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Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

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**UNEP Regional Consultation Meeting (RCM) for Latin America and the Caribbean, in preparation for UNEP 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-13) and 12<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GCSS.XII/GMEF)**

**5 September 2011, Santiago (Chile)**

**Report of the Regional Consultation Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean**



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## A. Background

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has maintained close ties with civil society, and has worked with it in a coordinated and joint manner with a view to encouraging the participation of citizens and governments in conserving the environment and promoting sustainable development.

In 1999, UNEP promoted the creation of a network comprised of non-government organizations and civil society, in the Environmental Governance Branch, to offer an opportunity for broader participation in decision-making.

In 2004, the Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch was created, with the major groups being classified into nine categories: women, children and youth, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, the scientific and technological community and farmers.

Each year since 2000, UNEP has organized the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF) and their participation in the meetings of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC/GMEF). In the past seven years, the consultation cycle of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum has become the main entry point for participation in UNEP, in the framework of environmental governance.

The Global Forum is built through six regional consultation meetings, in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and Western Asia.

Each region becomes involved in a substantive dialogue on the issues to be discussed at the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF) and at the meeting of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

## B. Objectives of the Major Groups and Stakeholders' Consultation Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2011

To provide a platform for exchanging opinions on relevant environmental issues. The conclusions of this regional meeting will contribute to enriching the discussions of the 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and of the 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMGSF-13 and GCSS.XII/GMEF), as well as the preparatory process for Rio 2012. The most significant topics addressed include



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the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, the institutional framework for sustainable development, the development process of the GEO 5, among others.

## C. Conduct of business

### Opening session

At the opening session, Carlos Gómez, president of Mundo Sustentable A.C., in his capacity as outgoing chair of the Regional Consultation Meeting, welcomed the participants. In his brief address, he stressed the progress made since the establishment of the Network of Major Civil Society Groups and encouraged participants to take the opportunity for interaction provided by UNEP so as to arrive at intelligent agreements.

Carlos Gómez gave the floor to Javier García Monje, Coordinator of International Affairs of the Ministry of the Environment of Chile, who stressed the important opportunity being created for the discussion on Rio+20. Javier García referred to the planet's global challenges and to how his country is facing them. He explained that Chile has ambitious objectives, such as 6 per cent sustained economic growth, poverty reduction, protection of 10 per cent of all major ecosystems, a 20 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, as well as the commitment to cease using chemicals that damage the ozone layer. The representative of Chile's Ministry of the Environment stressed the importance of having greater coordination between government and civil society.

Next to speak was Mara Murillo, Deputy Regional Director, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/ROLAC). After welcoming the attendees and indicating the objectives of the meeting, Ms. Murillo invited the representatives of the Major Groups to play an active role so as to allow a consensus to be reached on the Region's recommendations for the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum.

Carlos Gómez, taking the floor once again, invited the participants to introduce themselves to the rest of the Forum (the list of all attendees can be found in Annex I). He next proposed that the debate on the election of the new Chair of the Regional Consultation Meeting begin.

Liliana Núñez thanked UNEP for the greater role played by the Major Groups and the regions in this meeting and then proposed that Calvin James chair the meeting. Calvin James was



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chosen by a unanimous vote and he thanked the remaining participants for the trust they had placed in him and expressed his desire to achieve the expected objectives. Mr. James submitted the agenda to the consideration of the meeting, and it was approved by consensus.

## ***Session 2: Regional Perspective of the Rio+20 Conference and UNEP's Vision***

Mara Murillo gave a presentation examining the current situation in the world, and especially in Latin America and the Caribbean, compared with 1992. She said that environmental degradation has not been halted and the Region has the highest inequality in the world.

The Assistant Regional Director of UNEP commented on the importance of the topics of Rio+20 for the Region, and stressed the call made by GEO-LAC to reconsider the development model so as to allow the Region to face its challenges, in particular eradicating poverty, restoring ecosystems and recovering ecosystem services as well as achieving an increase in well-being and equity. She also invited the participants to look at the 15 posters exhibited outside the conference room showing cases of green economy in Latin America and the Caribbean.

She spoke of the importance of strengthening the environmental pillar, which was not yet sufficiently present and has not been made a cross-cutting component of development and sectoral policies; she underlined the need for the three pillars of sustainable development — the economic, social and environmental— to be integrated so as to promote the consistency and integration of policies, ensuring that all of the pillars are mutually dependent and mutually supportive and exist in a dynamic relationship.

Mara Murillo then spoke at greater length on the road to Rio+20 and the work that UNEP is carrying out by supporting various preparatory processes in the Region.

