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**XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers  
of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean**  
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# Report Ministerial Segment

## **Agenda Item I: Opening of the meeting**

1. The meeting was inaugurated with an opening ceremony on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 9:00 a.m., with the participation of 28 of 33 countries of the region: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The meeting began with a speech by Ms. Joyce Msuya, Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, acting as Secretary of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, who highlighted the need to take into account the messages of the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report and to make decisions so that future generations will not inherit a more dangerous planet. In this sense, she stressed the Forum's approach of agreeing upon concrete actions, including actions regarding more sustainable life styles, solutions for a more circular, low-carbon economy. She also emphasised the region's global leadership, and commended the progress made on the Escazu Regional Agreement and the preparatory discussions for the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

2. Afterwards, Rabbi Sergio Bergman, Secretary of Government of Environment and Sustainable Development of Argentina, as Chair of the XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, welcomed the participants and highlighted the presidential priority regarding the environment as a state policy. He called upon Mr. Marcos Peña, Chief of the Cabinet of Ministers, who reaffirmed Argentina's commitment with the Convention on Climate Change and with a joint collaboration with all the countries who wish to coordinate political actions aimed at stopping climate change and reverting a culture that is damaging the environment and endangering human lives. He also added that as Chair of the Group of Twenty (G20) an approach is being revised to offer opportunities and building consensus for fair and sustainable development. By the end of his speech, he expressed thanks for the attendance of all participants and wished for an agreement that contributes to the global exchange.

3. Mr. Siim Kiisler, as Chair of the United Nations Environment Assembly and Estonia's Minister of Environment, highlighted the honour of attending the meeting and being able to convey his key messages: the importance of contributions to the multilateral discussions and the ways of enhancing the global environment, the outlook of the upcoming fourth session of the Assembly on innovative solutions for sustainable consumption and production, the relevance and effectiveness of governmental investments towards promotion of sustainable development, the importance of waste management and promotion of sustainable energy developments, and the need to include circular economy in national policies and finally, the importance of social innovation and education.

## **Agenda Item 2: Organisation of work**

### *2.1. Adoption of the rules of the meeting*

4. In accordance with the practice of the Forum, it was proposed to adopt the rules of procedure of the United Nations Environment Assembly, mutatis mutandis, to govern the proceedings of the meeting. In this sense it was explained that the practice and expectation is to have the decisions that are adopted by consensus. As a result, the rules of procedure were adopted under this modality.

## *2.2. Approval of the agenda and the calendar of sessions of the meeting*

5. The provisional agenda and the annotated provisional agenda and its calendar of sessions proposed by the chair were adopted.
6. The Forum Chair informed the meeting that that the Forum Bureau finishes its functions on the last day of the meeting of the Forum. In accordance with the practice of the Forum, he requested the subregional groups to conduct their respective consultations to nominate two representatives in order to conform the new bureau. With regard to the chair, he highlighted that it would be appropriate to rotate subregions and, therefore, it is recommended that a Caribbean country should be nominated.
7. Lastly, he thanked the work of participants in the preliminary technical meeting and the achievement of regional consensus which resulted in drafted working documents for ministerial endorsement. He proposed that, with the common understanding that the declaration of the Forum should be regarded as a minimum agreement, and that a space for ministers to suggest new topics in order to add a strategic political voice to give the region a more prominent position should be opened. The proposal was adopted, and it was suggested for countries to submit to the Chair practical written proposals agreed by consensus within groups of proposing countries. Throughout the day, any motions would be collected and in the morning of the following day a space would be provided to agree upon the final document.

### **Agenda Item III: Dialogue on opportunities for cooperation and financing of the environmental agenda**

8. The dialogue on Opportunities for Cooperation and Financing for the Environmental Agenda was moderated by Ms. Joyce Msuya, UN Environment Deputy Executive Director. The panellists were Mrs. Jolita Butkeviciene, Director for Coordination of Development for Latin America and the Caribbean for the European Union; Mr. Gustavo Fonseca, Director of the Global Environment Fund (GEF); Ms. Marcia Levaggi, Director General of Environmental Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Argentina and Mr. Gabriel Labbate, Regional Coordinator of the United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD), of the United Nations Environment Programme.
9. The panel moderator, Ms. Msuya, introduced the panellists and opened the discussion stressing the importance of financing to achieve sustainable development and noted that, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), funding ranging from USD 5 trillion and USD 7 trillion is needed, with an investment gap in developing countries of about USD 3 trillion.
10. To begin the panel presentations, the first panellist, Ms. Butkeviciene started her participation by screening a video showing the cooperation provided by the European Union to the region in terms of climate change through the EUROCLIMA+ programme. She also mentioned the technical cooperation provided to the region through projects and exchange of experiences such as urban mobility, sustainable cities, renewable energies, response to environmental emergencies, South-South and Triangular cooperation, and design and enhancement of public policies. She also informed the meeting that the European Union shall promote a 25% increase in terms of international cooperation in climate change issues in order to address global challenges and foster private funding. She announced the creation of a green fund to support small projects such as those implemented in communities and those related to building and enhancing climate resiliency, for which the Caribbean region shall be a model. Finally, she repeated that the Latin America and the Caribbean region is a very important ally for the European Union and noted that there is encouragement for stronger participation in the

region of European development banks, such as the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

**11.** During his turn, as the following panellist, Mr. Gustavo Fonseca informed the meeting that the Latin America and the Caribbean region has benefited from 25% of the support provided by GEF during the 1991-2018 period, and that the region has implemented innovative projects and national programmes in the diverse topics supported by the Forum, such as those related to biodiversity, climate change, desertification of soils, international waters and chemical products, among others. In the case of biodiversity, for example, there is support for enhancing the systems of protected natural areas and integrating the importance of biodiversity in the productive sectors; support is also directed towards the analysis and assessment of the countries' natural capital.

**12.** Continuing the round of panellists, Ms. Marcia Levaggi presented the work that Argentina is doing related to the financing of its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ms. Levaggi commented that Argentina is focused on strengthening its institutional base, in this sense, the national cabinet includes all the ministers and is where the measures and actions for the implementation of the NDCs are discussed. He also highlighted the importance of financing, as well as the need to align financial flows with a low emission economy. She reported that Argentina developed a document on the alignment of financial flows and NDCs, where the challenges to attract international financing are presented.

**13.** Finally, Mr. Gabriel Labbate shared some experiences on financing, pointing out that years ago developing a wind or solar farm represented a high risk. On the contrary, at present, renewable energy is even cheaper than traditional options such as gas, evidenced in cases such as the United States, Denmark, and the United Kingdom. He stressed the importance of the role of the state to promote climate investments in the private sector. He also highlighted that land use, is a sector which has been slower to mobilise sustainable investments, being for several countries the sector that contributes the most to emissions of greenhouse gases. In this sense, he recommended promoting food production with less environmental and climate impact and stressed that the sustainable agriculture sector is facing many challenges. Finally, he mentioned the example of a project in Indonesia that promotes plantations in areas that do not cause deforestation, have no impact on biodiversity and generates a considerable amount of jobs. The project in question has the participation of commercial banks, private investments, and securitisation schemes.

**14.** The Chair of the Forum requested the interventions of Mrs. Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CLD) and of Cristiana Pasca, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). They highlighted the natural wealth of the Latin American and Caribbean region and the challenges faced in terms of drought, land degradation, restoration, climate resilience, land rights for women and indigenous groups, technology transfer, systems transformation as well as the need for a new global framework that integrates climate change, agricultural productivity, and the promotion of private sector participation.

**15.** After the presentations of the panellists, several countries made interventions. Costa Rica, for example, highlighted that the financing is insufficient as well as the deficiency in the amount and opportunities available to receive granting. He also pointed out the need for countries to mobilise domestic resources and have greater coherence in public policy.

**16.** Also, Brazil commented that it is necessary to have the opportunity to discuss about financing mechanisms, the sustainable development goals (SDG) or the transition needs. He also invited the region to make greater interventions in the renewable energy, forest, and

chemical agendas, and indicated that financing is important. He concluded by commenting that financing mechanisms should be instruments of regional integration, invited the region to remain united and reiterated that regional agendas should be priorities to strengthen national agendas.

**17.** Cuba agreed with the previous statements and added that financing is vital to achieve the objectives of the environmental agenda. Notwithstanding, the financing is ever more deficient and mechanisms to access these are increasingly difficult. As an example, he mentioned that Cuba has been trying to access the resources of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for several years and it has been impossible. In this regard, he noted that the Forum of Ministers can align positions to help countries submit projects to the GCF.

**18.** For its part, Peru commented that not only greater financing is required, but also the involvement of the private sector. Thus, if the private sector does not change its production matrixes, national commitments cannot be achieved. Therefore, it becomes a challenge to get banks to finance projects related to land use change. In this regard, she recommended greater contact with private banks in order to influence the conditions of loans and investments to contain sustainability criteria and get their interest in granting credits for projects and clean technologies. She concluded by highlighting the need to involve other ministries such as economy, production, energy, infrastructure, among others so that they incorporate environmental issues in their projects, given their cross-cutting nature.

**19.** Also, Grenada commented on the responsibility of building agendas and plans of action in the face of climate change, likewise, he pointed out that the Caribbean needs international support in order to face its extreme vulnerability. He pointed out that the fragmentation and lack of resources requires considerable coordination, defining how those resources are distributed and managed. He stressed that resources are increasingly scarce for the most vulnerable countries, which is the situation of the countries of the Caribbean.

**20.** Finally, Haiti mentioned that the marine environment is key for its country taking into account its location. Haiti intends to accede to the Cartagena Convention as soon as possible, in particular the Marine Biodiversity Protocol. Haiti requested international support to carry out a comprehensive study that allows climate action in its territory, impacting the assessment of carbon stocks in the soil. Haiti pointed out that it is exposed to many natural hazards, for example, last week 15 people died in an earthquake. The meeting observed a minute of silence in homage to the persons that died in this natural disaster.

## **Agenda Item IV: Ministerial Dialogues**

### **Dialogue I: Innovative solutions to detoxify our environment**

**21.** The first ministerial dialogue addressed the need to ensure a pollution-free environment, within the framework of sound management of chemicals, marine litter, and waste management. Mr. Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions, introduced the session, stressing the need to take action, to prevent the impacts from the unsound management of chemicals and waste, and mentioned a range of successful examples that are currently taking place in the region.

**22.** With regards to chemicals, the dialogue was initiated by Ms. Eneida de León, Minister of Housing, Land Planning and Environment of Uruguay, pointing out a set of initiatives that the country is developing in this area, such as the recent law to regulate the use of plastic bags, and the draft law on integrated waste management. She also highlighted the participation of Uruguay in the international agenda, such as the “Beyond 2020” process for chemicals, as well as the importance of the Intergovernmental Network on Chemicals and Waste for Latin America

and the Caribbean.

**23.** The following panellist Mr. Edson Duarte, Minister of Environment of Brazil, recalled the commitments agreed by the international community to ensure the sound management of chemicals, which have been integrated within the Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development, reflected on the need to “detoxify” cities and hydrographic systems, and informed the meeting about some recent initiatives in Brazil, such as the national policy on chemicals management, or the agreement on regulatory cooperation with Argentina.

**24.** In relation to marine litter, continuing the presentations of the panel, Ms. Carolina Schmidt, Minister of Environment of Chile, informed the meeting about the impact of plastics and microplastics in the oceans, and pointed out some of the actions that Chile is promoting. These include the increase of marine protected areas, awareness raising campaigns through beach clean-up activities and the ban on the use of plastic bags, as well as actions to move towards a circular economy, such as the Law on Extended Producer Responsibility and the promotion of recycling. She concluded by stressing the fundamental role that women play in reducing the gender gaps and protection of the environment.

**25.** This was followed by the intervention of Ms. Lorna Inniss, Coordinator of the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention, who further reflected on the issue of pollution in the Caribbean, where 80% of marine litter is from land-based sources and affects a range of sectors such as fisheries and tourism. She stressed the need to prevent the generation of waste at source, as well as the benefits of regional cooperation.

