

31 March 2005

## UNESCO

### Summary Record

#### Intersectoral Information Meeting for Permanent Delegates and Observers to UNESCO

International (UN) Meeting to Review and Further Plan the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS)  
(Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005)

Wednesday 16 March 2005, 15:00 - 17:00 hrs, Room XIII

**Present:** *Permanent Delegates and Observers to UNESCO:* Albania (H.E. Tatiana Gjonaj), Andorra (M. Ubach), Australia (H.E. J. Madden, A. Siwicki), Bahrain (P. Djabali), Belgium (C.G. Lepage), Benin (F. Medegan), Brazil (L.A.Figueiredo), Cape Verde (H.E. José A. Duarte), Central African Republic (S.P. Gbadin), China (Tao Jin), Comoros (H.E. Thoueybat Said Omar), Czech Republic (M. Vaclavikova), Democratic Republic of Congo (M. Kizabi), Djibouti (N. Abou-Fadel), Dominican Republic (C. Segura), Ethiopia (H.E. Brook Hailu), France (H. Sekutowicz-Le Brigant), Gabon (S.E. Yolande Bike, I. Malonga), Germany (M. Schmalenbach), Greece (N. Tselenti), Grenada (C. Haddad), Haiti (M.J. Justinvil), Iceland (G. Helgadóttir), Indonesia (Y. Grissa), Italy (P. Fondi), Jamaica (H.E. Sybil Campbell), Japan (H.E. Teiichi Sato), Lithuania (G. Žalenas), Luxembourg (C. Dessart), Madagascar (H.E. Yvette Rabetafika, E. Rajoel), Mauritania (Hassan Ould M'Bareck Fall), Mauritius (H.E. Mahammad H.I. Dilmahomed, D. Aubeeluck, P. Reetoo), Mexico (A. Miranda-Ortiz), Namibia (H.E. Wilfried I. Emvula), Netherlands (V. Al), Nigeria (Y. Lijadu), Norway (J. Osnes), Republic of Korea (Eun ok Choi), Saint Lucia (V. Lacoeuilhe), Saint Vincent & the Grenadines (C. de Kerdaniel), Senegal (H.E. Mame Birame Diouf), Serbia and Montenegro (J. Zrnovic), Seychelles (H.E. Calixte d'Offay), Thailand (Preeyanuch Jariyavidyanont), United Kingdom (A.J. Mackie, H.J. Izon), United States of America (A. C. Koss), Palestine (A. Dari).

**Members of UNESCO Working Group on SIDS (WG-SIDS):** W. Erdelen -- ADG/SC (Chair of WG-SIDS); M.J. Pigozzi for ADG/ED; P. Sane – ADG/SHS; K. Rao for ADG/CLT and Dir. CLT/WHC; W. Jayaweera for ADG/CI; M.-L. Kearney for ADG/ERC; A.E. Santana Afonso for ADG/AFR; J. Perce for ADG/IOC; D. Kasymov for Dir/BSP; D. Troost, Focal Point for B+10/MIM (Secretary of WG-SIDS).

**Other participants:** S. Arico (SC), O. Benchick (SC), M. Bertero (SC), S. Bokhari (ED), M. Bonell (SC), A. Caine (CI-Apia), M. Clüsener-Godt (SC), B. Combes (ED), M. Faetanini (SHS), B. Falatar (ERC), F. Ghina (SC), K. Grant (SC), M. Hadley (SC), C. Hahm (SHS), J. Heath (SC), L. Higgs (BSP/YTH), L. Hoareau (SC), K. Ikhlef (SC), M. Jardin (SC), U. Kalha (ED), S. Ledauphin (SC), A. Marjoram (SC), D. Nakashima (SC), A. Nilsson (SC), B. Rouhban (SC), A. Schischlik, (CLT), E. Smith (SHS), C. Šark (BSP), A.R. Tash (SHS), M. Tran (SC), M. Turner (SC), Y. Vacondios (ERC), R. van Oers (CLT/WHC), C. von Furstenberg (SHS), K. Konstantinos (International Scientific Council for Island Development, INSULA). **Apologies:** F. Bandarin (Dir. CLT/WHC), M. Del Corral (DADG/CLT), K. Holmes for Dir/IIEP, M. Lourenco (ERC), C. Menenez (CI).