The floor was then opened up for discussion among the participants and numerous topics were touched upon. One of the first messages was that the social movement, in the run-up to Rio+20, was not sufficiently strong. Several participants stated that their governments were not making the necessary effort for sustainable development or regarding the preparatory process for Rio+20.

The representative of the academic area pointed out the need for an evaluation of the international agreements signed in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. He said it was crucial for the issue



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under discussion to know how we were in legal terms as well as in the application and implementation of the agreements, because they are international obligations for the States.

Some representatives agreed on the need to strengthen the pillars of sustainable development, in particular the environment and the social pillars, and there were differences on which pillar has been neglected the most. One participant expressed concern that the concept of green economy could be placing greater emphasis on the environmental and economic pillars.

### ***Session 3: Green economy and sustainable development: Regional perspective***

After a short break, Calvin James gave the floor to Paulo Itacarambi, who began a presentation on green economy from the perspective of the Instituto Ethos de Empresas e Responsabilidade Social, of which he is the executive director.

Paulo Itacarambi began by explaining that the Instituto Ethos had added the ethical aspect to the economic, social and environmental aspects of the concept of green economy. In his opinion, to achieve authentic change in the business world, the interaction of three factors was needed: price, quality and sustainability.

He proposed working in three core areas:

- Involving enterprises in the vision of change—in competitiveness based on sustainability. He stressed the role that could be played by state and multinational enterprises.
- Secondly, enterprises should formulate specific proposals on public policies for governments.
- Lastly, society should present its proposals to governments without waiting for institutions to propose them.

Paulo Itacarambi stated that innovation for sustainability would be key for moving forward in the transition to a green economy. He underscored the importance of social inclusion as well as growth with wealth distribution and equitable access to opportunities. The system should be ethical and transparent, and he stressed the importance of changing the consumption patterns and the values of the mass consumption society, in order for change to be feasible.

He reported that the Instituto Ethos has developed a mobilization agenda in the run-up to Rio+20, which seeks to have governments commit to ensuring that the sustainable



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development goal results in social and ethical development of their populations and a decrease in resource consumption. This would lead to a green, inclusive and responsible economy.

The Institute is also promoting a commitment by institutions to create a context conducive to sustainable development, with national plans, emissions reduction, the establishment of minimum operating standards for state and multinational companies, a reduction in inequality and increased transparency.

The commitments being sought would also require fostering new consumption standards; developing the mixed economy with the synergy between public and private investments; and constructing an institutional architecture for sustainable development, with the agencies of the United Nations, the IMF, the World Bank, the OECD, etc.

Participation in the subsequent debate was very strong. The first remarks addressed the preparatory process for Rio+20 by small and micro enterprises in the Region as well as by workers organizations. One of the messages transmitted was that to be green, work must be decent. Another participant stressed that the green economy must not distance itself from the recognized rights of indigenous peoples and must be respectful of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

On this point, another participant stated that there was no consensus among civil society of the Region on the concept of green economy and she indicated her preference for making positive proposals on issues on which a consensus had been reached, such as sustainable development. The calls to carry out an authentic assessment of the degree of compliance of the commitments adopted twenty years ago were recurring. One of the meeting attendees asked that UNEP offer a presentation on the green economy, although the next participant stated that, in addition to the perspective of UNEP, it was positive to know other viewpoints on innovating. This participant stated that she was in favour of moving beyond the GDP and Human Development Index indicators —incomplete, in her opinion— and creating an indicator of sustainable development and green economy.

In response to the request of the attendees, Elisa Tonda gave a talk on different aspects of the green economy, with special emphasis on its coverage of the three pillars of sustainable development.

After the presentation, the next person to speak was Mara Murillo, who added some data on the economic, social, environmental and sustainable development implications of the



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degradation of ecosystems and ecosystem services. She also commented on the urgency of reconsidering the development model, bearing in mind that the world's population will rise from seven billion today to nine billion in 2050, with the enormous challenges that this population growth will imply in terms of food and basic services, among other issues.

The debate then resumed, focusing especially on the concept of green economy. One participant said that the use of the terms “economy” and “green” did not seem appropriate to her. Another said that green economy should remain within the context of Agenda 21.

One participant suggested a need to make progress on other issues and that one of the conclusions should note a lack of consensus on the concept of green economy. Another person questioned the need for new concepts on which there was no consensus, and noted concern that this appeared to be more than anything a concept tailored for business.

The indigenous peoples' representative said that green economy included some concepts for which indigenous peoples have fought.

The Deputy Regional Director of UNEP noted that the Region has clear examples of policies and mechanisms that aim to bring about a low-carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive economy. She thus stressed the importance of focusing on strengthening the environmental pillar in the economic and social fields.