**26.** Afterwards, the last panellist, Mr. Molwyn Joseph, Minister of Health and Environment of Antigua and Barbuda, informed the participants about the experience of the country in banning the use of single-use plastic bags, highlighting the consultation processes with society as one of the key success factors of the regulation. As a result, during 2017 no plastic bags were imported, and work is in-progress to also restrict the use of polystyrene.

**27.** Ending this segment, the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala, shared with the audience the experience of the country in the use of “biobardas”, a local and artisanal solution to prevent waste reaching the oceans. This experience is starting to be shared with neighbouring countries and within the region.

## **Dialogue 2: Innovative solutions to decarbonise our environment**

**28.** Rabbi Sergio Bergman, Secretary of Government of the Secretariat of Environment and Sustainable Development of Argentina moderated this segment. The panellists were the, Mr. Simon Stiell; Mr. Pablo Vieira, Global Director, NDC Partnership; Gianni López Director of the Mario Molina Centre in Chile; the Minister of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica, Mr. Carlos Manuel Rodríguez; and Mónica Araya, Founder and Executive Director of Costa Rica Limpia.

**29.** In his intervention, Mr. Simon Stiell Minister of Climate Resilience, Environment, Forests, Fisheries, Disaster Management, and Information of Grenada, informed about the impact of climate change in his country where, for example coastal communities have had to be relocated due to the recent increases in sea level. Mr. Stiell indicated that the transport sector is the key to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and that electric mobility provides economic as well as environmental benefits, which is fundamental for energy security, and that therefore Grenada considered necessary a very ambitious decision in this regard. Along these lines, he explained that 50% of Grenada’s gross domestic product (GDP) is lost in the transport sector, in the import of fossil fuels. He added that a regional approach is required to generate economies of scale and attract private investments.

**30.** During his presentation, the second panellist Mr. Pablo Vieira, Global Director, NDC Partnership, explained that we are already 1°C above pre-industrial levels. Latin America and the Caribbean concentrates 40% of the world's biodiversity, and the difference of half a degree from 1.5°C to 2°C is very significant in terms of preserving biodiversity. Reducing vulnerability can reduce social inequality. The region does not make a large contribution in terms of emissions, nevertheless, it has the capacity to generate the reductions to the necessary negative levels globally. The transport fleet will triple in the next 25 years, which in a business as usual scenario implies a 114% increase in emissions.

**31.** Mr. Gianni López, Director of the Mario Molina Centre in Chile, following the round of panellists, indicated that Chile, Dominican Republic, and the cities of Asunción, Paraguay, Montevideo, Uruguay, and San José, Costa Rica have levels of air pollution, well above the safe levels determined by the World Health Organisation. This is according to the state of global air<sup>1</sup>, where country-by-country pollutants are reported present and premature deaths cause by poor air quality. The presence of quality fuels in the countries is observed; However, there is also a lack of regulation regarding vehicle emission standards, unlike in Europe. Consequently, if this trend continues, the number of premature deaths that are currently registered (140 thousand) will increase considerably. Likewise, there are markets, such as the Peruvian one, in which private vehicle sales grow at an annual rate of 20 to 25%. The Global Fuel Economy Initiative (GFEI) informs that it will not reach the goal of 2 degrees increase, unless the fleet becomes 30% electric by 2030. Regarding the useful life of the batteries of electric cars, it was noted that in Chile they enter the Extended Producer Responsibility (REP) system. Additionally, it was mentioned that electric cars are twice as efficient as those that are being sold on average in our region.

**32.** Mr. Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, Minister of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica, indicated that in his country afforestation was duplicated. During the transition to a 100% renewable energy matrix, the country tripled GDP and doubled its population, which shows that economic growth does not have to imply an increase in emissions. In Costa Rica it has been prohibited to exploit oil and gold reserves for many years, since it was a contradiction with eco-tourism and the demand of eco-tourists. Eco-tourism generates income that can be better distributed among the population.

**33.** Ending the round of presentations, Ms. Mónica Araya, Founder and Executive Director of Costa Rica Limpia, a Costa Rican expert on climate change and low carbon development, reported that we are living "the electric moment". She clarified that there are many myths and a lot of resistance around this issue, which is why we must create innovative alliances. It is necessary to quantify the damage, as done by the MOVE platform (Electric mobility in Latin America). Finally, he added that electric mobility is not a transportation issue, it is a people issue.

**34.** After the presentations by the panel members, countries including Ecuador expressed the belief that it is necessary to decarbonise the energy matrix at the same time as transport is electrified. Cuba indicated that each country must solve the problems with the resources it has. Brazil expressed the view that it is necessary to discourage private transport and added that the transition involves the promotion of low carbon fuels.

**35.** Venezuela expressed that without changing the pattern of consumption, the problem cannot be modified. Honduras expressed admiration for the examples presented by Costa Rica and Chile and requested their support.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.stateofglobalair.org](http://www.stateofglobalair.org)

**36.** The Chair of the Forum concluded that in this region it is necessary that the climate change platform promotes dialogue on clean transport, beyond the technologies and path decided by its members.

### **Dialogue 3: Innovative solutions for decoupling**

**37.** The moderator of the session, Mr. Carlos Gentile, the Secretary of Climate Change and Sustainable Development of Argentina, began his participation, highlighting the importance of sustainable consumption and production in the 2030 agenda and the SDGs, and in light of the agenda of the fourth session of United Nations Environment Assembly. For this reason, it is important to have a coordinated voice from the region, and the important advances the region has made on this topic. He also highlighted the importance of including the private sector and civil society in the discussion, as well as the challenge of building adequate indicators that enable work and measure progress on the use and efficiency of natural resources.

**38.** The first panellist of this segment, Ms. Izabella Teixeira, co-chair of the International Resources Panel, presented data and indicators on the demand and increasing use of resources, which is advancing at an accelerated pace. She stressed the importance of linking science and policy to solve environmental problems, and to contribute to global agendas such as the Paris agreements and the SDGs. She highlighted that decoupling is a valuable tool to increase human well-being, achieve economic growth and reduce the use of resources and environmental impacts. She mentioned some strategic areas to achieve decoupling in the region, including the importance of cities and buildings, transport, and mining. She also underlined that sustainable public procurement can be fundamental in inspiring innovation and new lifestyles. She announced that the Panel will present a flagship report "Global Report on Natural Resource Use and Management: The Human Development Report for Natural Resources" in the Fourth United Nations Environment Assembly. Ms Teixeira concluded her intervention inviting the countries of the region to join the Panel.

**39.** The next panellist, Mr. Siim Kiisler, Minister of Environment of Estonia, and President of the Fourth United Nations Environment Assembly, highlighted the importance of changing business models to achieve a more sustainable use of resources. Mr. Kiisler underlined that the Assembly gives us the opportunity to agree and achieve common international commitments to empower sustainable initiatives. He also presented three main priorities: environmental data management; efficient resource management; and involvement of civil society and the private sector. He shared some examples of web platforms with updated information and live monitoring of air and water quality in Estonia. He emphasised that through decoupling or with new business models, there is an opportunity to provide a competitive advantage to sustainable companies with sustainable business models, and to provide information to consumers.

**40.** During her intervention, Mrs. Fabiola Muñoz, Minister of Environment of Peru, presented some of the environmental challenges that are faced in Peru. Among them, she mentioned the very low rate of recycling (0.3%), the loss of 150 thousand hectares of forest per year, and the concentration of the population in the capital (approximately 30%). In this regard, she pointed out the programs that are currently ongoing to face these challenges. For example, she referred to the work done with regional governments to address the problem of deforestation: "Protection, production and inclusion"; the creation of a fund to value biodiversity, forests, and their products, through the linkage of biodiversity with gastronomy. She also explained the efforts made in Peru for transparency in access to information and the Escazú agreement. Finally, she stressed that this is also linked to the fight against corruption.

- 41.** The next panellist, Ms. María Claudia García, Vice-Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia, presented about her country's experience in public procurement over the past eight years. She underlined the development of specific criteria, including defining what is sustainable public procurement, based on a life cycle analysis of goods and services; social and labour criteria; and criteria related to economy, efficiency, and transparency. She mentioned that Colombia has already developed 26 technical sheets. Lastly, she spoke about the work implemented in the development of a regional environmental stamp, which includes certification of products, services and companies taking into account the sustainable use of biodiversity, or technological proposals that reduce environmental impacts. She explained that this exercise could be replicated in other countries or regions.
- 42.** The last panellist, Mr. Elvis Rodas Flores, Under Secretary of the Ministry of Environment of Honduras, spoke about the country's efforts to work on SDG criteria, linked to a strategic plan that reflects the country's vision. He also spoke about the development of indicators in line with national needs and resources, using national information sources and statistics as well as adequate methodologies, with the objective of changing consumption patterns and having further scope to produce responsibly. He explained the Strategic Framework of Production and Consumption in Honduras, which has aspects related to sustainable cities, tourism, and value chains, with a view of promoting innovation. Mr. Rodas explained that this document was developed from dialogue and meetings with several public and private entities and NGOs, among others, and is aligned with national policies and international commitments, and it is part of country planning efforts towards sustainable consumption and production, environmental protection, and the search for new opportunities. Honduras is also working at the institutional level with regulations on energy efficiency, and solid waste sector. He mentioned the importance of monitoring and evaluation of mitigation measures. He concluded his intervention indicating that Honduras is committed to improve its sustainable production and consumption and that they are making important progress.
- 43.** The representative of Honduras and the moderator of the Panel recognised the efforts of the United Nations Environment Programme.
- 44.** The delegate of Mexico made an intervention thanking the panellists and mentioning that there is still a need to achieve alliances with the private sector and with civil society. She also highlighted the importance of communication and environmental education.
- 45.** Finally, Mr. Gentile pointed out that the Fourth United Nations Environment Assembly is configured as an instrument to advance beyond the environmental agenda towards the definition of policies, and discussions on development, seeking new partners for the global environmental agenda.

#### **Dialogue 4: Innovative solutions to enhance ecosystems**

- 46.** The moderator of the panel, Ms. Cristiana Pasca Palmer noted the importance of the restoration agenda and congratulated El Salvador for promoting the initiative of the UN decade on ecosystem restoration. She underlined that innovation is about more than just technology, and that technology cannot fix everything and cannot control nature.
- 47.** To begin the round of presentations of the panellists, Mrs. Lina Pohl Alfaro, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of El Salvador, began by informing that El Salvador proposed the “Decade of the Restoration of Ecosystems” because it is located in the most climate-vulnerable region of the world. The idea is not only ecological restoration but also the restoration of productive ecosystems and landscapes. The political framework and institutional framework include political parties, but also private sector and civil society. El Salvador has

launched a working group on restoration and is working on a policy based on environmental data, and using information on risk and vulnerability, to develop local sustainable development plans, and local opportunity maps for restoration. These were developed using high resolution satellite data.

**48.** She added, that forty-nine techniques for restoration were developed, alongside a financial and technical analysis to support restoration programmes and methodologies. The transition to a restored ecosystem was developed for each zone, with annual action plans in each of the productive landscapes of El Salvador. The first forest inventory was developed in high resolution, allowing the country to identify its carbon stocks for all forests, and to better understand biomass gains and losses. Restoration is an innovative solution and the most effective solution to face climate change. 160,000 ha have been restored, the target is one million. She ended by explaining that this is the initiative which underpins the recommendation to make 2021-2030 the decade on restoration.

**49.** The second panellist, Mr. Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, Minister of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica, presented his country's experience of integrating ecosystems management into national development plans and how this contributed to having a better understanding of the 2030 Agenda. Costa Rica is a country which has understood how to use restoration to generate employment and economic growth. He recalled that in 1975, Costa Rica had the highest deforestation per capita in the world. There were four times more cows than people, due to extensive agriculture. This created a tension between short term goals and the need to protect ecosystems. He added that the Climate Change Convention needs to learn from the Convention on Biological Diversity, with its global targets on biodiversity. Costa Rica has stopped deforestation and doubled forest cover.

**50.** He noted that most countries with degraded forests do not understand how to begin restoration, nevertheless. Costa Rica and El Salvador have discovered how to do this in an inexpensive manner. Unfortunately, the negotiators of the UN Reducing emissions derived from deforestation and forest degradation UN- REDD programme negotiators did not understand this in the climate change convention. REDD has been understood as a monitoring mechanism rather than dealing with the cause of deforestation.

