures, the success of most of the UNEP programmes in the region is due to the concerted effort of participation made by UNEP's regional and national associates. The Global Environment Perspectives mentioned above is only one of many examples of cooperation that exist among UNEP, national governments and collaborating technical centres. The networks on ozone, environmental training and environmental citizenship are other examples of this tripartite relation.

Such a model will be strengthened and broadened wherever possible, with a view to including other regional organisms and other United Nations bodies in the execution of the UNEP programme in Latin America and the Caribbean in the next biennium (2000-2001).

Possible Links between the UNEP Programme in Latin America and the Caribbean and Other Global and Regional Mechanisms

Obviously, there are many cases of convergence and of possible links between the Plan of Action for Sustainable Development of the Americas, Programme 21 and the UNEP Programme of Work. Perhaps it only remains to give these links an official character in many fields.

UNEP, through the Forum of Environment Ministers, can maintain the cohesion amongst its programmes and those of the countries of the region. The Interagency Technical Committee allows UNEP and its associate bodies (UNDP, IADB, WB, ECLAC) to maintain operational cohesion in the follow-up not only of its own programmes but also of the work being carried out in the framework of Programme 21. Perhaps it will be possible to establish a link by the inclusion of the Organization of American States as an associate member, or observer, of the Interagency Technical Committee, a decision that can only be taken by the Forum. In summary, the necessary mechanisms exist to achieve cooperation and the strengthening of possible links; it only needs an extra effort to exploit the full potential of these mechanisms. The following Table indicates some of the present activities relevant to Latin America and the Caribbean region.

*Based on a paper by
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Commission on Sustainable Development	UNEP	Bolivia Summit
Programme 21	Priorities of the Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean and of the UNEP Executive Council	Action Plan for the Sustainable Development of the Americas
Atmosphere	Environmental management (framework, policies and instruments)	Health and environment
Land resources	Integrated management of drainage basins	Sustainable agriculture and forestry
Deforestation	Biological diversity and protected areas	Sustainable cities and communities
Desertification and drought	Climate change	Water resources and coastal zones
Sustainable development of mountains	Environmental assessment and research	Energy and mining
Sustainable agriculture and rural development	Environmental conventions and preparation of policy instruments	
Biological diversity	Fresh water	
Biotechnology	Technology and industrial transfer	
Oceans		
Fresh-water resources		
Toxic chemicals		
Wastes (dangerous, solids/liquid, radioactivity)		



The Role of the World Bank in Promoting Regional Cooperation in Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Introduction

The World Bank's environment portfolio for the Latin American and Caribbean region (LAC) has been focused in recent years on projects dealing with:

- *pollution problems in urban and industrial areas;*
- *enhancement of public participation;*
- *institutional strengthening;*
- *sustainable natural-resource management;*
- *biodiversity conservation; and*
- *disaster management.*

This portfolio has been implemented mainly through country-driven loans and grants.

However, in addition to its nationally based portfolio, the World Bank is participating actively in the promotion of several regional and subregional cooperative initiatives addressing sustainable development in the LAC region:

- *The Clean-Air Initiative for Latin American Cities;*
- *The Forum of Environment Ministers of LAC;*
- *Responding to Natural Disasters in Central America;*
- *The Mesoamerican Biological Corridor (MBC); and*
- *Collaborative efforts on sustainable development in the Upper Amazon.*

These initiatives are undertaken in the context of the decisions and recommendations of the global, regional and subregional intergovernmental sustainable development fora. This paper presents and discusses the first four of these examples.

The Clean-Air Initiative for Latin American Cities

The objectives of this initiative are to:

- promote the development and enhancement of clean-air action plans;
- advance the exchange of knowledge and experience among all partners; and
- foster public participation and the active involvement of the private sector in the accelerated introduction of cleaner technologies.

The following major activities have been carried out:

- assistance in the development of a Clean-Air Action Plan for the area of Lima–Callao, Peru;
- assistance in the development of the Third Air Quality Management Plan for the Mexico City metropolitan area;
- development of a Clean-Air Web Site and Distance-Learning Facility; and
- international meetings in Lima, Mexico City and Rio de Janeiro. (Meetings will be held in Buenos Aires and Santiago, in 2000.)

The Clean-Air Initiative is undertaken in partnership with city governments (Buenos Aires, Lima–Callao, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago de Chile), national government entities (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs), private-sector companies (DaimlerChrysler, Renault, Shell, Volvo, CNN), development banks (Inter-American Development Bank, World Bank), UN agencies (United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, Pan-American Health Organization), NGOs (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, Asociación Iberoamericana de Ingeniería Sanitaria y Ambiental) and foundations

(Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft, Germany). These partners, together with the Bank, form part of a Steering Committee for the Clean-Air Initiative. The Steering Committee meets biannually in fulfilment of its mandate to:

- endorse the Initiative's annual work programme, oversee its implementation and provide annual performance assessments;
- promote the Initiative through in-kind and financial contributions, fund-raising and networking; and
- make the Initiative sustainable by gradually turning over its management to regional institutions.

