



SUMMARY OF THE AIMS REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES: 17-19 JULY 2013

The Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS) Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) took place in Mahé, Seychelles, from 17-19 July 2013. This was the last of three regional meetings in preparation for the Third International SIDS Conference that will take place in Apia, Samoa, in September 2014 (Apia Conference). The meeting aimed to: assess progress and remaining gaps in the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI); seek a renewed political commitment; identify new and emerging challenges and opportunities for the sustainable development of SIDS; and identify priorities for the sustainable development of SIDS to be considered in the elaboration of the post-2015 UN development agenda.

Approximately 70 delegates attended the three-day meeting, including representatives of six of the eight AIMS SIDS—Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles and Singapore—as well as representatives from New Zealand, India, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), and a number of UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and Major Groups. The other two AIMS SIDS, Comoros and São Tomé and Príncipe, did not attend the meeting.

During the first day of the meeting, following opening remarks from the President of the Seychelles, the Secretary-General of the 2014 Third International Conference on SIDS and the Chair of AOSIS, AIMS countries had the opportunity to present an overview of their national consultative processes. Delegates then discussed progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the BPOA and the MSI, followed by an interactive dialogue with the UN system and regional organizations on ensuring integrated approaches to SIDS sustainable development.

During the second day, a drafting group, chaired by Jean-Paul Adam, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Seychelles, met all day, with participation of representatives from the six AIMS

SIDS present in the meeting, along with a youth delegate and representatives from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). In a parallel high-level session, the morning dialogue focused on “Emerging Opportunities in the Region.” This was followed by a second session, which included presentations on oceans governance and the blue economy. After lunch, presentations and discussions on building partnerships took place.

On the third day, delegates received copies of the draft outcome document and the summary of the high-level dialogue. The drafting committee then reconvened and worked through the draft outcome paragraph-by-paragraph. At 5:00 pm, the committee concluded its work and the plenary reconvened just before 6:00 pm to adopt the outcome document.

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SIDS CONFERENCES

The vulnerability of islands and coastal areas was recognized by the 44th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in 1989, when it passed resolution 44/206 on the possible adverse effects of sea-level rise on islands and coastal areas, particularly low-lying coastal areas. The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, brought the special case of small islands and coastal areas to international attention when it adopted Agenda 21, a programme of action for sustainable development. Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, on the protection of oceans, all kinds of seas and coastal areas, included a programme area on the sustainable development of small islands. Agenda 21 also called for a global conference on the sustainable development of SIDS.

GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SIDS: Established by UNGA resolution 47/189, the UN Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of SIDS was held in Bridgetown, Barbados, from 25 April - 6 May 1994. The Conference adopted the BPOA for the Sustainable Development of SIDS, a 14-point programme that identifies priority areas and specific actions necessary for addressing the special challenges faced by SIDS. The priority areas are climate change and sea-level rise, natural and environmental disasters, management of wastes, coastal and marine resources, freshwater resources, land resources, energy resources, tourism resources, biodiversity resources, national institutions and administrative capacity, regional institutions and technical cooperation, transport and communication, science and technology, and human resource development. The BPOA further identified the following cross-sectoral areas requiring attention: capacity building; institutional development at the national, regional and international levels; cooperation in the transfer of environmentally sound technologies; trade and economic diversification; and finance. The Conference also adopted the Barbados Declaration, a statement of political will underpinning the commitments contained in the BPOA.

The UN Commission on Sustainable Development was given the responsibility to follow up on the implementation of the BPOA.

UNGASS-22: In September 1999, the 22nd Special Session of the UNGA (UNGASS-22) undertook a comprehensive review and appraisal of the implementation of the BPOA. The Special Session adopted the "State of Progress and Initiatives for the Future Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS," which identified six areas in need of urgent attention: climate change, natural and environmental disasters and climate variability, freshwater resources, coastal and marine resources, energy, and tourism. In addition, the Special Session highlighted the need to focus on means of implementation. UNGASS-22 also adopted a declaration in which member states, *inter alia*, reaffirmed the principles of, and their commitment to, sustainable development as embodied in Agenda 21, the Barbados Declaration and the BPOA.

MILLENNIUM SUMMIT: In September 2000, at the UN Millennium Summit in New York, world leaders adopted the UN Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2) and, in doing so, resolved to address the special needs of SIDS

by implementing the BPOA and the outcome of UNGASS-22 rapidly and in full.