**51.** He explained that two political actions have facilitated restoration in Costa Rica. Firstly, institutions are responsible for the deforestation, and these same institutions cannot restore without being reconfigured. The Ministry of Environment and Energy is a ministry of environment, energy, mining, and water. Bringing these sectors together in a single ministry facilitated the development of more coherent public policies and a more comprehensive view of how these sectors work together. Secondly, restoration has usually been organised by services (e.g. forest service, national parks service), which do not work in a coordinated manner. To solve this problem, these were brought together under a single directorate. The location of the forest service within the environment ministry seems to reduce deforestation, compared to locating the forest service in the agriculture ministry. Finally, the application of the polluter pays principle (e.g. payment for carbon) stimulates incentives for forest preservation. For example, he revealed that globally 160 times more resources are invested in destroying forest rather than in protecting it.

**52.** The next panellist, Mr. Lucas Assunção, Head of Trade and Environment at the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), presented on the role of the private sector in integrating biodiversity and ecosystem services into value chains. The central issue of the presentation was how the private sector can be more accountable and the role of the state in facilitating this change. He explained that biotrade is a positive incentive, and that the business sector responds to three pressures. The first one is represented by consumers that drive the

way business deal with biodiversity, both promoting conservation and using it sustainably. Secondly the shareholder pressure that can also push companies to avoid the destruction of biodiversity. And thirdly, is the search for competitiveness, under this point promoting biodiversity can be taken as a competitive advantage, thus ends up and can be good business.

**53.** He clarified that UNCTAD's mandate is to promote and facilitate a fair participation of countries in the global economy. Within environment, the challenge of the CBD is to bring practical meaning to the concept of sustainable use. The biotrade programme, created two years ago, aims to do this. Studying trade flows, UNCTAD sees that biodiversity-based products present a potential of over US\$141 billion worldwide. 66% of these come from megadiverse countries, including Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Brazil. Many of these exports are low value, meaning that there are more opportunities for countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in pharmaceutical sectors which are increasingly sourcing their materials from the region. Mr. Assunção also explained that *biotrade* is about collection, production, transformation, and trade in products while fulfilling environmental, social, and economic sustainability. He explained that *biotrade* is now a reality that has the objective of a fairer transition to a greener and more sustainable economy worldwide. For example, he commented that in Ecuador there is a lot of *biotrade* work in the fashion industry, while in other countries, *biotrade* centres more on food. UNCTAD is active in 46 countries, has supported 3500 value chains and benefitted over five million people. *Biotrade* principles were developed in the Andean region and guide qualification of what is a *biotrade* product and what is not. UNCTAD support countries to implement these, as well as promoting market access and tries to support governments to create a policy environment which facilitates *biotrade* sectors and value chains.

**54.** The last panellist of this segment, Mr. Santiago Gowland, General Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of The Nature Conservancy, asked if we are measuring the benefits of protected areas, including social benefits, and whether or not there is sufficient financing for protected areas. He pointed out that Latin America and the Caribbean already has over 50 million hectares of protected areas, but this is still not enough. Soya alone accounts for billions of hectares. Taking into account that Latin America and the Caribbean still has three times more deforestation than other parts of the world, mostly due to extensive agriculture in soya and the production of meat, Mr. Gowland asked participants to consider changing from incremental and dispersed approaches to protected areas to a more systematic approach based on landscapes, water, and ecosystems. For example, the implementation of the Forest 2030 Platform led by ministers of the region aiming to mainstream the agenda in related policies. The idea is to generate employment, economic growth, and community development. Forest mitigates 35% of climate change and is the most effective way to reverse climate damage. However, the investment in forest preservation is minimal. El Salvador and Costa Rica's approaches are a good example on the way forward.

**55.** In summary, the moderator Ms. Pasca Palmer noted that innovation often makes us think of technology, but institutional innovation is important. Trade and the role of the private sector in integrating biodiversity into supply chains can be a comparative advantage for business. This is another example of non-technological innovation. She pointed out that we should also address traditional knowledge and the innovations it can bring, and underlined gender, since women are often the stewards of natural resources.

**56.** During the plenary, the minister of environment of Venezuela commented that there is a concern about where species come from for biotrade. Baba (cayman or "caiman crocodilus") is sought after for its skin. Those who wish to take advantage of a species for its resources should be responsible for facilitating breeding to replace the lost stock. Countries should guarantee species reproduction to cover the market demand for extraction, using laws and institutions as necessary. The Minister of Environment of Brazil noted that there is still a lot to learn about

biodiversity. Items extracted from biodiversity should have appropriate ecolabelling, to show where a meat of a wooden chain came from. The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala congratulated the panel for their presentations. He noted that even though Guatemala is one of the 20 megadiverse countries in the world, it suffers from being a drug trafficking bridge, which has contributed to deforestation and 50,000 hectares of forest was lost in 2016. He raised an alert for other countries, before they suffer from the same problem and added that, notwithstanding, the presentations of the session provide some hope for other solutions. An additional paragraph to the declaration relating to this subject had been proposed by Guatemala to the Secretariat.

57. Uruguay's minister of housing, land-use planning and environment highlighted the importance of the contribution of the Common Market of the South (Mercosur) to the environmental agenda, not only in biodiversity, but also in the fight against marine plastics and other environmental issues. Finally, the Under Secretary of Environment of Honduras, explained that his country had lost 1.6 million hectares due to the pine bark beetle (gorgojo). He supported the creation of a platform to better share the experiences of Costa Rica, El Salvador, and others, since their successes in restoration would be very useful in cases of accelerated degradation such as that caused by the beetle in Honduras.

#### **Agenda Item V: The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a control board for the management of public policies towards integrated and mainstreamed sustainability.**

58. As moderator of the session, Mr. José Luis Samaniego, Director of Sustainable Development of ECLAC, highlighted that the environmental indicators are the weakest in terms of monitoring the SDGs according to ECLAC's analysis. He added the need to strengthen the analysis on the current economic structure of the region that is placing limitations on the sustainable development of the countries. A proposal would be a joint report of the gross domestic product (GDP) with a rate of decarbonisation of the economy. The Regional Forum on Sustainable Development could be the place to experiment with these new metrics and analyses, and to provide concrete inputs from the region to the High-Level Political Forum.

59. The first panellist of this segment, Mr. Jose Fidel Santana, Vice minister of Environment of Cuba, presented the effort made by the country to use *Tarea Vida* (the climate change plan) in the 2030 plan that is being finalised. The 2030 Economic and Social Development Plan is being renewed taking into account the SDGs and other international commitments. In the case of the Ministry of Environment, it has been leading one of the six axes of the plan, specifically the one related to natural resources and the environment. To this end, they have called on many institutions to make an integrated contribution to the plan that takes the SDGs into account, and the more than seventy international legal instruments.

60. During his intervention, Mr. José Luis Lopez-Calva, Regional Director of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, presented some basic principles for the effectiveness of a public policy control board based on the SDGs. The first principle is the application of an integrated approach that includes the environment. The second, an effective governance instrument that not only serves for monitoring but also makes the "trade-offs" explicit. For this, according to the work of the winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics this year, it is important to change the concepts of space determined by financial flows to a focus on capital (natural capital, human capital, etc.) for a proper analysis on how a process leads to deterioration or improvement of capital, and thus be able to analyse the "trade-offs". He presented some examples of this change related to land management, resilience building and urban management.

**61.** Finally, Mr. Philip Schonrock, Director of the International Centre for Strategic Thinking (CEPEI for its initials in Spanish), presented the analysis of the voluntary reports of Latin America and the Caribbean presented to the High-Level Political Forum and the document on the progress and good practices of environmental governance in the region that contribute to the 2030 Agenda. On the one hand, he commented on the existence of 21 structures in the region for the 2030 Agenda, highlighting not all of them include the ministries of environment. The exclusion of the environment from the institutional aspect has had negative effects on the National Voluntary Reports on SDGs. For example, eight countries do not make reference to the Paris Agreement or other Multilateral Environmental Agreements in their reports. There is no integrated agenda and, although all of the countries analyse the alignment of their National Development Plans NDPs with the SDGs, there is a need for greater coherence and alignment in environmental matters as the silos are not broken.

**62.** In conclusion, he highlighted the following messages and recommendations: 1) Increase the representation of the ministries of environment in 2030 Agenda processes; 2) Improve the understanding of ecosystem services and their role, and include natural capital in national accounts; 3) Advance in an integrated approach for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and create bridges between the implementation of SDGs and Multilateral Environmental Agreements; and 4) Support regional environmental statistics as there is insufficient data. Finally, he highlighted the confluence in 2019 of three global summits (SDGs, Climate, and the General Assembly) and proposed to articulate them so that they do not compete with each other. It is necessary to defend the consensus achieved in 2015 to expand the opportunities for compliance of the 2030 Agenda and for the SDGs not to become a checklist but a truly transformational agenda.

#### **Agenda Item VI: Environmental rights, governance, and access to environmental justice**

**63.** The Chair of the meeting began Agenda item VI of the Agenda, informing that as a basis for discussion, the Meeting had document UNEP/ LAC-IG.XXI/9 that explains the approach to the rule of law in environmental matters, introduces the topic of environmental crimes in Latin America and the Caribbean, and refers to access to environmental justice, its recent developments and future prospects.

**64.** The moderator of this segment, Mr. Leo Heileman, Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Environment Program, referred to the rule of law in environmental matters as a main concept for equity in terms of making progress in the Sustainable Development Goals as well as access to justice by ensuring a rights-based approach, and the promotion and protection of environmental rights. Recognizing the progress in environmental legislation and institutions in the countries of the region, he mentioned that it is necessary to address persistent challenges in terms of law compliance and prosecution of environmental crimes. He also mentioned that the region can make an important contribution to the Global Compact process, based on the experience of the Escazú Agreement, and referred in particular to the United Nations Environmental Rights Initiative.

**65.** To begin the round of presentations of the panel, Mr. Winston Anderson, Judge of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Caribbean, referred to the main advances and challenges to consolidate the rule of law in environmental matters and protect environmental rights. First, he referred to the growing participation of the region in the negotiation of multilateral agreements and the acceptance of such agreements. There is also important progress in the recognition of environmental rights in the field of national law, beginning with the incorporation of the right to a healthy and clean environment in national constitutions, as well as recognition of access to justice for protection of those rights. That is to say, that increasingly there are more ways for

citizens to access administrative and judicial remedies, as is the case of popular actions, unrestricted access, and reversal of the burden of proof. He also referred to the incorporation of environmental law principles as the precautionary principle and the role of environmental jurisprudence.

**66.** In relation to the challenges, he mentioned in the first place the weaknesses in the implementation of laws and agreements, in many cases due to limited resources. From a regional perspective, there is a disparity between the countries, noting that some have been able to advance more forcefully in the protection of environmental rights, hence there are also many opportunities for the exchange of experiences and learning through regional and subregional cooperation.

**67.** The next panellist, Mr. Carlos de Miguel, head of the Policy Unit of the Sustainable Development Division of ECLAC, focused his presentation on the Escazú Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, highlighting its significance as the only legal instrument emanating from Rio + 20, and as the first environmental legal agreement developed in the region to strengthen environmental rights and governance, which is based on the characteristics and challenges of our countries and has cooperation as a central axis. He stressed that for ECLAC it is an honour to be the Secretariat of this agreement, where the participating countries have the leading role in the process, in a spirit of good faith and trust and with broad public participation. Regarding the prospects for its entry into force, he indicated that the agreement was signed by 15 countries since September 27, and other countries in the region are in advanced processes for signature, as well as to initiate the necessary national instances for its approval. He indicated that eleven ratifications are required for the agreement to enter into force, but countries can develop early actions to implement the Agreement, in areas such as the generation of environmental information.

**68.** Ms. Silvia Capelli, Senior Environmental Prosecutor of Brazil, began her participation by referring to the implementation mechanisms of the Rule of Law in environmental matters, mentioning those of coordination (such as the regional networks of enforcement, enforcement and compliance with the law and cooperation in judicial matters), communication systems (for the production and dissemination of guidelines, and technical and legal assistance), the approach of environmental crimes in relation to other crimes (such as money laundering, corruption and organized crime), and access to justice.