**Background** At the Information Meeting for Permanent Delegates held on 10 February addressing the Indian Ocean tsunami and outcomes of the SIDS-Mauritius and Kobe meetings, the Director-General deferred substantive discussions on the Mauritius event to a subsequent Information Meeting. This meeting was held on 16 March, chaired by ADG/SC in his capacity as Chair of the Working Group on SIDS (WG-SIDS) and involving all programme sectors.

**UNESCO's contribution to the Barbados+10/Mauritius International Meeting (B+10/MIM) process.** UNESCO has contributed distinctively to the review and forward-planning process associated with the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and to events connected with the international meeting in Mauritius (10-14 January 2005) in such fields as culture, youth, communities in action, and ocean and coastal management<sup>1</sup>. A powerpoint presentation<sup>2</sup> provided insights

<sup>1</sup> See <http://portal.unesco.org/islandsBplus10>

to these contributions and included video excerpts from plenary sessions in Mauritius relating to two UNESCO-facilitated events – the Plenary Panel on ‘The Role of Culture in the Sustainable Development of SIDS’ and the ‘Youth Visioning for Island Living’ process.

**Outputs of the Mauritius Meeting.** The principal negotiated outputs of the Mauritius International Meeting – a strategy document and a political declaration – call for action in many fields related to UNESCO’s concerns, programmes and priorities. Web addresses for these documents and other sources of information related to the MIM and its follow-up are given in an 8-page summary overview document<sup>3</sup>, and in an associated folder of hard-copy materials made available to those participating in the Information Meeting<sup>4</sup>. It should be noted that with the opening of the high-level segment of the MIM on 13 January, the custodianship of the SIDS process was handed over by Barbados to Mauritius.

**Follow-up.** Preliminary indications were provided on the proposed follow-up of UNESCO to the Mauritius Strategy and the Mauritius Declaration, in respect to the work of the five Programme Sectors and the Youth Visioning process. Summaries of the six presentations<sup>5</sup> are annexed.

**Questions and responses.** There followed observations, comments and questions from Permanent Delegations and subsequent responses from the UNESCO Secretariat. Among the points raised in these exchanges was the important role that SIDS are playing for the whole international community in demonstrating how to be a small country in a big world. Though SIDS represent a geopolitical grouping of small island developing states, continuous and enhanced interaction with continental countries and other island territories is of mutual benefit, and often a necessity. An example of the mutual benefit of such interaction was the participation of a non-SIDS island country in the Youth Visioning side event in Mauritius. Activities in such fields as sustainable tourism and renewable energy were among the domains of special interest to SIDS that were also of broader concern. In terms of education for sustainable development, attention was drawn to approaches outlined in two recently released regional strategies.

In commending the Director General for the measures taken by UNESCO to respond to the B+10/MIM process, one speaker expressed the hope that appropriate follow-up would be provided in terms of distinct programming for SIDS. Here the need to take on a realistic focused approach was mentioned. As regards natural disasters, attention was drawn to the regular, near-annual occurrence of certain natural hazards in SIDS regions (e.g. hurricanes in the Caribbean), and that it was important not to forget the importance of continued preparedness for such disasters while addressing high-profile topics such as tsunami warning systems and sea-level rise. For the fledgling serial World Heritage nomination relating to the Slave Route, it would be important to ensure cooperation at the inter-regional level.

In the communications field, continued support flows to communications projects are not necessarily inconsistent with the concept and spirit of sustainability, given the need to keep pace with technological advances and the ever-present challenge of building and rebuilding human resource capacities. A final comment concerned the role of National Commissions for UNESCO, in underpinning and complementing the work of the Secretariat in promoting UNESCO’s programmes in Member States.

**Conclusion.** In closing the meeting, the Chair of WG-SIDS thanked those present for giving of their time. The summary record of the meeting<sup>6</sup> would be sent to all National Commissions in SIDS, as well as to all participants, field offices in SIDS regions and other interested parties.