The meeting chair, Calvin James, proposed that during lunch two work panels explore possible elements of consensus on both topics: green economy in the framework of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

### ***Session 4: Governance for Sustainable Development.***

Alida Spadafora, executive director of the Panamanian NGO ANCON, delivered a presentation on the topic in which she covered elements of the debate in which she recently participated during the global consultation on Rio+20 held in Bonn.

She said that the achievement of sustainable development internationally requires achieving coherence for the three pillars to be equally strong.



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Regarding International Environmental Governance, she noted that it is necessary to resolve certain structural weaknesses such as the fragmentation of the agenda, the lack of accountability and the need for a global authority to act as the “conductor” of the environmental pillar.

She raised the need to effectively strengthen UNEP in order to ensure a strong scientific foundation —task which, in her opinion, UNEP had been carrying out— and predictable and sufficient funding and to achieve coherence in the United Nations system and develop an authorized global voice.

She said that, at the international level, various options are being debated: strengthening UNEP with greater authority and funding, establishing a new umbrella organization for sustainable development, creating a specialized agency such as the World Environmental Organization, reforming the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development or improving institutional reforms and streamlining existing structures.

At the end of her presentation, Alida Spadafora commented on the importance of representatives of the Major Groups from developing countries playing a more prominent role at global meetings, rather than merely acting as observers. She thus invited the participants to review and comment on the document Guidelines for Participation of Major Groups and Stakeholders in Policy Design at UNEP.

In the debate, the participants stressed the need to promote greater and more effective participation of the Major Groups in the debates at international intergovernmental agencies, while they recognized that this depends on the decision of the governments, which are members of those agencies. Some representatives of the Major Groups noted that it is necessary to work on local and national governance. The attendees also pointed to the importance of the participation of young people in strengthening governance and in framing policies for sustainable development.

The representative of local authorities supported the coordinated work of local governments and civil society. He expressed his conviction that local administrations could play a coordination role in ascertaining civil society's intentions and conveying it to national governments.

At lunch, the representatives worked in two panels, in order to debate on the two topics addressed and move forward on the possible recommendations to the Global Forum meeting.





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After the working lunch, Calvin James requested a brief presentation on the debate of the two workgroups.

Regarding the green economy, it was noted that there is no consensus on the concept. Some representatives indicated their disagreement with the use of the term “green economy” as a platform for moving forward. They expressed concern that using the term might lead to a dominance of economists, and economic institutions like the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, in sustainable development policy. Hence, they proposed that the role of these agencies be evaluated.

Several organizations see the use of this term as a form of colonization and appropriation of the resources of the South, which is of great concern for the Region. They also indicated that some countries of the South use the concept to promote policies such as those related to biofuels, which, these organizations believe, have had negative impacts on the population. Some participants indicated that the concept is oriented more to business than to persons. They also expressed their concern with the attempt to make the central pillar of human development the economic pillar. They stressed the importance of replacing the concept of sustainable development and the continued validity of Agenda 21.

Some participants put forth concrete proposals, such as:

- Agenda 21 and the Rio agreements, including the Rio Declaration and Conventions, should constitute the framework for the Rio+20 Conference. They stressed their support to some of the elements of what is currently proposed as “green economy” to be discussed at Rio+20 as well, provided they are not violating the rights of Indigenous Peoples as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In their view, there is a need to renew and rebuild Agenda 21 as a more comprehensive agenda.

Some representatives of the Major Groups indicated their opposition to the use of the term “green economy”.

They noted their desire for the Rio+20 Conference to focus on the assessment of the implementation of the current Rio agreements, and they asked that UNEP and other United Nations agencies take the initiative in this assessment. They proposed using scorecards, including equity indicators and other indicators, that take into account economic, social, environmental, cultural and ethical aspects and those related to peace for sustainable development. The assessment should cover implementation both by countries and international financial institutions and private lending institutions, among others:



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- Agenda 21 and the two legally binding Conventions adopted in Rio. States have an obligation to comply with these Conventions, taking into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. They highlighted the need to discuss the concepts of climate security and climate justice in this respect;
- the principles of the Rio Declaration, including the precautionary principle, the principle of prevention, the polluter pays principle and principle 10 on access to information, and participation of civil society.
- the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including by UN agencies through compliance with the UN Development Group guidelines.
- the Barbados Action Plan for Small Island Developing States, which is of utmost importance for the region.
- the Earth Charter, which highlights the ethical aspects of sustainable development and the common but differentiated responsibilities of people towards the Earth
- the role of the World Trade Organization and its rules in frustrating the implementation of the Rio commitments, including in particular the commitments in the field of transfer of technology.
- And, most importantly, a call for a profound evaluation of the implementation of the financial commitments of Rio 92.

