



The Joint Summit Working Group

Collaborating to Implement the Inter-American and Summits Agendas

Promoting Environmental Sustainability

The **OAS** has initiated efforts to improve regional cooperation and strengthening national technical and institutional capacity for disaster reduction, prevention, preparedness and response, rehabilitation, resilience, risk reduction, impact mitigation, and evaluation.

Following-up on a mandate from the Heads of State and Government of the Americas from the Fifth Summit of the Americas, on January 26th member States of the Organization of American States (OAS) officially convened the Second Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High Level Authorities on Sustainable Development. This meeting, supported by the OAS Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) will be hosted by the Dominican Republic in Santo Domingo, October 6-8, 2010.

Since the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development in 2006, the 34 OAS Member States have been working with the DSD in a focused and clear cooperative agenda inspired by the Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10 and the Inter-American Program on Sustainable Development. The upcoming Ministerial Meeting is the next milestone of progress in the western hemisphere's environmental agenda. During the preparatory process, the DSD will work closely with governments, technical experts, civil society organizations and the private sector to set out specific, tangible and cooperative measures that can make a difference in the regions' environmental performance. The OAS welcomes and encourages participation of the environmental community in this process.

ECLAC continued working on the interrelationships between economic growth, environmental protection, urban development and social equity, with significant attention to the cross-cutting issue of climate change. Significant progress was also made in the study of the economic impact of climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean through fifteen national and regional studies to be fully published during 2010.

Analysis, research and technical cooperation services were provided to improve public policy formulation in the areas of management of natural resources, and the provision of public utility and infrastructure services with the aim of fostering sustainable development. Some of these efforts included the document "*Situation and Perspectives of Energy Efficiency in LAC*". An innovative methodology called "*Tablero de Comando*"



The Joint Summit Working Group

Collaborating to Implement the Inter-American and Summits Agendas

Promoting Environmental Sustainability

for the formulation of policies for the sustainable production and use of biofuels was also developed.

In the area of assessing the economic impact of natural disasters, ECLAC continues to support the countries of the region through the application of the methodology to assess the macro, socio-economic and environmental impacts of natural disasters, called *Damage and Loss Assessment (DALA) Methodology for Assessments of Natural Disasters*. In use over the last 35 years, over the last two years, more than 12 country reports after major natural disasters in different countries of the region were produced. The methodology was for the first time applied to assess health disasters such as the influenza pandemic in Mexico and the dengue epidemic in Bolivia. Several training workshops were also held so that technical staff can conduct their own preliminary damage assessment of natural disasters using the ECLAC Disaster Impact Assessment Methodology.

In response to mandate 67, **PAHO** reviewed the Plan of Action for protecting health from climate change in the Americas. As a result, a plan of action for protecting health against the effects of climate change was adopted by the ministers of the MERCOSUR countries. PAHO organized a sub-regional workshop for the nations of Central America and the Caribbean to deal with the problems of vulnerability. PAHO carried out activities with the Mercosur countries that led to adaptations to climate change within the health sector. It also prepared the launch of the first draft of guidelines for assessing the vulnerability and adaptation of health to climate change, and pilot studies were conducted to evaluate the proposed guides in Barbados, Brazil, Bolivia, Canada, and Costa Rica.

As part of its commitment to helping client countries deal with the effects and impact of climate change, and as was requested by the member states at the Summit of the Americas, **the World Bank** is supporting the region's governments to develop alternative energy resources in a socially and environmentally sustainable manner.

The region has piloted new technologies and approaches to reduce emissions. Brazil is moving towards energy independence through the expansion of alternative energy sources such as hydroelectricity, ethanol, and biodiesel. Its sugar-based ethanol



The Joint Summit Working Group

Collaborating to Implement the Inter-American and Summits Agendas

Promoting Environmental Sustainability

production is financially and environmentally sustainable without diverting land from food crops.