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<sup>2</sup> Accessible at [http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim/meet16-03-05\\_Troost.ppt](http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim/meet16-03-05_Troost.ppt)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim/MIMoverview.doc>

<sup>4</sup> Available from the Focal Point for B+10/MIM via [islandsBplus10@unesco.org](mailto:islandsBplus10@unesco.org)

<sup>5</sup> Powerpoint summaries accompanied four of the six oral presentations, and can be accessed at

Youth Section: [http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim/meet16-03-05\\_Youth.ppt](http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim/meet16-03-05_Youth.ppt)

Natural Sciences Sector: [http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim/meet16-03-05\\_SC.ppt](http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim/meet16-03-05_SC.ppt)

Culture Sector: [http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim/meet16-03-05\\_CLT.ppt](http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim/meet16-03-05_CLT.ppt)

Communication & Information Sector: [http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim/meet16-03-05\\_CI.ppt](http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/mim/meet16-03-05_CI.ppt)

<sup>6</sup> The summary record of the 16 March meeting can be accessed in English and French at

[http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=18319&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=18319&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

## Annex

### Contributing to the SIDS Programme of Action

Some preliminary indications were presented to the Information Meeting on areas in which UNESCO was planning to provide support to SIDS in the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy and the Mauritius Declaration.

**Education (ED).** SIDS have a special role in the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) and were the focus of the most detailed of the information briefs released as part of the preparations for the DESD. This special role includes the contribution that SIDS could make to the global community in learning our way back to sustainability, in demonstrating ways and means of how to live and act in a manner consistent with the notion of sustainability. Among the challenges were those of reorienting education globally and of dealing with smallness in a big and globally interconnected world. Also of how to appreciate and use diversity, and of how to live and work with that diversity. The Decade is interesting in that it challenges the North as much as the South.

In terms of implementation, the two first regional strategies for the DESD had been elaborated for the European and Asia-Pacific regions, with the second region including many SIDS. Elsewhere in the programmes for the Education Sector, many other opportunities were flagged in the Mauritius Strategy and in various UNESCO documents outlining UNESCO's work in SIDS regions, such as Education for All, the Associated Schools Project, the recently launched SIDS University Consortium.

**Natural Sciences (SC).** Various divisions and programmes will contribute to the MIM follow-up. For freshwater resources, sustainable approaches to water resources management in SIDS will be promoted through such initiatives as the World Water Assessment Programme, the Institute for Water Education, and the Hydrology for the Environment, Life and Policy programme of the International Hydrological Programme. In terms of the ecological sciences and biodiversity, ongoing or pipeline activities joint work with the Convention on Biological Diversity (e.g. on alien invasive species and on sustainable tourism) and further development of biosphere reserves within the Man and the Biosphere (e.g. in the Pacific region, in Dominica, and elsewhere). For coastal and marine resources and sea level change, activities within the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission include the development of the Global Ocean Observing System in SIDS regions, support to the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands, and support to SIDS participation in coral reef monitoring and tsunami warning and mitigation systems.

In the basic and engineering sciences, disaster reduction activities include active participation in the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, better understanding of the space and time distribution of natural hazards, and enhancement of public awareness and education for disaster-preparedness. Renewable energy will be promoted through the programme on Global Renewable Energy and Training (GREET) (projected expansion to the Caribbean region) and such studies as social factors and the use of renewable energy in the Pacific. Science policy for sustainable development includes specific guidelines for policy formulation for SIDS and a regional conference on science and technology for the Caribbean.

In terms of holistic and integrated approaches to sustainable development, intersectoral synergies will be sought through the Coastal Regions and Small Islands (CSI) Platform and the cross-cutting projects on Small Islands Voice and Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS). Examples of ongoing and projected activities include the further strengthening of science-education interactions through such frameworks as university twinning and 'Sandwatch', coupling of science with local and indigenous knowledge, and consolidation of activities within the 'Island Communities in Action' framework. The role of internet fora in facilitating empowerment and exchange of information and experience will be further emphasized. A planning meeting with island partners and field offices is scheduled for July 2005.