WSSD: The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) convened from 26 August to 4 September 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The WSSD reaffirmed the special case of SIDS, dedicating a chapter of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) to the sustainable development of SIDS that identified a set of priority actions, called for a full and comprehensive review of the BPOA in 2004, and requested the General Assembly at its 57th session to consider convening an international meeting on the sustainable development of SIDS.

UNGA-57: In December 2002, the 57th session of the UNGA adopted resolution 57/262, in which the Assembly decided to convene an international meeting in 2004 to undertake a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the BPOA, and welcomed the offer by the Government of Mauritius to host the meeting. The UNGA also decided that the review should focus on practical and pragmatic actions for the further implementation of the BPOA, including through the mobilization of resources and assistance for SIDS.

INTERNATIONAL MEETING TO REVIEW THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPOA: The International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS convened from 10-14 January 2005, in Port Louis, Mauritius. Plenary panels convened on the themes of: environmental vulnerabilities of SIDS; special challenges of SIDS in trade and economic development; the role of culture in the sustainable development of SIDS; addressing emerging trends and social challenges regarding the sustainable development of SIDS; and building resilience in SIDS. The high-level segment addressed the "Comprehensive review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS." At the conclusion of the meeting, delegates adopted the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action on the Sustainable Development of SIDS (MSI).

MSI+5: The High-level Review Meeting on the Implementation of the MSI (MSI+5) was held from 24-25 September 2010 at UN Headquarters in New York. Delegates participated in two multi-stakeholder roundtables, which focused on reducing vulnerabilities, strengthening resilience, and enhancing international support for SIDS, and an interactive dialogue on cross-regional perspectives on common issues and priorities for the way forward. The major outcome of the meeting was a political declaration that elaborates new and renewed commitments to implement the BPOA and the MSI.

RIO+20: The third and final meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20), Pre-Conference Informal Consultations facilitated by the host country, and the UNCSD convened back-to-back in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 13-22 June 2012. Government delegations concluded negotiations on the Conference outcome document, entitled *The Future We Want*. Paragraphs 178-180 reaffirm that SIDS are a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities, including their small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base, and exposure to global environmental challenges and external economic shocks, including climate

change and natural disasters. *The Future We Want* also called for convening in 2014 a third international conference on SIDS, building on the BPOA and MSI.

UNGA 67: Resolution 67/207, Follow-up to and Implementation of the MSI, set up the modalities for the 2014 International Conference on SIDS, welcomed the offer of the Government of Samoa to host the conference, and called for the conference to: assess progress to date and remaining gaps in the implementation of the BPOA and the MSI; seek a renewed political commitment by all countries to effectively address the special needs and vulnerabilities of SIDS by focusing on practical and pragmatic actions; identify new and emerging challenges and opportunities for the sustainable development of SIDS; and identify priorities for consideration, as appropriate, in the elaboration of the post-2015 UN development agenda.

The UNGA agreed that in 2013 there would be a regional preparatory meeting in each of the three SIDS regions, as well as an inter-regional preparatory meeting for all SIDS to identify and develop input for the conference. The 68th session of the UNGA will determine the modalities for the UN intergovernmental preparatory process, which will begin in early 2014.

CARIBBEAN REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES:

This meeting was the first of three regional events in preparation for the Apia Conference. The meeting, held from 2-4 July 2013 in Kingston, Jamaica, issued a 44-paragraph document (the “Kingston Outcome”) reaffirming earlier commitments, including the BPOA, the MSI and the JPOI. The Kingston Outcome identified constraints to achieving the sustainable development of SIDS, including, *inter alia*: a lack of political will on the part of most developed countries to fulfill their commitments; SIDS’ vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters, and related impacts on the tourism industry; and the classification of many Caribbean SIDS as middle- to high-income countries, which excludes them from some sources of development aid. It called for new, additional and predictable financial resources for sustainable development, including relevant regional financing mechanisms. It also highlighted the role of women and youth; the challenges and opportunities of migration; and international climate-related mechanisms, such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Climate Technology Centre and Network. Other issues addressed included, *inter alia*: community empowerment; regional and national disaster risk reduction; a people-centered approach to poverty eradication; strengthening of health systems; and debt relief for small, indebted middle-income countries.