They proposed commitments by civil society on developing its own language and formulating its own demands rather than merely responding to governmental and United Nations documents. They also noted the importance of promoting the concept of "sustainable livelihoods", and they recommended that the central topic of Rio+20 should be sustainable production and consumption. The discussion should focus on the need for redistribution rather than growth and the concept of sufficiency.

They also suggested profound changes to policies and laws so as to:

- ensure property rights, land tenure and control of natural resources for women;
- promote women's access to the services, finances, education and technologies needed for water, energy, agricultural production, care for the family and household and enterprise administration;
- provide health centres, including sexual and reproductive health;
- allow women —and men— to combine their work with childcare;
- support investments for women's economic empowerment; and



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- promote women's participation in business and government leadership.

The significant and effective participation of civil society, in light of the UNDRIP and the need for a balanced participation of women, must be the foundation of the Rio process. The concrete proposals are:

- Organizing subregional meetings (if possible, using modern communications technology to avoid flight-related emissions);
- More civil society representatives in national delegations;
- More funds for the groups of the South, including through the expansion of the fund of the Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS); and
- More space for input from representatives of the various Major Groups;
- Highlighting the best practices, especially ethical initiatives of enterprises and other stakeholders that embrace all of the principles of sustainable development, provided that these models offer a faithful image of all aspects of sustainable development.

Lastly, they proposed the creation and strengthening of regional networks in the run-up to Rio+20. They concluded by saying that Rio+20 should be an audit and a recognition of the deficit as well as an opportunity for transformation.

The second group analysed the topic of the institutional framework for sustainable development. Some of the suggestions that emerged during the debate were as follows:

The Governance for Sustainable Development systems, both national and international, have been fragmented and have lacked the necessary leadership as well as accountability mechanisms.

The participation of civil society remains marginal and there are few spaces for participation in decision-making on sustainable development.

In this context, the principles of equity, transparency and democratic participation must be integrated at all levels of governance of sustainable development. Citizen participation is a key factor for ensuring these principles. This participation must ensure the balanced representativeness of both national and international Major Groups.

Beyond the specific structure of international governance for sustainable development that is established, such governance must comply with the functions and objectives that pertain to sustainable development and that have been identified by the United Nations. These functions and objectives should be accompanied by a coherent system of sustainable



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development indicators that can be monitored and that will make it possible to assess the performance of governance structures.

International regional funding is the key for ensuring the efficacy of the Governance for Sustainable Development structure.

Hence, the participants recognize and emphasize the continued validity of the National Sustainable Development Councils set forth in Agenda 21. These commissions should be reactivated and strengthened with the participation of the nine Major Groups. And they should help formulate sustainable development plans at the national and local level, establishing concrete and common objectives that address the issues faced by each country.

For the foregoing purposes it is essential to ensure timely and sufficient funding linked to the implementation of national and local development plans.

A new form of national accounting that considers the value of natural wealth and the loss of environmental services must be established as a new way of reflecting the countries' performance and progress in the context of sustainable development.

Internationally and at the highest level of the United Nations it is important to consider creating a Sustainable Development Council that will bring about sustainable development by integrating the three pillars of that development.

It is essential that governments find the political will at the Rio+20 Summit to meet commitments of Rio 92.

After the presentation, a brief discussion began in which one participant recommended returning to the concept of equity to determine common and differentiated responsibilities.

After both presentations, a discussion began in which several participants recommended creating national commissions on sustainable development and proposed formulas for giving these commissions the greatest possible strength and legitimacy. One person recalled that such mechanisms were already established in Rio 20 years ago, but that many countries were no longer putting them into practice.

## ***Session 5: Preparation for 13th Session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-13) and the 12<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GCSS.XII/GMEF)***



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The meeting Chair gave the floor to Mara Murillo, who reminded the attendees that they should choose their two representatives for the meeting of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum.

He reviewed the different items on the agenda in preparation for Rio+20, starting with the Córdoba Dialogue in October 2011 through the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, as well as the Eye on the Earth summit in Abu Dhabi, in December.

The Deputy Regional Director of UNEP invited the attendees to collaborate in the process of reviewing the guidelines for the participation of the Major Groups and Stakeholders in the work of UNEP, for which purposes they were given the corresponding document on a USB drive.

## ***Session 6: Preparation of the GEO-5. Emerging issues in the region***

The Chair of the Regional Consultation Meeting gave the floor to Mara Murillo in order for her to speak on the GEO-5 preparation process. She stressed that the methodology for drafting the report is participatory and that it promotes an assessment of the state of the environment and allows for capacity-building in developing countries.