The World Bank provides the Technical Secretariat to the Steering Committee and ensures overall management of the Initiative.

The networking developed through the programme promotes public-private sector partnerships. Firms and research centres are developing low-pollution, low-carbon technologies for the transport, energy and industrial sectors. The challenge is to create a profitable and viable market that will sustain the introduction and use of these technologies. The Initiative is making these opportunities possible in Latin American cities.

Support to the Forum of Environment Ministers

The Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean was established in 1982 as a mechanism to exchange information and promote regional collaboration. Today the Forum is the region's principal political intergovernmental body on environmental matters. The World Bank has joined forces with ECLAC, UNDP, IADB and UNEP in constituting the Interagency Technical Committee (ITC) that supports the Forum with substantive and technical advice and project formulation. At present, the Bank is supporting the Forum with trust fund resources to prepare a focused report on environmental and sustainable development trends in the region, which will be presented to the next meeting of the Forum in March 2000 in Barbados, at a ministerial round table.

The LAC Forum of Environment Ministers establishes priorities for regional cooperation on common environmental issues, identifies regional positions vis-à-vis the global environmental agenda, and facilitates information exchange on solutions to problems faced by the Ministers in their respective countries. The priority areas for regional cooperation that have been identified by the Forum are:

- institutional frameworks, policies and instruments for environmental management;
- integrated watershed management;
- biological diversity and protected areas;
- climate change; and
- reduction of vulnerability to natural disasters.

The Forum has provided a coordination platform for multilateral agencies and bilateral donors to follow the pulse of environmental thinking and to develop their actions in a more concerted, less duplicative, fashion. The Forum, by promoting the creation of the ITC, has established an agile mechanism for information exchange among ministers of environment and senior officials responsible for the subject in the five participating agencies—a larger number when one considers the ad hoc working groups established to assist the countries in addressing a particular issue, as the preparations for the Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The Forum has opened up vast possibilities for regional networking, since its meetings not only include the Ministers of Environment but also representatives of NGOs, major groups and international and regional organizations. The challenge facing this initiative lies in transforming the priorities established at the political forum into bankable programmes with a specific added-value due to the subregional or regional approach. The decisions of the Forum have been forwarded to other regional and global fora, such as the Bolivia Summit, the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Environment Programme and the depositories of the international environmental conventions.

Responding to Natural Disasters in Latin America

Natural disasters resulting from severe climactic phenomena, droughts (and associated forest fires) and flooding have been affecting the LAC region very severely over the past years. The impact of these disasters on the economic development of the affected countries has been significant. The World Bank is working at a national level and subregionally to identify vulnerable areas, develop disaster-preparedness plans and assess environmental-management measures that could help in mitigating disasters.

The World Bank has set in motion subregional initiatives in the Caribbean and in Central America to reduce the risks of and vulnerability to natural disasters, through environmental management and disaster preparedness. In the Caribbean, the World Bank is assisting the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. In Central America, the World Bank, in collaboration with UNDP, UNEP, ECLAC, and agencies of the US Government, has been assisting the Secretariat for Central American Integration (SICA) in the vulnerability assessment of Central America. The latter initiative is described below in greater detail.

Under the partnership between the World Bank and the Government of The Netherlands, a subregional initiative was launched in Central America for “the establishment of a special consultative task force to analyze the course of events of Hurricane Mitch in the broadest possible way and document the findings in a report that will serve the donor community as a reference for the reconstruction and future development of Central America.”

Since its inception, the project was developed in close collaboration with the UN system, specifically UNDP, UNEP and ECLAC, and designed to be executed under the overall policy guidance of SICA, the regional body charged by the Presidents of Central America to prepare the analysis, documentation and proposals for the reconstruction and future development of the region in a context of reduced vulnerability and greater sustainability.

The activities produced the following outcomes:

- a document analyzing disaster preparedness in Central America, based on the lessons learned from Hurricane Mitch on the linkage of such factors as: ecosystem integrity; environmental services; availability and dissemination of vulnerability and risk-assessment information; early warning to and disaster preparedness of local communities; human, social and economic losses; and the elaboration of criteria for less vulnerable and more sustainable social and financial investments in the reconstruction and future development plans;
- audiovisual presentations illustrating the above-mentioned relationships;
- an inventory of existing data and information, to enable the preparation of risk maps (i.e. flood zones);
- a generalized vulnerability map of Central America;
- specific proposals for the preparation of detailed risk maps for the most vulnerable zones; and
- project proposals to address social and environmental vulnerability issues of regional concern; these proposals would be developed in collaboration with the principal stakeholders through a series of intensive consultations with technical experts from governments and regional institutions, small farmers and indigenous groups, environmental NGOs, local authorities and insurance and financial sectors.