PACIFIC REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES:

This meeting was the second of three regional events in preparation for the Apia Conference. The meeting, held from 10-12 July 2013 in Nadi, Fiji, adopted a draft outcome document, titled “Accelerating Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development,” which contains a preambulatory section, and discussion and recommendations on: climate change; health, especially non-communicable diseases (NCDs); social development; governance; infrastructure; sustainable energy; oceans; sustainable resource management and protection; UN

institutional support to SIDS; national priorities and plans; inclusive and sustainable economic management; and means of implementation and partnerships.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

Rolph Payet, Minister for Environment and Energy, Seychelles, and Chair of the meeting, welcomed delegates and provided an overview of meetings held in preparation for the AIMS Regional Preparatory Meeting, including UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) youth consultations and intra-island consultations. He noted the call from the youth to include a youth representative in future SIDS delegations.

Amb. Marlene Moses, Nauru, Chair of AOSIS, underscored that the blue economy captures the nature of and challenges facing SIDS. She noted the need for a change in policy in the short term to avoid irreversible impacts on biodiversity, such as ocean acidification, and urged SIDS to implement policies that can also counteract local threats, including erosion, pollution and overfishing. Moses, calling for clear, focused roadmaps to implement such policies, suggested shifting the emphasis from capacity building to institution building. She stressed the importance of making “the economic case” to ensure implementation of such policies.

Wu Hongbo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Secretary-General of the 2014 Third International Conference on SIDS, praised AIMS countries for being leading innovators in sustainable development, specifically in renewable energy, marine habitat protection, sustainable tourism and SIDS-SIDS partnerships. He looked forward to the Apia Conference, stating his determination as Secretary-General to reach a successful outcome. He reminded delegates of ongoing preparations for the post-2015 UN development agenda, and expressed hope that the SIDS preparatory process will provide an occasion for island states to contribute to that agenda.

James Alix Michel, President of the Seychelles, welcomed delegates to this “critical” meeting, calling on them to create a framework that goes beyond rhetoric to provide a platform for concrete action. He cited three messages to take to Samoa: the need for a fair deal for SIDS, which is “a fair deal for our planet and for humanity,” calling for a sustainable governance structure for oceans; the blue economy is a shared opportunity to address the issues that matter most to SIDS, including new energy possibilities, fisheries resources, protected areas and biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, food security, sustainable use of mineral wealth on the ocean floor, and sustainable trade; and that islands are at risk of being disconnected from the global economy. He also called for partnerships with the international community, between islands and with youth from islands across the world. He then declared the meeting open.

The Seychelles Children’s Choir, accompanied by local artist Joe Samy, performed for the delegates.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Participants adopted the agenda by acclamation. Amb. Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima, Cape Verde, was elected rapporteur, and a drafting committee was established.

OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

Cape Verde outlined current conditions in his country, saying that as an archipelago it is vulnerable to weather extremes. He cited efforts in improving the country's economy, including reclaiming arable land and investing in renewable energy, which have led to significant increases in income and gross domestic product (GDP). He urged building on these efforts and economizing on fuel expenditures to reduce fossil fuel importation.

Guinea-Bissau delivered a shortened statement due to the unexpected absence of the head of delegation. She reminded delegates of the 2012 coup d'état in her country and said that this put an end to progress and halted international aid flows. She lamented that the political instability will continue to present difficulties and pointed to negative impacts on economic development and the sustainability of islands.

Maldives presented its national report and described achievements including: a pledge for carbon neutrality by 2020; the establishment of a UNESCO biosphere reserve and new protected areas; and an increase in human life expectancy. He identified challenges as: dependence on fossil fuels; a narrow economic base; lack of an adequate transport network; sea level rise; food insecurity; reef degradation; biodiversity loss; and a lack of human resources for governance. He cited emerging issues as: chemicals and electronic waste transport and pollution; unemployment; an ageing population; drugs and crime; growing national debt; and the country's recent graduation from least developed country (LDC) status.

