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Eleventh Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and the Eighth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region

Montego Bay, Jamaica, 28 September - 2 October 2004

**OUTLINE OF STRATEGY FOR THE ENHANCING OF THE
CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME WITHIN THE
FRAMEWORK OF THE REGIONAL SEAS PROGRAMMES AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

2005–2009

DRAFT

ACRONYMS

CDC	United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CEP	Caribbean Environment Development Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOC-UNESCO	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
PAHO	Panamerican Health Organization
POA	Programme of Action
POI	Plan de Implementation
RSCAP	Regional Seas Conventions and Actions Plans
RSP	Regional Seas Programmes
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
US EPA	United States Environment Protection Agency
WSSD	World Summit for Sustainable Development
WW2BW	White Water to Blue Water

FOREWORD

Decision I of the Tenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and the Seventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Montego Bay, Jamaica, May 7-11 2002) endorsed the Strategy for the Development of the Caribbean Environment Programme 2002-2006 (UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.22/5), and requested the Secretariat to publish a final document by December 2002 reflecting the inputs and results of the discussions held during the same meeting. This document proposes that a new regional and global momentum on a broader coordination of efforts to protect regional seas must be taken into account in developing a strong strategy for the Caribbean Environment Programme. The proposal thus sets a larger framework for the update of the strategy for 2005-2009 that is submitted to the Eleventh Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and the Eighth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region.

CONTEXT

1. In 1981 the governments of the Wider Caribbean region, with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) adopted an Action Plan within the context of the Global Regional Seas Programme (RSP) to jointly deal with the main environmental problems of the marine and coastal areas of the region. In addition, in 1983 they signed an Agreement (the Cartagena Convention) that provides the legal framework for all the activities carried out within the region for the protection of its marine and coastal environment. The Action Plan together with the Cartagena Convention form the framework of the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP).
2. The progress of the Action Plan and the level of application and implementation of the Convention have been regularly evaluated by the governments participating in the Plan, within the framework of the institutional provisions of the Plan. Successive action plans and programme implementation arrangements have been developed and implemented following the basic format within the constraints of resources and competing priorities. In this context, the governments have agreed to prepare and adhere to a “strategy” that will lend coherence to the provisions contained in the Convention, the CEP, and the decisions of the intergovernmental meetings.
3. Over the same period (1981 – present) there has been considerable growth in the appreciation of the need for integrated approaches for the promotion and execution of policies, programmes, action plans and projects to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of global resources and the earth’s natural endowment, including its marine and coastal ecosystems. With that appreciation, new actors, institutions, concepts and capacities related to conservation and sustainability have emerged in the Wider Caribbean as elsewhere.
4. Many of these entities appear ready, willing and able to work in strategic alliances and partnerships with established modalities such as the CEP and its Member States in achieving the targets of major factors in global environmental governance such as:
 - Agenda 21;
 - the Small Island Development States (SIDS) Programme of Action (POA);
 - the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
 - the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Plan of Implementation (POI); as well as those established in:
 - the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols; and
 - the cluster of Multilateral Environmental Agreements.
5. An additional challenge facing the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) as it moves into the 21st Century is to ensure that the Programme is harmonised and rationalised with respect to all its critical stakeholders and potential partners, that it continues to play a leadership role in its core mandated area even as it supports and complements the related initiatives of others in the UN System, and appropriate national, sectoral, academic, multilateral and bilateral partners.

6. This latest [draft] strategy [process], which covers the period 2005 to 2009, intends to facilitate the assessment, design and delivery of activities for appropriate Convention implementation during that timeframe. It also provides a [functional and conceptual] framework for integrated action, as required by the regional environmental priorities, linking the local, national, regional and global sustainability priorities identified by the Caribbean societies (governments working alongside the private sector as well as civil society). It therefore takes into account the changes in the evolving global development agenda including those related to the Rio, SIDS and MDG Processes.
7. This strategy review paper thus reflects the state of the coastal and marine environment, the international policy framework, improved scientific knowledge, other emerging issues as well as current socio-economic realities and trends. Many of these were considered at the 5th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Secretariats held from 26-28 November 2003, in Nairobi, Kenya and the decision taken [to recommend] to incorporate appropriate new strategic elements in the programmes of work of all the RSPs, and to energetically bring those elements to the attention of their respective Member States through their governing bodies and other relevant fora. In order to effectively address evolving challenges and the priorities identified in UNEP GC Decision 22/2 III A, and in order to contribute in reaching the relevant targets of Agenda 21, the WSSD Plan of Implementation and the MDGs, it was agreed that the Regional Seas Programme must be strategically adaptive and proactive.
8. This document therefore builds on the sound base of previous CEP Strategy Documents and incorporates the Strategic Guidelines for the RSPs, as agreed by the representatives of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAP) Secretariats in November.
9. The strategy thus seeks to ensure the development of stronger more effective ties between the RSPs and UNEP itself as well as with national and multilateral institutions. Particular emphasis is placed on continuing the process of formalising linkages and relationships with the various Secretariats responsible for regional and global instruments (including MEAs) particularly those whose objectives and elements are relevant to the CEP. The guidelines also seek to ensure optimal integration with the emerging and ongoing local, national, regional and global partnerships supporting sustainable development initiatives building upon and including Agenda 21, the WSSD Plan of Action, the SIDS/Barbados POA, and the Millennium Development Goals within the context of the Regional Seas mandate. This implies [proactive] facilitating and participation in partnerships (such as the International Coral Reef Initiative – ICRI, the White Water to Blue Water Initiative – WW2BW, and the emerging PAHO / US EPA / CDC Partnership), in capacity building and advocacy related to innovative approaches, and in developing sustainable financing sources.
10. The new CEP strategy needs to be based on both the new strategic directions proposed by the RSCAP Secretariats and the [established] general CEP vision and mission, which are more programmatic. It is proposed that the CEP organs and team members will establish a process for reviewing both the programmatic and higher order elements and that at the 11th IGM a fuller presentation will be available.