**69.** Regarding the mechanisms to strength environmental rights and access to environmental justice that can be promoted in the region and at global level, she mentioned the establishment of specialized prosecutor's offices as a tendency that distinguishes Latin American countries in particular, and the cooperative work through the Latin American Network of Public Environmental Prosecution, created in 2008 and which currently brings together more than 300 prosecutors from 19 countries.

**70.** Regarding mechanisms at the global level, the panellist made reference to the Global Judicial Institute of the Environment created in 2016, the World Declaration of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) containing the foundations of the State of Environmental Law, the Brasilia Declaration of 2018 with principles applicable to judicial interpretation, and the creation of the Global Institute of the Public Ministry for the Environment with the same purpose of establishing common bases of action, facing the practice of environmental crimes and being a research centre in environmental law. Finally, she mentioned the initiative of the Global Environmental Pact to solidify the state of environmental law throughout the world, a process that has begun this year within the United Nations.

**71.** Mr. Néstor Cafferata, Environmental Secretary of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Argentine Nation, was invited to reflect on the role of judges in the protection of environmental

rights, particularly of citizens in situations of greater vulnerability. The panellist indicated that traditional law does not provide adequate responses to the challenges of this time, which are characterized by two factors: first, the birth of new rights (rights of society as a whole, or of broad social sectors, referred to as "collective" or "common" goods, of "indivisible nature", such as environmental law) and secondly, the great importance of international law, the driving force of environmental law.

**72.** The recognition of these new rights imposes changes in both substantive and procedural law. Environmental law is a right that equals the unequal, protects the weakest in society, and the poorest sectors, children, the women, the elderly, the indigenous communities, marginal communities, and nature. Hence, under the environmental paradigm, the principles and appropriate solutions are based not only on punishment or repression, but on the prevention and avoidance of harm (precaution and prevention, access to information, citizen participation, effective access to environmental justice, and the active role of the judge).

**73.** In this context, the affected party, groups or classes, holders of diffuse interest, NGOs, the ombudsman or ombudsman, the environmental prosecutor can take action, and the ruling has *erga omnes* effects, or *ultra partes*, and thereby changes the role of the judge, who passes from a passive judge, spectator, to an active judge with social responsibility.

**74.** There were interventions from Guatemala, Venezuela, and Panama, highlighting the importance of strengthening environmental governance for the region and referring to national experiences in this area, such as the creation of environmental prosecutors, as well as the importance of recapturing initiatives from the region related to recognizing Mother Earth as a subject of law,

**75.** Finally, the conclusions of this Dialogue were provided by Mrs. Mariela Chervin, Interjurisdictional and Interinstitutional Undersecretary of the Secretary of the Government of Environment and Sustainable Development of Argentina, who formulated them within the framework of the mandate of the present meeting of the Forum, focused on action. In this regard, she stressed that, in order to achieve the state of environmental law or as mentioned by Dr. Cafferata, the constitutional socio-environmental law status, the panellists have identified a series of challenges that the region faces.

**76.** To this end, the definition of the regional cooperation agenda is key, with a view to exchanging relevant experiences and learning among the countries, as well as the definition of the UNEP Environmental Law Program. Cooperation should focus not only on regulatory development, but also on the implementation phase of environmental policies in this area.

**77.** On the other hand, it is, she emphasized the need to conceive new relationships between the powers of the states, not only focused on mutual checks and balances, but also on collaboration for concerted and coordinated action on environmental matters.

**78.** The Escazú Agreement is a fundamental milestone and a regional road map. Access to information is identified as an instrumental prerequisite for exercising participation and the right to the environment, including for access to justice. The development of the countries of the region in the area of specialized prosecutors and courts is very important and cooperation in this area can contribute to their implementation in other countries.

**79.** As highlighted in the Escazú Agreement, access to justice in environmental matters includes alternative dispute resolution mechanisms; if the main environmental conflicts are only submitted to the judicial sphere for their solution, it implies that the remaining powers of the State have failed, so it is essential to contemplate the participation in all stages of environmental decision-making processes, as well as alternative dispute resolution mechanisms

## **Agenda item VII: Review and adoption of the Forum agreements and the Ministerial Declaration**

**80.** Under this agenda item, the ministers examined the recommendations of the segment of high-level officials with a view to their adoption.

**81.** The meeting approved the four proposed decisions; 1. Chemicals, marine litter, and waste management, 2. Climate change; 3. Consumption and sustainable production: decoupling economic growth from resource use and environmental impact; 4. Innovative solutions to enhance the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystems, and the Buenos Aires Declaration, unanimously.

**82.** In the spirit of the proposal made by the Bureau of the Forum and agreed upon at the beginning of this ministerial segment, the Chair then proposed to discuss the various initiatives and proposals of countries or groups of countries that were presented in response to the call made by the Chair.

**83.** Regarding how to integrate these contributions and initiatives into the results of the forum, it was agreed to take note of these in the meeting report, so that they can be elements to be considered in the planning of consultations and future activities within the framework of the Forum. In this sense, this opportunity provided by the Chair was held to bring new topics of interest to the Forum table, with the aim of increasing its strategic value for a broad and inclusive discussion on issues that may be important for some countries in the region.

**84.** Under this premise, the initiatives and ideas compiled by the Secretariat that are reflected in Annex III of this report were presented.

**85.** Firstly, Chile presented a proposal for a commitment to include the gender dimension in the design and implementation of environmental policies (supported by Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Cuba, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru). and Uruguay). This initiative was presented with the objective of showing a greater political commitment than the one already reflected in the Declaration of Buenos Aires, particularly taking into account the momentum that the first informal meeting of Women Ministers of Environment in the region has had during this forum, and the opportunity for the region to take leadership in this issue.

**86.** After some exchanges regarding the methodology of this segment, and continuing the presentation of initiatives, Guatemala presented a proposal related to the Green Climate Fund (supported by Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Haiti, Honduras, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), urging to start the first replenishment of the fund with a more ambitious result and to ensure greater access for the Latin American region and the Caribbean, to resources, for which it is essential to simplify and accelerate the access processes, and also pointing out the strategic importance of strengthening the presence in the region, for example, through the establishment of regional sub-offices.

**87.** Subsequently, Peru presented an initiative on the involvement of the private sector in the financing of the environmental agenda (supported by Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador and Mexico), which highlights the cross-cutting nature of environment and, therefore, the importance of coordination among the diverse actors and dialogue with private banks to motivate interest in the granting of credits for projects and cleaner technologies.

**88.** Next, Trinidad and Tobago presented a proposal on climate resilience in coastal marine ecosystems (supported by Argentina, Ecuador, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, the Dominican Republic, and Uruguay). This proposal is motivated by the deep concern about

the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystems, and the challenges faced in particular by the Small Island Developing States as they depend on their marine resources and their food security is compromised. In this context, it is emphasized that it is imperative to promote best practices and deploy technologies and adequate technical knowledge for the development of a blue economy in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

**89.** After this, Costa Rica presented a proposal on electric mobility (supported by Argentina, Barbados, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, El Salvador, Grenada, Honduras, Peru, Saint Lucia and Uruguay, as well Mexico and Bolivia), highlighting that an important part of air pollution in the region comes from the transport sector, and that electric transport technologies can help countries deal with this problem and comply with their Nationally determined Contributions. Therefore, the countries that adhere to this initiative manifest their willingness to initiate a dialogue aiming at exploring lines of cooperation and learning in areas such as strategies and regulatory frameworks with emphasis on urban public transport, financial instruments and / business models. capacity building, collaboration for pilot projects and creation of innovative jobs.

**90.** In the framework of this agenda item, Peru announced that it will host the Third Congress of Latin American and Caribbean Protected Areas (III CLAAP), to be held from March 17 to 20, 2019 in Lima under the theme "Well-being and natural solutions for sustainable development ", inviting the participation of all the countries of the region.

**91.** In addition, although they did not present a written proposal in this regard, Guatemala (with the support of Costa Rica and Honduras), noted the importance of developing work on illicit wildlife and drugs trafficking, and the impact this has on deforestation. Argentina, for its part, proposed that this issue be registered as a relevant shared agenda, and as a theme of interdisciplinary coordination, together with the issue of security and justice linked to the crimes associated with human, wildlife, and drug trafficking as a subject that affects the environment.

**92.** Ecuador presented a proposal related to the recent special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (supported by Bolivia, Costa Rica, Peru, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, joined after by Argentina, Guatemala, Mexico and Honduras), noting that the rapid, profound and unprecedented changes to limit the global warming to 1.5 °C that this report proposes, requires developed countries to fulfil their commitments based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, to enable the Latin America and the Caribbean region to implement more ambitious goals according to their capacities and circumstances, and their determined contributions at the national level.

**93.** Ecuador also invited the countries to participate in the Second Regional Meeting of the Environmental Information Network to be held in Quito, Ecuador from November 14 to 16, 2018, organized jointly with the United Nations Environment Program.

**94.** At this point, it was noted that in the context of the presentation of the various initiatives, some general considerations were made regarding the modality of the sessions of the Forum of Ministers. Bolivia noted the importance of the ministers and deputy ministers remaining until the end of the meeting, so that the possibility of making decisions and advancing in making commitments that are raised in the last moment of the meeting is maintained. Guatemala, for its part, suggested that instead of approving the results of the forum by consensus, consider the possibility of approving initiatives and priorities by majority, and thus consolidate the forum as a democratic process.

**95.** In relation to these issues, the Chair of the meeting recapitulated the agreed process to include the additional initiatives presented by the countries, which represented a valuable exercise to host topics of interest to Forum members; therefore, it is pending for the next Chair

and the Secretariat to consider the procedural aspects, regarding the duration of the meeting of the Forum, the definition of the agenda for the work of the preparatory segment and the ministerial segment, as well as the modalities that can be more suitable for decision-making and approvals by consensus or majority.

**96.** The Chair also encouraged the countries that have presented and supported the various initiatives to continue discussing them and consider presenting them in other instances such as preparatory meetings or Conferences of the Parties to Multilateral Environmental Agreements, so that they can be taken as an input already formulated at the regional level to work in the global field.

#### **Agenda Item VIII: Election of the Bureau**

**97.** The Chair informed the meeting that nominations from all the subregional groups had been received, and hence the Bureau of the XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean was integrated as follows:

Chair: Barbados

Vice Chairs:

Argentina

Bolivia

Chile

Guatemala

Grenada

Honduras

Peru

**98.** The Ambassador of Barbados, Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson, on behalf of the Chair-elect, expressed her country's gratitude for the election to chair this Forum and to host its next meeting, expressing the desire to work collectively with the entire region towards the achievement of a successful forum.

#### **Agenda Item IX: Closure of the XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean**

**99.** After the words of appreciation of the Regional Director of the United Nations Environment Program and the closing message of the Chair of the XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, the meeting was concluded on Friday, October 12, 2018 at 4:00 p.m.