Mauritius explained how its national report was prepared through a consultative process to review progress achieved in implementing the BPOA and the MSI. Mauritius added that constraints and challenges stem from SIDS vulnerabilities, new and emerging issues, lack of a national coordination mechanism, no dedicated SIDS mechanism to enable access to finance and technology, significant data gaps, and the absence of a regional coordinating body for AIMS SIDS. Mauritius presented nine recommendations for the Apia Conference, including: improving regional-level coordination; enhancing resilience to climate change and natural disasters; reducing dependence on fossil fuels; developing an ocean economy; improving hazardous waste management; improving trade; addressing migration; establishing time-bound targets; and creating a special SIDS category for development assistance.

Singapore outlined its policies and strategies to address Singaporean environment and sustainable development challenges and to pursue a green economy. He noted, *inter alia*, the Sustainable Development Blueprint, implemented in 2009, which aims to improve resource efficiency. He said that these policies take note of limitations, such as a lack of renewable energy resources and the importance of the maritime economy to its GDP. He stressed that the policies are based on an integrative approach, which utilizes long-term land use planning to increase "liveability," minimize environmental impacts and ensure adequate pollution control. He stressed the importance of partnerships and South-South cooperation for pursuing a green economy and capacity building.

Seychelles described the preparation of its national report and said progress has been made across all areas of the BPOA and MSI, but some sectors, such as freshwater, have suffered from

a lack of investment. He expressed pride that the Seychelles has the highest percentage of protected areas in the world and said that his country would remain at the forefront of UNFCCC negotiations to "defend [its] survivability." He said that a lack of financing continues to be a major challenge for all SIDS and that the ability to move out of debt has been severely compromised due to a lack of official development assistance (ODA), lack of concessionary loans and high market rates. He said a global partnership must be bold and innovative in requesting a special financing mechanism for SIDS, and suggested that countries work on a vulnerability index and a special SIDS category at the Apia Conference, as well as explore debt-for-adaptation swaps.

Nikhil Seth, UNDESA, presented the synthesis report based on the four national reports received. He noted progress on climate change adaptation, renewable energy, waste management, disaster preparedness, coastal and marine resources, culture, and knowledge management. He said gaps remain in science and technology, data, monitoring and evaluation, political stability, human resources, skills and training, and financing. Recommended actions, he noted, include: tackling crime; mobilization of financial resources, including a special category for SIDS; transfer of environmentally sound technologies; stronger monitoring and evaluation; strengthening partnerships; investing in renewable energy; effective oceans management; regional coordination; and human capacity development. He urged delegates to enhance their interface with the political processes at the UN in New York, especially the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG) and the post-2015 development agenda.

In response, Cape Verde requested mention of organized crime and the World Health Organization (WHO) said that NCDs also need to be addressed.

The SIDS Youth Network for the AIMS Region presented on the outcomes from their meeting held prior to the AIMS Regional Preparatory Meeting. In attaining their ideal future, they urged national delegations to include a youth representative at the meetings leading up to and including the Apia Conference. They also called for, *inter alia*: including sustainability in school curricula; establishing youth chapters in international organizations; using renewable energy technologies to decrease reliance on fossil fuels; defining a SIDS-specific sustainable development goal (SDG); providing access to grants as opposed to loans; eliminating fossil fuel subsidies; and establishing a SIDS-specific regional development bank.

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), delivered a video message. He noted that five of the 18 parties that have ratified the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing thus far are SIDS, and urged other countries to ratify. He said that the greatest contribution of SIDS is to mainstream blue economy approaches and he called on delegates to bring blue economy solutions to the 12th Conference of the Parties of the CBD in the Republic of Korea next year. He said the CBD will support SIDS in achieving the blue economy and praised them for learning to depend on their biodiversity for development, a lesson that he said "the rest of the world needs."

Chair Payet listed the main topics for consideration over the coming days, based on the morning's presentations: food security; climate change; energy dependence; health; resource

management; biodiversity targets and conservation; education, capacity building, human capital and brain drain; trade; disaster resilience and recovery; governance framework; financing for development and long-term economic sustainability; partnerships; and security, including drug trafficking, crime and piracy.

The Seychelles added regional integration in the AIMS region, as well as cultural issues and identities. UNESCO suggested the need to harness regional science, technology and innovation. Cape Verde asked about including tourism, Maldives added water and sanitation, and Mauritius suggested “SIDS solidarity.” Chair Payet agreed that these issues must be reflected, and asked delegates to come back in the afternoon with concrete recommendations.