The Deputy Regional Director of UNEP described the open process for drafting and reviewing the entire document, making special reference to the chapter on Latin America and the Caribbean. She noted that the priorities of analysis set for the region were biodiversity, climate change, water and soil use and desertification, and she explained that the report will be presented in February 2012 and that there would be an executive summary as well as summaries of specific sections, which might available starting in late 2011.

## ***Session 7: Discussion of the results of the meeting and consolidation of the key messages (regional communiqué) to be delivered to the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-13) and to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GCSS.XII/GMEF).***

Before proceeding to open the discussion on the recommendations document, Calvin James asked Alida Spadafora to share with the remaining attendees her experience at the global



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forums. Her remarks focused on the need to improve the participation of Major Group representatives in the Global Forum, as well as on the manner in which regional representatives are elected.

After this, the debate on arriving at a consensus on a document with the recommendations of the Regional Consultation Meeting began. Although one participant initially suggested beginning with the proposals formulated during lunch by the two work panels, in the end this option was ruled out because the participants considered that they had not had a chance to carefully review the texts.

Lastly, the participants reached a consensus on the document, which can be consulted in Annex II. It is titled "Recommendations of the Regional Consultation Meeting of the Major Groups and Stakeholders to the 13<sup>th</sup> Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the 12<sup>th</sup> Session Special of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of UNEP".

### ***Session 8. Election of regional representatives for the GMGSF-13 and the GCSS.XII/GMEF***

Mara Murillo addressed the attendees and asked that they elect two regional representatives for the 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-13) and the 12<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GCSS.XII/GMEF).

After the debate, four possible representatives were chosen: Luis Flores, Jocelyn Dow, Alida Spadafora and Calvin James. The final decision was postponed until after the meeting, to allow Luis Flores to confirm his availability, which he did later on. Hence, Luis Flores and Calvin James were elected as regional representatives for the GMGSF-13 and the GCSS.XII/GMEF.

### ***Sessions 9 and 10. Assessment and adjourning of the meeting***

After the approval of the final document with the recommendations of the Regional Consultation Meeting, its Chair, Calvin James, and the Deputy Regional Director of UNEP, Mara Murillo, offered some closing remarks and thanked all of the event participants. The meeting officially concluded at 7 p.m. of 5 September 2010.



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## Annex I. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

ALIDA SPADAFORA	NGO	Asociación Nacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (ANCON)	Panama
ALONSO LIZARAZ	YOUTH	TUNZA / Vitalis	Venezuela
PEDRO ARANHA	NGO	Movimentos Sociais para Meio Ambiente e Desenvolvimento - Forum Brasileiro de ONG	Brazil
CARLOS GOMEZ	NGO	FUNDACIÓN MUNDO SUSTENTABLE	Mexico
LILIANA NÚÑEZ	NGO	( FUNDACIÓN ANTONIO NÚÑEZ JIMÉNEZ) FANJ )	Cuba
ALBERT DETERVILLE	INDIGENOUS	CAIPCD	St. Lucia
CALVIN JAMES	FARMERS	CNIRD	Trinidad & Tobago
JOCELYN DOW	WOMEN	Trade & Sustainability - Red Thread Women's Development Programme	Guyana
Dr. GUILLERMO TAPIA NICOLA, Secretario Ejecutivo	LOCAL AUTHORITIES	FLACMA	Ecuador
SERGIO PEÑA NEIRA	SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY	U. de Chile/ del Mar/ Valparaíso/ Andrés Bello - Science and Technological Area	Chile
LAURA MAFFEI	WORKERS & TRADE	Sustainlabour	Argentina



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PAULO ITACARAMBI	BUSINESS	INSTITUTOETHOS	Brazil
LUIS FLORES	NGO	CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL	Chile
SIMONE LOVERA	NGO	GLOBAL FOREST COALITION/WOMEN'S STEERING GROUP/SOBREVIVENCIA/FRIENDS OF THE EARTH - PARAGUAY	Paraguay
MARÍA TERESA LLANOS	WORKERS & TRADE UNIONS	CTA-ARGENTINA	Argentina
ÁLEX SANTIVÁÑEZ	NGO	CEIISA	Bolivia
DANIEL ANGELIM	WORKERS & TRADE UNIONS	CONFEDERACIÓN SINDICAL DE LAS AMÉRICAS	Brazil

## **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean**

Mara A. Murillo	Deputy Regional Director
Elisa Tonda	Resource Efficiency. Officer
Alejandro Laguna	Information Officer