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**Annex I**  
**Buenos Aires Declaration**

**Buenos Aires Declaration  
XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of  
Latin America and the Caribbean**

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**The Ministers and Heads of Delegation participating in the XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from October 9 to 12, 2018:**

**Reaffirming** that the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean is a space to contribute to integrate the environmental dimension in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals in our region;

**Highlighting** the efforts made to achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the commitments taken on within the framework of the Bilateral and Multilateral Environmental Agreements;

**Recognizing** the resolutions adopted by the Third United Nations Environment Assembly and **taking into consideration** the agreement to fight against pollution achieved by the international community through the Ministerial Declaration “Towards a pollution-free planet”;

**Reaffirming** the Human Right to Clean Water and Sanitation as an essential Human Right for the full enjoyment of life and recognizing that water is the source of life, a factor of integration, cooperation, and peace among peoples; **highlighting** the need to focus on assuring that the water sources are free of pollution;

**Bearing in mind** that the Fourth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly will take place in Nairobi, Kenya, in March 2019, with the main motto “Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges and Sustainable Consumption and Production”;

**Acknowledging** the development of the Waste Management Outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean, as a reference document for the design and implementation of policies and programmes for integrated waste management in the countries of the region, and highlighting the importance that the United Nations Environment Programme updates the document on a regular basis, through the strengthening of the capacity of the countries to provide data and information;

**Recalling** that the Ten-Year Framework of Programs on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) adopted at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) in 2012 promotes the shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns, incorporating different views, models, and instruments, according to the circumstances of each country, as one of the essential requisites for achieving sustainable development;

**Acknowledging** UN General Assembly Resolution 71/225, that reaffirms inter alia, small island developing states remain a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities; that calls for the review of progress made in addressing the priorities of small island developing states through the SAMOA Pathway; and that also decided to convene a High-level review at the UN Headquarters in September 2019;

**Recognizing** that the region, and continues to suffer environmental emergencies, including climate-related and other disasters caused by natural hazards, and industrial accidents, which

impact the ability of countries to effectively pursue the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC);

**Noting** that the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement) was adopted on the 4th of March, and is open for signatures from September 27, 2018 to September 26, 2020;

**Reaffirming** the relevance of Environmental Education as an unavoidable instrument of environmental management to build citizens that are ethically committed to caring for the environment;

**Recognizing** the efforts of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee and the need for continued and enhanced integrated approaches, strengthened collaborations and cooperation, and the consideration of new institutional partners to support the implementation of decisions of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, and in scaling up the implementation of the ILAC;

#### **We agree:**

1. **To highlight** the importance of the 2030 Agenda as a referential action framework for public policies and, at the same time, highlight the contribution of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) to follow scheduled activities in the region;
2. **To consider** the gender perspective as a significant variable for the development and implementation of public policies on environmental issues, considering the gaps that are present in the region today and the opportunities that arise from the exchange of experiences on this matter to meet the 2030 Agenda requirements and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
3. **To request** the help of the Working Group on Environmental Indicators to review of the main Agenda items of ILAC; and to define and note relevant environmental indicators for the region, consistent with the SDGs, and to monitor the environmental regional progress towards the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Samoa Pathway and Sendai Framework, as well as to promote the dissemination and use of that information;
4. **To call** the attention of the countries about the importance to develop and sustain environmental information production, analysis and dissemination systems that include primary and geospatial data, statistics, and indicators to satisfy regional reporting and monitoring frameworks, providing support, and coordinating this task with the ILAC Working Group on Environmental Indicators;
5. **To constitute** a peer learning space for international and regional cooperation and capacity building for the implementation of SDGs;
6. **To recognize** the efforts of the countries, to the best of their abilities, regarding the implementation of systems of access to information, citizen participation and justice in environmental matters according to Principle 10 established in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; as well as to **encourage** the countries of the region to consolidate international cooperation on matters of environmental access rights and strengthen government institutions and legislation on this matter, inter alia, through the new Program for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme V), to be considered at the next United Nations Environment Assembly, for its implementation from the

year 2020;

7. **To invite** the countries of the region to complete their designation of national focal points to participate in the ongoing revision to the Montevideo Programme for Development and the Periodic Review of Environmental Rights (Montevideo IV Programme);
8. **To recognize** the achievements of the region in the development of strategies and national plans on sustainable consumption and production, and the implementation of sustainable public procurement policies; and request the support of other financing sources, to develop a Regional Program to boost the implementation of the Regional Sustainable Consumption and Production Strategy, in a way done by the European Union with the SWITCH Programme;
9. **To encourage** the decision-making processes and the design of policies that favour the transition towards sustainable consumption and production patterns based on scientific knowledge and tools on the efficient use of natural resources; for this purpose, the support of the International Resources Panel will be requested to support regional reports on the efficient use of resources, in order to increase the knowledge and capacities of the countries;
10. **To call** on the governments of the region to promote models of inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and human settlements, for which support is requested to the United Nations Environment Programme and the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GABC) to analyse the development a road map on buildings and low-emission, resilient and efficient construction;
11. **To invite** the countries of the region, based on the different national development models, realities, and capacities, to boost, develop and strengthen public policies and instruments that promote innovative and sustainable business and ventures, without this representing the transfer of responsibilities;
12. **To urge** the international community to recognize the relevance and urgency of the implementation of measures that are consistent with the objectives of the Paris Agreement, including the adaptation, mitigation, and provision of means of implementation;
13. **Support** the process of operationalizing the Platform for the exchange of experiences and best practices of indigenous peoples and local communities, established within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which recognizes the need to reinforce knowledge, technologies, practices and efforts of local communities and indigenous peoples to address climate change;
14. **To exchange** information and experiences in the matter of implementation National Determined Contributions, and the elaboration of long term strategies towards low greenhouse gas emission to comply with the Paris Agreement; and **promote** the development, regional collaboration, and the exchange of information on national or regional strategies, as well as the formulation of public policy instruments on innovation, clean technologies and sustainable urban transport and mobility, according to the realities of each country;
15. **To invite** the countries of the region to promote the planning and implementation of adaptation measures based on risk indexes and indicators and other innovative tools; capacity building and exchange of experiences in monitoring adaptation;
16. **To manifest** that, Developed Countries must fully comply with the requirements of Article 9 of the Paris Agreement, in relation to the provision of financial resources to Developing Countries with respect to the provision of assistance in both mitigation and adaptation, and to

continue leading the efforts aimed at mobilizing climate finance from a wide variety of sources, instruments and groups, representing a progression with respect to previous efforts. Likewise, to strengthen regional cooperation within the framework of the Regional Platform for Cooperation on Climate Change, through capacity building and cooperation among the countries of the region, with the support of international cooperation programmes such as EUROCLIMA+ and REGATTA, to facilitate the regional implementation of the decisions of the Forum of Ministers on climate change;

17. **To promote** the adoption of sustainable land management to achieve land degradation neutrality, as well as **promote** regional commitment to reverse the process of loss of forest cover, flora and fauna species, and other key ecosystems, such as grasslands and wetlands, at the regional level and **reinforce** actions aimed at recovering and restoring ecosystems;

18. **To support** the proposal of the Government of El Salvador and the countries of the Central American Integration System (SICA), requesting the 73rd Session of General Assembly of the United Nations to designate the 2021-2030 decade as “The Decade of the Restoration of Ecosystems”;

19. **To boost** the conservation of biodiversity throughout the territory and through protected areas, promoting the development of capacities through regional technical cooperation, and **to promote** actions aimed at reducing the extinction rates of species, as well as loss of biodiversity at all levels, genetics, species, and ecosystems;

20. **To promote at a regional level** the mainstreaming of biodiversity in all sectors, for its conservation and sustainable use, encouraging innovation in solutions based on nature and sustainable infrastructure;

21. **To recognize** the importance to adopt appropriate measures to guarantee access to genetic resources of biodiversity and fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use. Likewise, to recognize the need to adopt simplified access measures for non-commercial, research purposes and also for emergencies that could threaten or damage human, animal, or plant health, including the genetic information digitally available. The importance of genetic resources for food and agriculture, and their role in relation to food security, should also be considered;

22. **To reiterate** the region's commitment to the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans by all countries and the protection of the marine biodiversity, including the creation of new, and enhancing the capacity of existing marine protected areas;

23. **To develop** a Regional Cooperation Programme on Biodiversity for Latin America and the Caribbean;

24. **To celebrate** the approval of the Action Plan for Regional Cooperation in Chemicals and Waste Management 2019-2020, as a technical cooperation tool to strengthen the capacity of countries in the effective and coordinated implementation of the international agreements on chemicals and wastes, and their sound management beyond 2020;

25. **To encourage** the regional development and adoption of policies and strategies for the integrated management of plastics throughout their life cycle in order to prevent and reduce marine litter, including the promotion of mechanisms to restrict single-use plastics and microplastics, properly managing and minimizing plastic waste, encouraging greater corporate social responsibility and private sector innovation, as well as strengthening monitoring and treatment of water bodies;

26. **Support** the Caribbean Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) in the ongoing review of the SAMOA Pathway and their call for scaled-up international cooperation and support for the implementation of the environmental dimension of the SIDS Sustainable Development framework;

27. **To recognize the importance to respond** quickly to environmental emergencies with the support of United Nations Environment Programme and other relevant organisations, and commit to work on actions to reduce the risk of these events;

28. **To call** on the Intergovernmental Network on Atmospheric Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean to update the Regional Action Plan and the Resource Mobilisation Strategy, given the importance of air quality matters in the region;

29. **To strengthen** environmental education as a cross-cutting issue and provide more support to the Environmental Training Network of Latin America and the Caribbean to promote cooperation in the exchange of experiences among the countries of the region, generating synergies with other initiatives and networks that promote environmental education;

30. **To consult and prepare** proposals to the XXII Forum of Ministers of Environment of LAC for the expansion of the membership of the Interagency Technical Committee taking into consideration regional development banks and agencies, relevant United Nation system agencies, and other regional technical institutions;

31. **To invite** International Credit Organizations, cooperation agencies and other entities to support the implementation of the regional priorities adopted by the XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean;

32. **To recognize** the work being done by the region and the efforts to fulfil the commitments assumed in the ambit of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, as well as in other environmental forums, both regional and multilateral non-binding;

**And finally, they agreed:**

33. **To request** the Chair of the XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to present this declaration on behalf of the countries of the region in the Fourth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development and other relevant environmental forums and processes;

34. **To express** deep gratitude to the Government of Argentina for its kind hospitality as host of the XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from October 9 to 12, 2018

## **Annex II Decisions**

**Decision 1:**  
**Chemicals, Marine Litter and Waste Management**

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**The Ministers and Heads of Delegation participating at the XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean,**

***Regional Cooperation on Chemicals and Waste***

**Recalling** Decision 8 of the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment, through which the Intergovernmental Network of Chemicals and Waste for Latin America and the Caribbean was established, with the main objective of strengthening the environmentally sound management of chemical and waste, through regional cooperation and the exchange of information and experiences;

Also recalling Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goal 12 which specifies, *inter alia*, the global target that by 2020, countries achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment;

**Reiterating** the urgent need for concerted action by all countries in the region to effectively address the health and environmental risks arising from the unsound management of chemicals and all wastes;

**Acknowledging** the importance of having regional coordination mechanisms in collaboration with international organizations and other relevant stakeholders, as well as with the necessary financial support for the implementation of the sound management of chemicals and waste;

**Decide**

1. **To adopt** the *Action Plan for regional cooperation on chemicals and waste management 2019-2020*<sup>2</sup> within the framework of the Intergovernmental Network, which addresses the priority issues for the region.
2. **To encourage** the countries of the region to support the implementation of the activities included in the Action Plan, by fostering the exchange of experiences and information, and promoting the actions included in the Resource Mobilization Strategy 2019-2020<sup>3</sup> to enable the effective implementation of the Action Plan.

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<sup>2</sup> UNEP/LAC-IG.XXI/4/Ad.1

<sup>3</sup> UNEP/LAC-IG.XXI/4/Ad.2

3. **To undertake** the necessary efforts for the strengthening of the Intergovernmental Network, with the support of the Secretariat and other relevant organizations.
4. **To highlight** the leadership and work developed during this first period by the member countries of the Steering Committee<sup>4</sup> and the focal points of the Network and **encourage** the members of the Network to express their interest in being part of the next Committee for the period 2019-2020.

### ***Marine Litter***

**Recognizing** the urgent need for coordinated action in the region to effectively address the risks posed to the environment as well as to the human health associated with the growing flow and accumulation of marine litter and microplastics, increasing the level of pollution in the aquatic ecosystems;

**Recalling** Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals 12, 13 and 14 on responsible consumption and production, climate action and life below water.

**Also recalling** the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolutions 1/6, 2/11 and 3/7 on marine litter and microplastics and considering the recommendations in them.

**Recognizing** the several existing global and regional frameworks addressing the issue, including the Regional Seas Programme, the Open-Ended Expert Group on marine litter established by UNEA, the Global Partnership for Marine Litter (GPML), the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal and, in particular, the outcomes of the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group, and encouraging active participation in these forums.