PROGRESS TO DATE AND THE REMAINING GAPS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPOA AND THE MSI

Chair Payet began Wednesday afternoon’s session by asking delegates to provide feedback on their lunchtime consultations. Mauritius spoke about the growing problem of electronic waste and how it is handled, and said that, while people talk about the three “R”s (reduce, reuse and recycle), a fourth is also needed: “rethink.”

Singapore said that discussions on resource efficiency must include: good governance; appropriate resource pricing; working with markets; and the role of legislation, citing Singapore’s Energy Conservation Act. He also noted the importance of partnerships with youth, the business sector, governments and international organizations, as well as the need for better research, technology and education.

Seychelles reflected that SIDS often address ocean issues in a fragmented and disjointed manner and that it is important for SIDS to “get [their] acts together nationally.” He said that if SIDS want to call themselves “large ocean states,” their public institutional structures should reflect that, and noted that regional and international coordination is essential due to a “free-for-all” beyond SIDS’ exclusive economic zones (EEZs). He called it “ironic” that SIDS, which depend the most on oceans, are the ones with the least knowledge about them and have the least human, scientific and technological capacity.

Cape Verde responded that its government is being reorganized directly by the cabinet and prime minister to have clusters, including one on oceans. The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) encouraged AIMS countries to focus on value added by the “blue sectors,” such as fisheries and coastal tourism.

Cape Verde noted that when discussing the maritime economy, security issues should be included. He said that his country is working with the Economic Community of West African States to put together a regional maritime strategy. On Cape Verde’s graduation from LDC status in 2008, he lamented that while such status is assessed by GDP per capita and social indicators, economic vulnerabilities, such as lack of access to concessional loans and erosion of market access privileges, remain.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO), in response to Seychelles and Cape Verde, said they are discussing maritime strategies with SIDS, saying that one cannot imagine the future of SIDS’ economic development that ignores the maritime sector.

The Maldives urged action to quickly address unemployment to avoid social ills and achieve sustainable development. Stressing the seriousness of high population growth and youth unemployment due to a lack of opportunities, he called for establishing the necessary policies to improve skills development.

Guinea-Bissau reported on the issue of organized crime and how Guinea-Bissau is a transit country for international crime. She said strong partnerships are needed within the international community and that all SIDS should monitor waters, and requested assistance through sharing of strategies.

Cape Verde summarized his country’s efforts to ensure food security, including through increasing arable land, encouraging agricultural entrepreneurship and overcoming drought. He stated that challenges include soil erosion and rural-urban migration and said that in spite of these, positive results are being seen. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) noted its willingness to work with Cape Verde to develop a strategy.

Chair Payet opened the floor for comments on key issues that still need to be addressed. Seychelles expressed frustration in accessing financial and other resources, and said that graduation from LDC status has meant that many SIDS are considered “too rich” for certain mechanisms. He called for increased international cooperation to access such mechanisms, suggesting that the resources used could be “paid back in the future.”

Cape Verde called for reinforcing capacity building to ensure effective engagement at the international level, strengthen the public sector and make SIDS’ economies more competitive. He urged consolidating legislation to underpin local sectors and ensure alignment with international law, and called on delegates to intensify and diversify scientific partnerships and reinforce “regional solidarity.” He stressed the role of political will and requested that this conference’s outcomes address building capacity to better react to current conditions.

The SIDS Youth Network for the AIMS Region acknowledged the different abilities and capacities among SIDS, and said that SIDS should work to help each other, particularly through education.

The UN Development Programme (UNDP) praised the clarity of Seychelles’ statement and noted a more intense level of discussion at this regional meeting compared to the Caribbean and Pacific regional meetings earlier this month. He predicted that following the Inter-regional Meeting in Barbados next month, the voice of SIDS will become diluted and challenged by the international community; thus, he said, AIMS delegates must be clear and specific, and speak with a strong voice so that their determination and passion is captured in the outcome document.

Chair Payet agreed with UNDP and said that so far delegates have tried to “zoom in” on their message. On implementation, he cited the example of the Kyoto Protocol’s Adaptation Fund as an undelivered commitment.