**PROPOSED STRATEGIC GUIDELINES FOR THE REGIONAL SEAS PROGRAMMES
(based on the RSCAP guidelines)**

11. The infusion of the following elements will formalise many innovations which have already been infused into the CEP over its existence. The guidelines are:
- I. Increasing the CEP Regional Seas Programmes' formal links with the Sustainable Development community, 'champions' and International Partners and making a more structured contribution to Sustainable Development through:*
 - complementing, enhancing [and supporting] local, national, regional and global partnerships with relevant social, economic and environmental stakeholders; and
 - building upon the WSSD Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals within the context of the SIDS POA and of the Cartagena Convention / Regional Seas mandate.

 - II. Enhance sustainability and effectiveness of the CEP through:*
 - increasing member state / country ownership;
 - continuing to facilitate the translating of Cartagena Convention and its protocols into national legislation;
 - promoting compliance and enforcement mechanisms,;
 - engaging and involving civil society and the private sector;
 - building capacities of all stakeholders;
 - ensuring viable sustainable financial arrangements; and
 - developing indicators and assessment/evaluation procedures where appropriate.

 - III. Enhance the CEP Regional Seas' visibility / political impact in global and regional policy setting, through:*
 - establishment of a strengthened 'Regional Seas Alliance';
 - addressing emerging and priority issues, and publishing regular statements on these;
 - promoting and implementing an effective communication / information policy; and
 - ensuring greater participation in the CEP fora and promotion of the Regional Seas approach in relevant regional and global fora.

 - IV. Support monitoring and assessment by facilitating:*
 - knowledge-based policy making;
 - development and implementation of relevant environmental legislation;
 - improve knowledge on the state of the marine environment; and
 - enhance public awareness, by contributing to the establishment/strengthening of appropriate national and regional monitoring and periodic assessment of the marine and coastal environment.

V. *Enhance and increase the use of the Cartagena Convention and its protocols as a platform for:*

- developing common regional objectives;
- promoting synergies; and
- co-ordinating regional implementation of relevant MEAs, global and regional initiatives and responsibilities of United Nations Agencies, such as IMO, IAEA, IOC of UNESCO, WHO / PAHO and FAO, as well as other international actors as a contribution to the sustainable management of the coastal and marine environment.

VI. *Promote the ecosystem approach through comprehensive integrated initiatives and the development of:*

- a common vision;
- an integrated management culture, based on the ecosystem approach;
- priority setting and documenting of shared concerns related to the coastal and marine environment in Regional Seas Conventions, Protocols and Action Plans; and
- proactive, creative and innovative partnerships and networks.

12. It is also noted that the inclusion of more of the valuable 'lessons learnt' and information generated by the member states (for instance in their State of the Environment / State of the Coasts Reports) may also further enrich the CEP strategic process. Similarly, the sharing of current information on the mandate, capacity and programmes of partner organisations may prove useful to the member states and partner organisations with whom the CEP may find common cause and lead to of strengthening the networks and functional cooperation critical to the CEP mandate. The Convention and its Protocols, together with inter-governmental decisions, should continue to provide the foundation of the conceptual framework on which the strategy rests.
13. The long-term objective of the strategy is to provide appropriate direction to accomplish the sustainable development of the marine and coastal environment of the Wider Caribbean Region. Thus, the programmatic strategy may continue to include the five inter-dependent strategic implementation elements: legal, institutional, programmatic, training and financial, which represent strategic options to comply with its operational goals which were applied to the CEP work plan approved at the 10th IGM for the period 2004-2008.
14. These elements constitute the basis of the current strategy and play an essential role in the design and priority setting of the CEP work plan. The goals are aimed at strengthening the regional legal framework for protecting the marine environment, reducing marine pollution in the region, and improving marine and coastal environment quality through adequate management of the activities carried out. This will therefore assist in reducing the loss of biodiversity and recovering degraded ecosystems, strengthening regional capabilities to adequately manage the ecosystems and conserve marine and coastal resources, strengthening and expanding international technical cooperation and assistance and increasing the health and quality of the regional marine environment.