**Recognizing** the progress made by the countries in the development of local solutions to prevent marine litter, as well as in the adoption and implementation of the Clean Seas Campaign, and encouraging other countries of the region to join the Campaign;

Also **Recognizing** the need to better utilize and, and where possible, strengthen the existing regional coordination mechanisms to enforce and accelerate the cooperation in tackling the issues of marine litter and microplastics.

### **Decide**

1. **To increase** the efforts of the countries to develop and implement national and regional plans to reduce marine litter, by developing necessary policies, strategies and programmes, such as the research and development of more sustainable alternatives to the use of plastic and microplastics, the restriction and reduction of single-use plastics, the implementation of extended producer responsibility schemes, the sound management of waste, and the monitoring and surveillance of water quality, including in coastal zones, watersheds, ecosystems and wetlands..

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<sup>4</sup> The member countries of the Steering Committee during this period were: Jamaica and Dominican Republic (Caribbean); Costa Rica and Mexico (Mesoamerica); Colombia and Peru (Andes); Brazil and Uruguay (Southern Cone).

2. **To strengthen** the existing regional coordination mechanisms such as the Regional Seas Programme, the Global Partnership for Marine Litter and its Regional nodes, and the Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional centres, for their suitability to serve as a regional coordinating platform to strengthen the cooperation on reducing marine litter and microplastics, including through sharing of information, knowledge and best practices, capacity building, special events and other similar activities.
3. **To invite** United Nations Environment Programme, in coordination with other relevant organizations, to continue to support and promote all actions taken by countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region in reducing the marine litter and microplastics and to further strengthen regional collaboration and coordination, including through providing advice and facilitating the participation of experts in relevant events and capacity building opportunities in the region.

### ***Waste management***

**Considering** the adverse effects on human health and environment that can be derived from the unsound management of waste, and aware of the progressive increase in the amount and complexity of the waste generated;

**Acknowledging** the efforts of the countries to advance towards the sound management of waste;

**Recalling** the request to the Secretariat, in Los Cabos Declaration, to develop a regional outlook on the main challenges and trends in the integrated management of waste;

**Acknowledging** the development of the Waste Management Outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean, as a reference document for the design and implementation of policies and programmes for integrated waste management in the countries of the region, and highlighting the importance that the United Nations Environment Programme updates the document on a regular basis, through the strengthening of the capacity of the countries to provide data and information.

### **Decide:**

1. **To stress** the need to foster sustainable consumption and production, promoting the prevention, minimization, and recovery of waste over its final disposal, and including awareness raising and education actions;
2. **To agree** that the countries of the region will make the necessary efforts to strengthen the integrated solid waste management, developing policies and strategies necessary to phase-out the unsound waste management practices, including dumpsites and open burning;
3. **To invite** the Secretariat to promote the establishment of a working group or voluntary coalition between governments and other relevant organizations, in coordination with other initiatives, to develop a roadmap for the progressive closure of dumpsites and the effective transition towards the integrated waste management in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the development of technical and financial guidelines, taking into

account the different realities in the region, and promoting the sharing of best practices and experiences.

4. **To invite** also donors and partners to support governments of the region in the development and implementation of regional and national plans to achieve integrated management of waste.

## Decision 2: Climate change

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The Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean,

**Recognizing** the ongoing work of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as the main instrument to implement global climate action, as well as the Paris Agreement as an important instrument that facilitates the urgent and significant actions needed to address the growing challenges associated with climate.

**Noting** with concern the increasing impact of climate-related disasters in the region, such as hurricanes, floods and droughts; observing the evidence that their severity is increasing due to changes caused by greenhouse gas emissions; and considering the impact they have on human lives, livelihoods and the environment, and the resulting humanitarian challenges, including the management of waste generated by a disaster.

**Considering** that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change are the fundamental instruments of regional cooperation to address climate change.

**Recognizing** the results of the "Global Warming 1.5°C" Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); the fact that current commitments place us in a 3°C temperature scenario, where damage to the environment and production systems would be irreversible.

**Noting** with serious concern the IPCC Special Report on 1,5 degrees Celsius and the need for urgent and ambitious action to avoid catastrophic climate change, in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

**Committed** to the balance that is required between mitigation and adaptation actions to face climate change, and the special attention required by the oceans and biodiversity approach in climate measures.

**Convinced** of the urgency of the prompt and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement, and the need to achieve progress on the Work Program in the forthcoming 24th Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24).

### ***Long-term strategies and NDCs***

**Noting** that long-term low GHG emission development strategies and **NDCs** can help to institutionalize action on climate change and assess the sensitivity of the economy to climate change, highlighting opportunities and limitations.

**Considering** that, in order to make the required change towards low-emission, resilient and equitable economies, there is a need for a medium and long-term point of view that is integrated with national development planning processes and strategies, that integrates gender issues, and has a participatory and transparent approach.

**Returning** to the need to adopt and implement an integrated approach in the development policies of the cities established by the SDGs, it is essential to establish close links with the Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN Habitat- ECLAC, 2018).

***Innovation and clean technologies***

Considering the need to achieve the goal of GHG emission reduction on a large scale and the role of innovation and clean technologies to achieve this, including, in the transport sector, among others;

**Considering** that regional collaboration would help to strengthen capacities and would give a signal to private actors and the financial sector to make available clean technologies and therefore lower their total costs; in accordance to national characteristics and conditions.

**Considering** that there is the opportunity to **introduce and** improve transport systems and urban mobility, which are vital for the region, since more than 80% of the population of the region lives in urban centres, one of the highest rates of urbanization on the planet.

***Planning and monitoring adaptation***

**Recalling** paragraph 1 of Article 7 of the Paris Agreement, which establishes the “global goal on adaptation of enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change, with a view to contributing to sustainable development”.

**Considering** that the majority of the countries have initiated the development and execution of their National Adaptation Plans and that this is a continuous, progressive and iterative process of dialogue between different institutional and non-institutional structures, stakeholders and different sectors and levels of government that follows a country-driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and transparent approach; whose implementation should be based on priorities established in relevant national documents, plans and strategies, and should be coordinated with different national objectives, plans, policies and sustainable development programs.

**Considering** that, in some cases, it is more efficient to undertake a part of the formulation and execution process of the National Adaptation Plans, such as climate modelling, vulnerability and risk assessment, and knowledge management, at the regional and sub-regional level.

***Regional Platform on Climate Change***

**Bearing in mind** that, at the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, held in March 2016 in Cartagena, Colombia, the Ministers of Environment of Latin America, and the Caribbean agreed in Decision 7 upon the establishment of the Regional Platform for Cooperation on Climate Change, with voluntary participation, led by the countries.

**Considering** that, the main objective of this Platform is the reinforcement of capacities, through work in three key priority areas: (1) Dialogue and exchange of experiences on public climate policies and their interrelations with other policies; (2) Climate action in adaptation and mitigation as well as in losses and damages; (3) Financing and other means of implementation, including the transfer of technologies, and climate science and capacity building.

**Bearing in mind** that at the last High Level Intersessional Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, a consensus **was reached** to take advantage of the opportunity represented by the existence of regional and **multilateral** platforms in the field of climate change that already have funding and a work trajectory on climate change in the implementation of the work plan of this Platform.

**Recognizing** the need to increase and align climate finance for the effective implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), strengthening technology transfer and capacity building.

### **Decide:**

#### ***Long-term strategies and NDCs***

**Strengthen regional and** South-South cooperation in relation to development of capacities and exchange of information and experiences in the implementation of NDCs and development of long-term low GHG emission development strategies.

**Promote** regional mechanisms that facilitate new flows of international climate financing directed to national governments for the implementation of their NDCs and the development of their long-term low GHG emission development strategies.

#### ***Innovation and clean technologies***

**Promote** development, regional collaboration, and the exchange of information on national or regional strategies, as well as the formulation of public policy instruments on innovation, clean technology, and sustainable urban mobility and transport.

#### ***Planning and monitoring adaptation***

**Promote** the exchange of experiences and South-South cooperation for the identification, the development and implementation of adaptation measures and plans, based on data and climate change scenarios, using as basis, among others risk maps and other innovative tools.

**Support** capacity building and exchange of experiences in the integration of adaptation indicators at the national level to contribute to building resilience across the Latin American and Caribbean region, recognizing the unique biophysical characteristics and considering the different approaches and visions our countries have.

#### ***Regional Platform on Climate Change***

**Strengthen** regional cooperation in the framework of the Regional Platform for Cooperation on Climate Change, through capacity building and cooperation among the countries of the region, as an essential pillar for taking actions to manage climate change, taking into consideration the particular needs of the countries of the region.

**Request** donor countries, funds, agencies and cooperation programmes, such as the GEF, EUROCLIMA + and Regatta, to increase their support to facilitate the regional implementation of the decisions of the Forum of Ministers on climate change, including activities within the framework of the Platform, seeking equitable access to all countries, so that the proposed objectives are achieved.

**Appoint** the Chair of the Forum of Ministers of Environment as Chair of the Platform, with the support of the Secretariat of the Forum of Ministers, and in consultation with the countries of the

region to develop, update and supervise the implementation of the work plan of the Platform, during their presidency period.

**Ensure** that, in the execution of the activities of the Regional Platform, efficiency and coordination are priorities and duplication of efforts is avoided.

**Decision 3:  
Sustainable Consumption and Production: decoupling economic growth from resource  
use and environmental impact**

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**The Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean,**

**Recalling** the commitments adopted in the framework of Agenda 21 at the Earth Summit of Rio de Janeiro in 1992; as well as in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002; and in the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012, which reaffirms that changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production is one of the three overarching objectives and essential requirements for sustainable development;

**Considering** the Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly 70/1 of September 2015, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and affirming the commitment of the region to achieve their objectives and goals, also recognizing that of the objective of moving toward sustainable patterns of consumption and production is a crosscutting element of the 2030 Agenda, which not only contributes to achieving SDG 12 and its associated targets but also to advancing other related commitments;

**Recognizing** the Ministerial Declaration of the 2018 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which expresses its concern that decoupling economic growth from resource use continues to be challenging; and acknowledges the midterm review of and progress achieved in the implementation of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (A/CONF.216/5), including the development of the One Planet network, which is an important implementation mechanism for Sustainable Development Goal 12; and agrees to further accelerate action on the 10-Year Framework of Programmes.

**Taking into account the** San Pedro Declaration of Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean (SIDS), during the Regional Preparatory Meeting (August 2018), which reaffirms that SIDS remain a special case for sustainable development, given their unique vulnerabilities and their constraints in achieving all three dimensions of sustainable development; underscores its support for the principles of sustainable consumption and production as means of addressing issues related to waste, chemicals, food, energy, sustainable lifestyles and land management in an integrated manner; and calls on the United Nations Environment Programme and other regional organizations to support the establishment of a framework initiative to address the sustainable consumption and production priorities of Caribbean SIDS in the SAMOA Pathway.

**Recalling** what was established in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 69/313 of July 2015, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development about “continuing the support of developing countries to strengthen their scientific, technological and innovative capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production, in particular through the implementation of the 10YFP”;

**Considering** the Fourth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA4), to be held in March 2019, with the theme of “Innovative Solutions for Environmental problems and Sustainable Consumption and Production”;

**Recognizing** the progress made in the implementation of: i) the Regional Strategy for Sustainable Consumption and Production and its Action Plan (2015-2016); ii) Decision 6 on Sustainable Consumption and Production from the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean; and iii) the proposals for action for the Secretariat and Global Board of the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP).