These proposals were presented at a Consultative Group Meeting in Stockholm at the end of May 1999 and constituted a point of departure for the negotiation of specific investments by the donor community in regional projects to strengthen Central America's capacity to deal with natural disasters and to introduce preventive-planning measures, including appropriate natural-resource management that would mitigate the effects of disasters.

The Bank sponsored extensive consultations with indigenous groups, small farmers and local communities in order to take into account their perceptions of disaster preparedness and response and of the relationship between environmental management and vulnerability.

Natural-resource management and increased vulnerability to the effects of hydrometeorological phenomena are becoming a critical issue for the countries of LAC faced with increased loss of life and hundreds of millions of dollars of damage due to flooding, forest fires, droughts and mudslides. The Forum of Environment Ministers has signalled the importance of this issue, and the last Central American Summit concluded that vulnerability-reduction is fundamental to the region's development. The challenges are: to identify the environmental services provided by natural ecosystems to mitigate the effects of disasters; to assess them in terms of existing rural development policies that cause ecosystem degradation and increase the cost arising from increased vulnerability to disasters; and to formulate appropriate comprehensive strategies.

The Mesoamerican Biological Corridor

The Governments of Central America have recognized the value of regional cooperation and have resolved to collaborate in the protection and the sustainable use of the MBC. The Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD), constituted by the Ministers of Environment of the region, was charged with the responsibility for implementation. The MBC represents a unique exercise using international bioregional planning as an instrument of sustainable development. The World Bank is very actively involved with a full range of international, subregional, national and local partners to support the MBC effort.

Bilateral and multilateral donors and technical cooperation agencies support regional and national projects to monitor and manage the environmental resources of the MBC and to foster a better understanding of their importance and value by the communities within the Corridor, through education and participation.

By the end of 1998 a unique GEF regional project, implemented by UNDP and UNEP and executed by CCAD, was endorsed by the seven countries plus Mexico; it started its operations in 1999. In a simultaneous process, the World Bank, in collaboration with the national governments

and NGOs, initiated the development of national corridor projects. These, together with the regional project and other parallel bilaterally funded activities, made up a substantial package of international cooperative actions with an investment of nearly US\$ 100 million to support the MBC.

A meeting of donors, convened jointly by the World Bank and CCAD in Paris in November 1998, agreed on two fundamental needs:

- the mainstreaming and consolidation of the MBC concept, making it a recognized concern of the various stakeholder groups; e.g., indigenous, Afro-latino and “campesino” communities, as well as local authorities and private sector; and
- the strengthening of coordination, through CCAD, to ensure a more efficient and coherent implementation of the vast suite of regional activities.

Several developments marked 1999 as a significant year in the strengthening of the MBC work:

- The Heads of State of the region decided to move the CCAD Secretariat, based until then in Guatemala City and operating in relative isolation from the rest of the regional integration system, to a permanent site in San Salvador. The CCAD Secretariat became the General Environmental Directorate of the Secretariat for Central American Integration (SICA) and works in close coordination with the two other main parts of SICA: the Economic and the Social Directorates;
- The GEF region-wide MBC project became operational;
- The international community focused on Central American recovery following a major hurricane, Mitch, which struck the region in November 1998. Since the impact of floods was exacerbated by deforestation and lack of appropriate watershed management, environmental management became an important issue for reducing vulnerability to such events in the future; and

- Resources from the Global and Regional Environmental Activities component of The Netherlands/World Bank Partnership Programme are applied to the consolidation of the Corridor, in order to mobilize and harness funds and know-how from the international community, strengthen regional co-operative frameworks, enhance scientific information and develop the vision and strategy to put the MBC on the political and development map of Central America. The following are some of the specific activities undertaken by the Bank in collaboration with CCAD and other partners in 1999:
 - production of a 1:250,000 map of the terrestrial ecosystems of Central America, as a planning tool for natural-resource management;
 - development of a broad-based communications strategy to consolidate the MBC and, through promotional and educational activities, disseminate the concept through all sectors of Central American society, thus providing the basis for attracting investments in sustainable development;
 - an inclusive strategy for increasing ownership and participation of MBC stakeholders, based on broad consultations;
 - establishment of a network of Central American private-sector CEOs to promote sustainable economic initiatives in the MBC context;
 - institutional assessment and development strategies for strengthening CCAD's Secretariat, including the mobilization of resources from UN technical cooperation agencies to develop a substantive unit within CCAD's Secretariat;
 - study of regional environmental priorities and projects (coastal-resource management, Mesoamerican barrier-reef initiatives, certification feasibility studies for regional eco-labelling, etc.); and
 - preliminary plans for the "MBC" trail.