**Social and Human Sciences (SHS).** In the Mauritius Strategy and the Mauritius Declaration, SIDS explicitly recognize their primary role in working towards sustainable development in their countries. They are in the driving seat and others should clearly recognize that pre-eminence. For SHS, part XVI (para 72) of the Mauritius Strategy is of particular importance, with its concern with 'national and regional enabling environments' and with actions in such fields as the incorporation of guiding principles of sustainable development into nationally owned poverty reduction strategies and all sectoral policies and strategies.

The Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme would continue to provide the principal focus for actions leading to sustainable development, a process which should be people-centred with people not just as actors but as decision-makers. Within MOST, plans were in place for an on-line policy guidance service, which would provide the means for the exchange of experience between and among SIDS. Other intended contributions include networks linking research and policy, a forum of ministers of social development of SIDS, and the SIDS University Consortium. Technical backstopping of UNESCO's actions has been strengthened by the recent appointment of regional advisers in social and human sciences in the Apia and Kingston offices. In terms of financial resources, the SHS Sector hoped that other parts of the UNESCO programme would be able to contribute meaningfully to actions and projects in fields of shared interest and responsibility.

**Culture (CLT).** For the Intangible Heritage, SIDS will be encouraged to ratify the 2003 Convention (there are two SIDS in the 12 Member States to have ratified so far). As part of this process, one of eight regional meetings in different regions of the world will be held in the Pacific in May 2005. The elaboration process will be continued for the Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions, with the aim of a submission to General Conference in October 2005. Cultural industries (cinema, music, publishing, etc.) will be strengthened through the Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity, by promoting respect for intellectual property rights and encouraging public-private partnerships. Within the framework of the Global Alliance, implementation of poverty reduction projects will be carried out in Fiji and Trinidad & Tobago (in cooperation with UNCTAD and ILO), with related projects in Cuba, Haiti and Jamaica. Assistance will be provided to the development of cultural policies in SIDS, such as in an ongoing project in Comoros being handled by the Dar-es-Salaam Office.

In respect to Cultural Heritage, tsunami-affected SIDS will be assisted in the restoration of cultural heritage and rehabilitation of cultural life. Also in Indian Ocean SIDS, museum partnerships will be developed. And more generally, support will be provided to capacity building in the protection of cultural heritage. For World Heritage (WH), preparatory assistance is being provided for the development of a potential transboundary WH site linked to the Slave Route. A special SIDS programme will be initiated by the WH Centre and SC. At the request of SIDS, support will be provided to national WH strategy workshops, aimed at elaborating Tentative Lists and nominations to the WH List, as well as pilot projects to involve local communities in conservation management of WH sites in SIDS.

**Communication and Information (CI).** Access to and use of ICTs and the development of Community Multimedia Centres are two of the actions in the Mauritius Strategy (para 55) that find echoes in UNESCO's programmes and projects. High connectivity costs and distribution problems for print media are just two snapshots of the media situation in small islands that shape obstacles and opportunities for action

The International Programme for the Development of Communications plays a major role in media development in SIDS. Since the early 1980s, and in cooperation with a host of partners, IPDC has implemented more than 150 media development projects, in fields ranging news agencies and media training to radio broadcasting to media law. In 2004-2005, 19 new media projects were approved for SIDS, totalling US\$497,000.

**Youth visioning for island living.** During 2004, young people from different SIDS regions exchanged views on their perceptions and aspirations for the future of their islands, culminating in a special event in Mauritius which brought together 96 youth from 31 SIDS and six island territories with other affiliations. Conclusions of the Youth Visioning event were encapsulated in a four-page Declaration that includes commitments for follow-up action, and was presented to the Plenary of the MIM. Follow-up commitments relate to three main themes: Life and love in islands -- island lifestyles and cultures (17 projects); My island home -- safeguarding island environments (15 projects); Money in my pocket -- economic and employment opportunities (11 projects).

As an ensemble, these projects relate to many parts of the Mauritius Strategy, which in several sections mentions the need to involve youth in working for the sustainable development of SIDS (e.g. paras 14, 15, 72). During 2005-2006, working with a range of partners, seed funding will be provided for local youth projects, and various networking and awareness-raising activities undertaken.