### **Decide to**

- 1) **Reaffirm** the commitment of the Latin America and the Caribbean region in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 12 and targets related to sustainable consumption and production; as well as the commitment of Caribbean SIDS to the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, in particular the paragraph 69 related to sustainable consumption and production.
- 2) **Redouble** the efforts of the countries of the region in the implementation of the Latin American and the Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development, and the Regional Strategy for Sustainable Consumption and Production; and the regional implementation of the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) and its strategy "One Plan for One Planet". For this purpose, countries are invited to take action on the following points:
  - a. **Request** the Regional Council of Government Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production and the United Nations Environment Programme, as Secretariat of the Forum, to update the Action Plan based on the results of the Forum, and the Fourth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.
  - b. **Engage** in a dialogue between the countries of the region and the European Union, to explore the creation of regional cooperation programs on sustainable consumption and production for Latin America and the Caribbean, taking into account the important progress on SCP in our region, and considering the best practices and cooperation mechanisms of the European Union in other regions, such as the "SWITCH Asia Pacific", "SWITCH Africa" and "SWITCH Mediterranean" programs.
  - c. **Request** the technical support of United Nations Environment Programme's Latin America and the Caribbean Office to facilitate dialogue between the European Community and the Region – Regional Forum of Ministers of Environment, CARIFORUM and EULAC (European Union - CELAC), and to support the development of the regional proposals on sustainable consumption and production.
- 3) **Strengthen** decision-making processes and the design of policies that favour the transition towards sustainable consumption and production patterns based on the scientific knowledge and tools on the efficient use of natural resources. To this end, countries are invited to take action on the following points, according to their national priorities:
  - a. Request the support of the International Resource Panel to:
    - i.) **Make** available to countries of the region the summaries of the reports translated into Spanish and Portuguese, given their importance for the

development of national and regional policies and initiatives, based on scientific information.

- ii.) **Develop** regional studies, based on global reports when possible and resources allow, contextualizing the benefits and opportunities to promote the efficient use of resources in each region.
  - iii.) **Provide** support for the organization of regional roundtables with multiple stakeholders (private sector, academia, civil society, youth, etc.) on resource efficiency and decoupling, to enhance knowledge and skills, and disseminate studies of the International Resource Panel.
  - iv.) **Support** capacity building on global material flows and methodologies for analysis of material flows to enable national statistical offices in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to their priorities and capacities, to report material flow and resource productivity indicators. Such indicators are needed for monitoring and implementation of several SDG targets, including SDG 8.4, SDG 12.1 and 12.5.
- b. **Invite** the countries of the region to strengthen the representation of the region in the International Resource Panel by increasing the number of representatives of governments and independent scientists in the Panel.
  - c. **Strengthen** alliances on innovative solutions for resource efficiency and SCP with global and regional initiatives, according to the national and regional priorities, and as appropriate.
- 4) **Call for action** to focus cooperation and promote combined actions on priority issues of the Regional Strategy for Sustainable Consumption and Production, where several countries in the region are already developing innovative solutions to promote sustainable consumption and production, which may be scalable and replicable; in the following areas:
- 4.1. **Sustainable, Efficient, Resilient and Inclusive Cities.** It is essential to advance in the development and implementation of integrated urban and land-use planning approaches, as well as the adoption of tools for the efficient use of natural resources to promote efficient and resilient cities; responding to the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, especially the SDGs 11, 12 and 13. For which countries are invited to participate in the following actions:
    - a) **Establish** a dialogue and strengthen the cooperation between Ministries of Environment and other national authorities related to urban and spatial planning (including environment, transport, energy, territorial development, and urban planning, etc.) for the development of sustainable urban and multi-sector planning policies.
    - b) **Invite** countries of the region, according to their national priorities and capacities, to join The Global Alliance for Building and Construction (GABC) and consider the development of a roadmap for the region about low-carbon construction and buildings that are resilient and efficient in the use of natural resources, based on the guidelines of this initiative and incorporating sustainability criteria in social housing plans.

- c) **Request** the GABC provide guidance on the development of sustainable building codes and certification of sustainable buildings, according to national context and priorities and where appropriate, and to provide information on the cost of these measures and their mitigation potential; and to continue to provide a regional platform to exchange experiences through an annual regional roundtable and to support alliances between ministries, other national authorities, and private sector stakeholders throughout the supply chain.
- d) **Invite** all countries to strengthen their efforts to contextualize and operationalize SDGs goals and indicators at the city level, and promote innovative approaches in cities, which help to achieve greater resource efficiency and better sustainable urban and land-use planning.

**4.2. Innovative and sustainable businesses:** acknowledging that in the region, Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, and the productive sector are important sources for economic growth and employment, and have a key role to increase the efficient use of resources, innovation and support for sustainable lifestyles, further action is requested to:

- a) **Support** Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the incorporation of tools that encourage changes towards sustainable consumption and production patterns, for example through eco-design, innovation, community-based economy, circular economy-in the context of sustainable consumption and production, and other sustainable solutions.
- b) **Support** Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises that are implementing sustainable consumption and production practices to get involved in value chains and new opportunities for market access.
- c) **Encourage** entrepreneurs working on innovative solutions to face social, environmental, and economic development challenges through innovative approaches to increase productivity, sustainability, and innovation.

**4.3. Sustainable Public Procurement, Eco-labelling and other social-labelling to accelerate the efficiency and sustainable use of natural resources.** Considering the progress of the region in the development of national strategies for sustainable public procurement, as well as work and results of the Sustainable Public Procurement and Eco-labelling Programme (SPPEL) implemented in seven countries, with the technical and financial support of United Nations Environment Programme and European Union, it is requested to:

- a) **Support** the development of a second phase of a regional project on sustainable public procurement and eco-labelling (SPPEL) to strengthen and scale up good practices and the implementation or development of national plans for sustainable public procurement, with technical support of the United Nations Environment Programme and other relevant UN Agencies and cooperation organizations.
- b) **Expand** the use of sustainable public procurement to accelerate the efficiency in the use of resources and the adoption of sustainable consumption and

production patterns, including the attainment of global and national priorities such as the elimination of single-use plastics.

- c) **Recognise** the initiative for the development of a regional eco-label (Environmental Seal America), promoted by Colombia, Costa Rica, and Mexico, and invite other countries who wish to join this initiative.

**4.4. Generate and encourage enabling conditions for citizens to adopt more sustainable lifestyles.**

- a) **Strengthen** the participation of the region in the 10YFP Program/One Planet on Sustainable Lifestyles, to work alongside governments, the private sector, civil society, women, afro-descendants, indigenous peoples and local communities, and communication media in the development of enabling conditions that allow citizens to understand the lifecycle of products, and change their habits, adopting healthier and more sustainable lifestyles.
  - b) **Take into account** different approaches, visions, models, and instruments to achieve sustainable development and good living, living good, and other approaches, respecting the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities.
  - c) **Generate** and support research, education and innovation platforms to promote solutions for sustainable lifestyles.
  - d) **Coordinate** environmental education and training processes in the development of policies and technical-operational tools to generate more sustainable consumption and production patterns, with the allocation of adequate financial resources and evaluation and monitoring instruments.
- 5) **Work** together in efforts to integrate conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity in productive sectors, as well as in the decarbonization and detoxifying of cities, especially in clean transport, air quality, and integrated waste management, and sustainable urban lifestyles, which is essential in the fight against climate change, in increasing resource efficiency and for environmental protection.

## Decision 4

### Innovative solutions to enhance the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystems

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#### **The Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean,**

**Recognizing** that the Convention on Biological Diversity is the most important global instrument to promote and ensure the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services provided to society, and the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable distribution of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources;

**Highlighting** the important role of the Government of Mexico in the organization of the successful Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Eighth Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Second Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Derived from its Utilization, whose motto was: “Integrating biodiversity for well-being”;

**Recalling** the scope of the thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which adopted decisions that favour the implementation of policies and measures aimed at the integration of holistic and integrated approaches for the mainstreaming of conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity in all sectors, particularly those that depend on biodiversity;

**Bearing in mind** that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes objectives and goals that are aimed at promoting the sustainable use of ecosystems, combating desertification, halting, and reversing land degradation, and curbing the loss of biological diversity, for the sustainable and integral development, and ending poverty in all its forms by applying integrated approaches;

**Recalling** that the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets has an achievement date in 2020, for which it will be necessary to enhance efforts and think strategically about the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;

**Recognizing** the progress of the region in the implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and compliance with Target 11 on protected areas, both marine and terrestrial;

**Recalling** Decision 10 of the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment, which emphasized that biodiversity, the conservation and sustainable use of its components, and the protection and restoration of ecosystems, offer the opportunity to contribute to the application of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of several of the Sustainable Development Goals, in an effective way, even including economic benefits;

**Emphasizing** that Decision 10 establishes the need to arrange a Regional Cooperation Program on Biodiversity to support national capacity building, as a strategic opportunity looking towards the implementation of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean;

**Recalling** Decision 10 of the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment, which considers the decision-making that takes into account financing to implement programs of ecological restoration of degraded ecosystems, that generate connectivity with protected areas, and re-establish ecosystems to provide environmental functions and basic ecosystem services;

**Bearing in mind** the Regional Assessment of the Americas on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), which indicates that it is expected for the trends of the main drivers of biodiversity and nature's contributions to people to increase in the future, with the consequent increase in the need to improve the effectiveness of governance and policies if biodiversity conservation and nature's contributions to people are to be maintained;

**Emphasizing** that addressing the restoration of degraded ecosystems presents a transformative opportunity to focus in an integrated manner on the relationship between ecosystem degradation, desertification and combating climate change, and move towards compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, recognizing the interdependence of ecosystems, biodiversity and livelihoods, as well as the relationship of the sectors that depend on biodiversity with these ecosystems that provide essential services through a landscape vision;

**Recognizing** the initiative of the Government of El Salvador to promote the 2021-2031 Ecosystems Restoration Decade, which guides actions to fulfil the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, synergistically with the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

**Recalling** the Caribbean Triologue on Pollinators, Food Security and Climate Resilience held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic from September 4 to 6, 2018, and taking into account the numerous contributions of pollinators to the well-being of people in food and agricultural crops.

**Recognizing** that according to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), invasive alien species are the third cause of loss of native and endemic biological diversity of countries, and that goal 9 of Aichi seeks to reduce this risk.

#### **Decide:**

1. **Promote** regional coordination and strengthen efforts to achieve the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
2. **Specify** actions to strengthen regional capacities for the progress of work towards post-2020 global biodiversity framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity.
3. **Agree** on the development of a Regional Cooperation Program for Biodiversity, whose Terms of Reference are annexed to this Decision, promoting coordination and the exchange of information to develop specific strategies and plans within the framework of actions which can be carried out and aimed at towards the mainstreaming of biodiversity and ecosystem services in all economic sectors, especially those that depend on biodiversity and are relevant to natural life systems of indigenous peoples and local communities.
4. **To invite** the Secretariat of the Forum to support the establishment of a working group with the objective of preparing a roadmap to form the Regional Cooperation Program for Biodiversity mentioned in the previous paragraph and present its results in the next session of the XXII Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

5. **To include** in the roadmap, the mechanisms of joint actions for the development of knowledge, experiences, and their application to agrobiodiversity, in agroecological systems and best practices in sustainable agricultural.

6. **Support** the proposal of the Government of El Salvador and the countries of the Central American Integration System (SICA), calling on the General Assembly of the United Nations in its 73rd session to designate the decade of 2021-2030 as "The United Nations Decade for the Ecosystems Restoration".

7. **To encourage** the establishment of cooperation actions and joint action among the countries, in the fight against the illegal trafficking of Wildlife, and request support from the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora Wildlife (CITES) and The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to establish a framework for joint action against wildlife trafficking.

8. **To invite** the countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region to take concrete actions for the restoration of ecosystems at the national and regional level during this decade, integrating them into policies and plans to address the current development challenges following established guidelines in the decision of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD/COP/DEC/XIII/5) on the Short-term Action Plan for Ecosystem Restoration.

9. **To invite** the countries of the region to strengthen regional wetland management initiatives and the implementation of the conceptual frameworks included in the Ramsar Convention.

10. **Encourage** commitments and partnerships among countries, the international community, civil society, the private sector, and other stakeholders, as well as among sources of financing, to address the restoration of degraded ecosystems through efficient production systems, agroecological approaches, conservation agriculture, agroforest, and cattle ranching systems, among other sustainable agriculture practices.

11. **To invite** the countries of the Latin America and the Caribbean region, having reached Aichi target 11 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) with respect to the percentage of 17% in terrestrial environments declared as protected area and 10% in the marine area, to reinforce efforts for the effective management of these protected areas, to ensure their ecological integrity and, consequently, the provision of environmental services in favour of the people.

12. **To encourage** commitments and alliances among countries to prevent the introduction of invasive alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats, and other species.