The MBC is an unparalleled example of dynamic cooperation amongst many bilateral and multilateral international organizations, regional bodies, national governments and the diverse sectors of civil society to promote sustainable development. The CCAD Council of Environment Ministers oversees the implementation through its

Secretariat and an MBC programme coordinator (within the framework of the GEF region-wide project). A Steering Committee constituted by the principal bilateral and multilateral agencies involved in the MBC ensures the coherence of the mosaic of activities encompassed within the MBC regional and national portfolio.

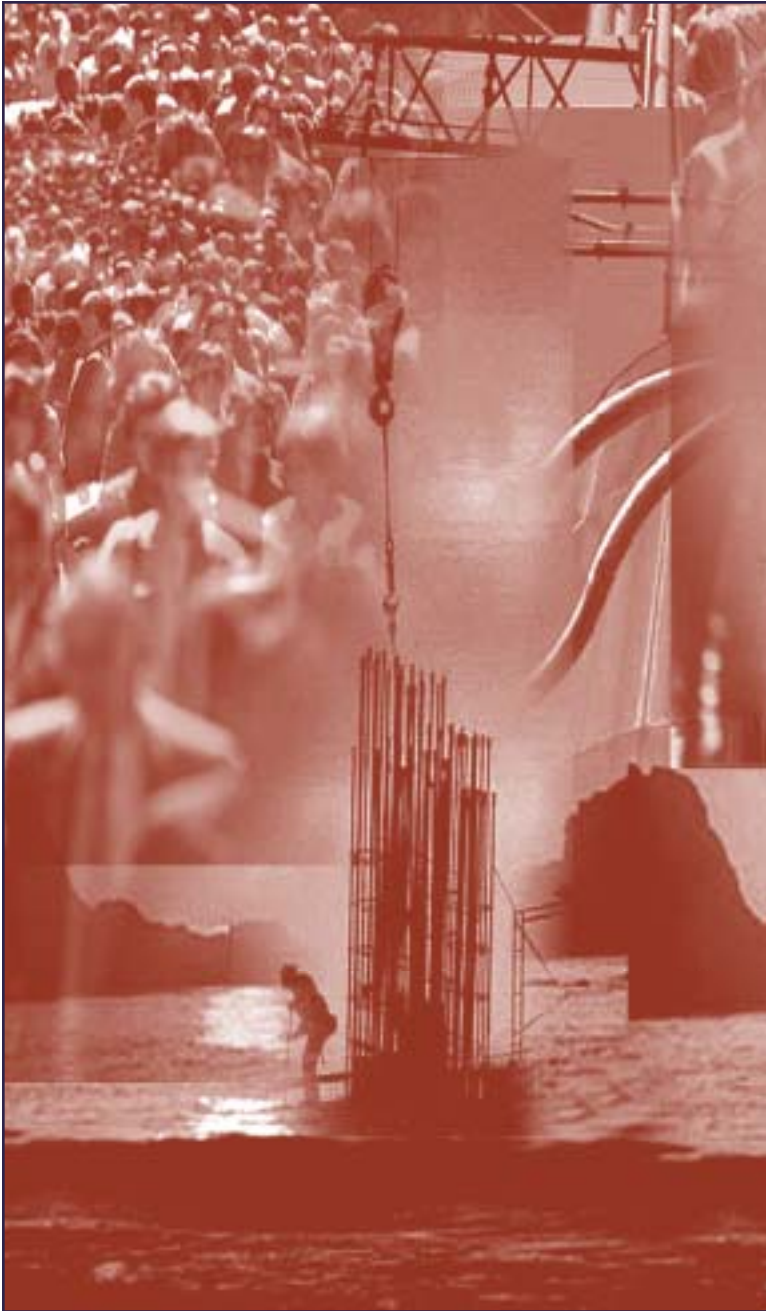
Perhaps the greatest challenge for the MBC is to reconcile some widely varying goals, interests and national policies and to make the concept extensively known and owned by the various stakeholder groups of the region.

Final Remarks

The millennium that has just dawned is bringing about more integrated economies and trade patterns and a greater recognition of the interconnectedness of the environmental, economic and social processes. Global agendas to address the issues of sustainable development impinge critically on regional and national agendas and vice versa. Therefore, the road ahead calls for increased cooperation amongst countries to design and apply the collaborative regional and subregional strategies for managing natural resources, the integrity of which depends on factors that span national borders.

The World Bank fully recognizes the importance of regional and international collaboration, in addition to national development efforts, to address the issues related to the management of these commons, and is increasing its support for regional work in close cooperation with other international partners, governments, private sector and civil society groups.

*Based on a report by
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