Environmentally friendly public transport policies demonstrated by Curitiba (Brazil) and expanded in Bogota (Colombia) are now underway in dozens of cities in the region. Costa Rica has received worldwide recognition for its efforts to place a financial value on preserving ecosystems through several initiatives on “payments for ecosystems services.”

To better respond to these countries’ development agendas, the Bank has introduced several innovative programs:

- *A US\$1.3 billion loan to Brazil for the First Programmatic Development Policy Loan for Sustainable Environmental Management.*
- *A US\$1 billion loan to Mexico to expand access to housing to low income groups.*
- *A \$501.25 million development policy loan was approved to support Mexico’s National Climate Change Strategy.*
- *A US\$401 million loan for Mexico’s Environmental Sustainability Development Policy Project.*
- *A US\$400 million loan to Uruguay in support of the government’s reform program and additional financing to face the impact of the global economic crisis.*
- *A US\$330 million loan to Peru to strengthen the new Ministry of the Environment and improve environmental management in key sectors of the Peruvian economy.*
- *A US\$100 million loan to launch a public bond in Uruguayan Pesos, the Bank’s first ever to be issued for the purpose of a back-to-back disbursement of a specific loan.*

In 2008, **IICA** created the Natural Resources and Environmental Management Division in response to the mandates previous Summit and Ministerial Meetings and the environmental challenges facing the hemisphere. Through this unit it has strived to “increase visibility” for the conservation of natural resources and environmentally



The Joint Summit Working Group

Collaborating to Implement the Inter-American and Summits Agendas

Promoting Environmental Sustainability

friendly good agricultural practices, particularly on the strategic issue of Agriculture in the Americas response to Climate Change and Food Security.

IICA has initiated a hemispheric agenda, taking into account regional and national policies and fostering the strengthening of institutional and private capacities, training and working in a participative form with executives and technicians in the countries.

IICA has participated in diverse international meetings related to natural resources and environmental management, climatic change and sustainable development including the UN conference on Biodiversity, desertification and soil degradation and drought; the World Forestry Congress; the V International Water Forum and the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

During the last 2 years IICA has collaborated and provided support for 6 projects valued at US\$ 56.0 million and has produced and disseminated diverse materials geared to improve and systematize training events and project design in the countries of the hemisphere.

IICA has also produced diverse publications related to environmental management, natural resources, climate change and their link to food security, the most recent one being "Agriculture, Urbanization and Water".

CABEI, through an agreement signed with the Global Environmental Fund (GEF), is in charge of operating Project CAMBio (Central American Markets for Biodiversity) whose purpose is to promote SMES that are friendly with the biodiversity through financing, technical assistance as well as incentives for complying with conservation indicators for SMES. CAMBio also promotes partial guarantees that allow SMES access to financing from Financial Institutions. Through this agreement, CABEI has destined US\$ 17 Million for credits and GEF US\$ 10.2 Million. The project applies to the Banks founding member countries.

UNDP focuses on helping developing countries to create the enabling environment to attract and drive direct investment toward lower carbon technologies and sustainable land management at the national and sub-national levels. This entails providing support and capacity building in the areas of policy formulation, regulatory frameworks and



The Joint Summit Working Group

Collaborating to Implement the Inter-American and Summits Agendas

Promoting Environmental Sustainability

production of strategies that embed climate change action. At the same time, UNDP assists countries to access financial resources to directly address climate change mitigation and adaptation through application of renewable energy, energy efficient technologies, sustainable land management, water governance and chemicals management.

Several examples of UNDP-led initiatives highlight the above approach: nineteen countries around the region are assisted to analyze investment and financial flows to provide critical information for policy makers on investment options for climate change mitigation and adaptation; UNDP has recently initiated a program (TACC) to assist sub-national governments to develop integrated territorial climate plans as a means of identifying cost-effective investments in CC mitigation and adaptation and the synergies between them; UNDP is supporting the piloting of innovative risk transfer mechanisms against extreme weather events and the implementation of strategies to facilitate sustainable development that will counter the negative effects of extreme natural catastrophes through an integrated approach to risk management.