13. **Encourage** commitments and alliances involving indigenous peoples and local communities, protected by the countries' biological diversity and traditional knowledge, to promote the effective

implementation of the Nagoya Protocol to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) of the United Nations.

14. **Invite** the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to develop efforts aimed at improving technical capacities, raising baseline information, and mobilizing resources to address the threats that threaten pollinators in the region, given the multiple benefits they bring to people and the functioning of ecosystems.

15. **To agree** to take all the steps that are feasible to promote the mobilization of resources for the region to address the issues addressed in this ministerial decision.

## Appendix I

### Terms of Reference of the Regional Program of Cooperation on Biodiversity for Latin America and the Caribbean

#### Background and context

Latin America and the Caribbean constitutes one of the largest and most important in situ repositories of biodiversity on the planet. Together with the diverse cultures that inhabit these regions, its international relevance multiplies. In a context of growing human pressures on biodiversity and the effects of climate change on ecosystems, the need to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and its components is becoming increasingly urgent. Different international instruments and declarations have drawn attention to this situation and the urgency of adopting measures that reverse and curb levels of biodiversity loss and promote its conservation and sustainable use. These instruments include, for example, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the Cancun Declaration on the Integration of Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity for Wellbeing (COP 13, Cancún, Mexico), the Americas Assessment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, among other instruments.

In this context, and as a result of the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Cartagena, Colombia between March 28-31, 2016, the representatives of the countries adopted Decision 10 (Integration of Biodiversity for Sustainable Development in Harmony with the Environment). Paragraph 4 of this Decision establishes the need to "Establish a Regional Cooperation Program on Biodiversity to support the creation of national capacities, in order to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and promote the integration of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the agricultural, forestry, mining, hydrocarbon exploitation, energy, fisheries and tourism sectors<sup>5</sup>, that will contribute, among others, to ending poverty, zero hunger, sustainable and integrated development, improvement in living conditions and the enjoyment of a healthy environment".

This is related to paragraph 7 of this same Decision, which raises the need to "Promote within the framework of this Forum [of Ministers], the strengthening of legal and institutional frameworks for the integration of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the different sectors, and the identification and exchange of good practices for the integration of biodiversity and sustainable and integrated development".

As a result of these mandates, the United Nations Environment Program, Regional Office for Latin America, and the Caribbean, takes the initiative to promote the development of a Regional Cooperation Program on Biodiversity with the countries of the region. A result that is expected to be presented at the XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

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<sup>5</sup> It is important to note that, while these are priority sectors, countries could also incorporate other sectors that, in the light of their own interests and national prioritization, they consider deserve attention such as productive natural ecosystems, economy and finance, transport and communications, among others

## **Main objectives of the programme**

- Strengthen institutional capacities of the authorities and sectoral officials and of the biodiversity focal points in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, through coordination, communication, and information exchange.
- Develop concrete strategies and plans and carry out actions aimed at mainstreaming the component "biological diversity" in all sectors, particularly those that depend on biodiversity, and those relevant for indigenous peoples and local communities' natural life systems, in the framework of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant international agreements.
- Contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, facilitating the achievement of the objectives and goals related to biodiversity and ecosystems in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).
- Collaborate strongly in the development and prioritization of post-2020 actions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in accordance with the results on the progress of the Aichi Targets.
- Support the transformational process promoted by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to adjust the agreement to the challenges of the post-2020 decades.
- Make recommendations at the policy and program level and support the implementation of international agreements on biodiversity and ecosystems in the countries of the region.
- Strengthen the cooperation, exchange and coordination of the sectoral authorities and officials and the biodiversity focal points of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in the development of national legislation on access to genetic resources, including the genetic information available digitally, and the distribution of the benefits derived from its use.
- Strengthen regional cooperation and facilitate the exchange of information and good practices on integrated and sustainable management of ecosystems.

## **Specific objectives**

- Support the development and implementation of a Regional Program of Cooperation on Biodiversity in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, in coordination with other relevant initiatives and stakeholders;
- Identify and disseminate funding opportunities among the countries of the region and support the mobilization of resources to carry out activities related to the area of biodiversity and ecosystems;
- Facilitate the strengthening of capacities in, inter alia the sustainable use of biodiversity and integrated management of ecosystems (for example protected areas) access to genetic resources and benefit sharing, the integration of biodiversity in all sectors, the relation between biodiversity and climate change, among countries in the region and with other regions, including South-South cooperation actions and involving to the different actors and with the support of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- Promote the generation of knowledge and the development of research activities in the abovementioned areas;
- Develop a mechanism for information, experiences, policies, projects, and activities, among others, related to biodiversity and ecosystem issues, between the countries of the region and with other regions;

- Identify priorities, challenges, and opportunities, and give recommendations for consideration by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and other relevant forums;
- Contribute to other objectives on biodiversity and ecosystems as defined by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

**Structure and operation:**

**Members:**

The Regional Program of Cooperation on Biodiversity will be composed by the set of focal points nominated by the governments of the region. Other related stakeholders will also be invited to designate their respective focal points, international organisations, and relevant stakeholders including indigenous peoples and local communities in order to encourage their participation and promote an integrated vision of the actions to be addressed at the regional level.

**Steering Committee:**

The Regional Program of Cooperation on Biodiversity will have a Steering Committee formed by two members from each of the sub-regions of Latin America and the Caribbean (Mesoamerica, Caribbean, Andes, and Southern Cone). The members of the Steering Committee will be appointed for a period of two years on a rotating basis among the countries of the sub-region.

Secretariat: The Secretariat will support the Regional Program of Cooperation on Biodiversity

of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, which falls to the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Program for the Environment.

**Operation:**

Members of the Regional Biodiversity Cooperation Program will meet at least once every two years (depending on available resources) and will hold regular teleconferences. Its Steering Committee will meet at least once a year and must prepare the program's operating regulations at its first meeting, establishing the consultation procedures, and consider, if necessary, the extent of its objectives with the government focal points and the participation modalities of official delegates of other governments, international organisations and relevant stakeholders including indigenous peoples and local communities.

**Regional action plan:**

The Regional Program of Cooperation of Biodiversity must develop a bi-annual regional strategy or action plan, which will be submitted for approval by the Forum of Ministers. The first regional action plan will be prepared by a working group made up of the members of the Steering Committee and experts from other relevant organizations (including indigenous peoples and local communities), with the support of the set of focal points. The Plan should reflect the priorities of regional cooperation on biodiversity and ecosystems, as well as the possible actions and resources needed to carry them out.

**Annex III**  
**Additional proposals and initiatives of countries and  
groups of countries**

## Annex III

### Additional proposals and initiatives presented by groups of countries

#### Proposal from Chile - Gender

*Supported by: Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, México, Paraguay, Perú and Uruguay*

Commit to incorporate the gender perspective in the design and implementation of public policies on the environment and climate change according to the reality of each country, and to promote joint work to collect data to identify the gaps faced by the region and the opportunities that the exchange of experiences on this subject bring, and to integrate to the meetings of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean a space to monitor progress in this area.

In this way we will be able to progress in the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals and that will allow Latin America and the Caribbean to be the pioneer region in facing this challenge.

#### Finance chapter

##### Proposal of Guatemala on the Green Climate Fund

*Supported by: Uruguay, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Panamá, Colombia, Antigua y Barbuda, Granada, Bolivia, Peru, Venezuela, Haiti and Argentina*

##### Preamble

Taking into account that the Green Climate Fund was established through Decision 1 during COP 16 in Cancun, where it was established that the Green Climate Fund is the operational entity of the Financial Mechanism under Article 11 of the UNFCCC, with the purpose of providing financing for climate action under the principles and guidelines of the COP.

To urge developed countries and the international community to provide new and additional flows of funding for Latin America and the Caribbean, within the framework of climate action and sustainable development objectives;

To urge the Board of the Green Climate Fund to urgently begin the first replenishment of the fund with a more ambitious result and to ensure greater access to resources for Latin America and the Caribbean;

To request the Green Climate Fund to simplify and accelerate the processes to access financial resources for climate action and consider strengthening the presence in Latin America and the Caribbean through different bodies, such as, for example, regional offices that facilitate the work in conjunction with the Green Climate Fund.

## **Proposal of Peru – involvement of the private sector to finance our agenda**

*Supported by Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, and Mexico*

We recognize the need to increase the involvement of the private sector to increase funding to support the advancement of the environmental agenda, influencing this sector to promote a change in the productive matrix including the environmental dimension.

We promote coordination with other ministries such as Economy, Transport and Production, among others; as well as working to ensure that private banks are interested in granting credits for projects and cleaner technologies.

## **Proposal of Trinidad and Tobago – Climate resilience in marine and coastal ecosystems**

*Supported by Argentina, Ecuador, Granada, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay*

Preamble:

"Wary that climate change is already having an adverse impact on biodiversity and ecosystems, including through ocean acidification, and it is expected to become progressively more pronounced

in the coming decades, and which poses significant challenges to food security, particularly to small island developing states, which are heavily dependent on marine resources for economic livelihoods and diversification including through the development of blue economy and consistent with the sustainable development goals"

Operational:

" To promote best practices aimed at building and maintaining climate resilience of coastal and ocean ecosystems, including through the exchange of information, experiences, research and development, and deployment of environmentally sound technologies and know-how"

## **Proposal of Costa Rica on Electric Mobility**

*Supported by Argentina, Chile, Perú, Uruguay, Colombia, Granada, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Santa Lucia, Barbados, México y Bolivia.*

Latin America and the Caribbean face the growing challenge of air pollution, which has a high impact on the quality of life, in general, and on health. Much of this pollution comes from the transport sector and today, for the first time, there are electric transport technologies that can help countries to improve air quality and reduce the public health costs associated with this problem. At the same time, the countries of the region have set

targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the context of the Paris Agreement. Given that emissions in the region from transport are increasing, electric mobility can help countries improve their air quality and meet their nationally determined contributions (NDC, for its acronym in English).

Additionally, the IPCC has published a special report on the impacts associated with a 1.5 ° C global warming and the options to reduce emissions. This report motivates us to move forward at a faster pace in climate action, particularly in the transport and electricity generation sectors.

Many countries in the region have enabling conditions, including having a high electrical generation with renewable sources (the highest percentage in the world on average), as well as a high use of public transport - especially buses. With support for electrical mobility, governments can send a positive signal to the private sector, the financial sector and consumers to explore national and international partnerships

Our countries express their willingness to start collaborating in this field. Possible areas of cooperation, learning and dialogue:

- a. Learning with respect to the strategies and regulatory frameworks of electric mobility with emphasis on urban public transport and low emission and resilient development of the countries
- b. Financial instruments and/or business models that promote electric mobility.
- c. Creation of capacities and exchange of knowledge and information for the public and private sector, civil society, users and academia, among others.
- d. Collaboration for pilot projects in countries or cities.
- e. Explore synergies and opportunities in areas such as public health and the creation of innovative jobs, such as recharging and digital services related to electric mobility.

Recognizing that the countries will advance in accordance with their capacities and their national circumstances, the signatories express our willingness to initiate a dialogue that allows exploring lines of cooperation, knowledge exchange, good practices, lessons learned, and opportunities associated with electric mobility.

### **Proposal of Ecuador - IPCC report on global warming**

*Supported by Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, México Honduras, Perú, Venezuela, Uruguay*

Preamble clauses:

Taking into account the relevance and importance of the actions towards limiting global warming to 1.5 ° C, to be developed under the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities;

Recognizing the historical responsibilities held/maintained by developed countries, to ensure a fair distribution of the remaining global emissions to achieve 1.5 ° C for developing countries;

Operating clauses:

To urge developed countries to comply with their commitments regarding financing, capacity development and technology transfer, in order to enable the Latin American region to set and implement more ambitious goals in accordance to their national capacity and circumstances in their Nationally Determined Contributions and thus progressively achieving the ambition required to limit global warming to 1.5°C, adapting populations and livelihoods, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the principles and provisions of developing countries and developed countries under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, highlighting the regional need for urgent action according to the IPCC special report on Global Warming at 1.5 ° C;

## List of Participants

# **Lista de Participantes**

## ***List of Participants***



**XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers  
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Buenos Aires, Argentina

B. Ministerial segment  
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