Nikhil Seth, UNDESA, said that on the difficult question of financing sustainable development, three points are at the heart of the issue: the implications of a special category for SIDS; finding a “window” in financial mechanisms, which clearly earmark issues that delegates are discussing; and using “bridge financing” to fund projects that would otherwise not be viable.

On communication, Seychelles expressed concern that he had not heard about the problems affecting neighboring countries,

such as Maldives, until the national reports were presented. He stressed that this disconnect and “dysfunction” must be solved so that the AIMS region can speak as one.

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) said solidarity among SIDS and within the region is needed to ensure effective implementation.

Cape Verde noted that the issue of a special category for SIDS is not an easy one, adding that if SIDS want to take a position on this, they must take into account the problems associated with it and the possibility that it will be blocked if other SIDS do not also adopt it. The Maldives said that there is a need to define a common identity for the AIMS region, noting that this is a core issue because the other two SIDS regions have strong cultural and geopolitical identities. He said that AIMS is an artificial grouping of eight countries without a regional organization. Chair Payet noted that this is an issue that has preoccupied many, and will take effort and political commitment to resolve.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE UN SYSTEM AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON ENSURING INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO SIDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mauritius, introducing the topic, suggested that initial steps for improving interaction with the UN system include establishing a dedicated secretariat with a roving ambassador to bring together AIMS countries. He said this should be conducted under a “new-thinking” paradigm and be in line with regional trade and economic interests. He lauded the support and assistance from, among others, UNDESA, UNEP and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC). The Seychelles urged partner organizations to engage with SIDS to share their knowledge and experience. The WHO expressed its willingness to provide guidance and support for implementing strategies and plans that have health-related impacts. UNDESA highlighted the concrete recommendations contained in UN document A/66/278, saying that the UNGA decided to consider the recommendations as an input to the preparatory process. UNESCO said that they wish to provide assistance for education in SIDS countries.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) noted their country-specific approach, and indicated that they want to rethink this and introduce a subregional approach to become more involved with SIDS. UNDP said that delegates seem to agree that this process requires a different level of diplomacy because parties are “stuck in this approach,” and invited additional input from delegates on how the UN system can provide support. FAO said that partnerships will be an overriding concern at the Apia Conference and they are critical for implementation.

The IOC noted that it initiated, with UNDESA, an integrated system to monitor SIDS’ progress and future plans. He praised IFAD’s plan to create a strategy for SIDS, and called on all UN agencies and international parties to follow this example and create a SIDS-specific strategy. He called for yearly reporting, stating that when SIDS meet every 10 years, there is a tendency to try and “reinvent the wheel,” and he lamented the lack of focus among agencies. He suggested building an integrated system for implementation at all levels.

The Office of the High Representative for the LDCs, Land-Locked Developing Countries and SIDS (OHRLLS) called for

better coherence and coordination among SIDS at the national, regional and international levels. He noted that it is often difficult to advocate for SIDS who comprise only 1% of the world’s population. He queried how SIDS want to be projected at the global level, what issues SIDS want OHRLLS to focus on, and elaborated on the special case for SIDS. He urged SIDS to focus not only on their vulnerabilities but also on their value.

Chair Payet commented that after listening to the discussions, it is clear that even the UN system does not take SIDS seriously and that the UN system and international organizations do not look at SIDS in a systemic way. He noted that some programmes have been shut down due to lack of funding and others do not interact with SIDS in all regions or do not have focal points or offices specifically dedicated to SIDS, underscoring that even the UNDESA SIDS Unit is not sufficiently staffed. With regard to the fact that SIDS represent only 1% of the world’s population, he reminded delegates that SIDS represent 40 votes in the UN and play an important, yet underestimated, role in peace and security saying “we may be small, but our influence is significant.” SIDS, he said, represent a “canary in the coal mine” and cautioned that when an island sinks it indicates a serious problem. He called for the AIMS region to show solidarity and said that, “despite our differences, we can complement each other.” Payet stressed the need for SIDS to be more formally included within the UN, saying that any unit created should not be tied to a funding cycle or be project-based.

Cape Verde urged that the UN reaffirm the importance of SIDS and their contribution to the world economy. He lamented a “lack of solidarity” in avoiding a “generalized mentality” regarding SIDS.

UNEP urged reflecting on the “possibilities of what can happen,” and called for promoting the gains from blue capital, because if marine resources’ true value was recognized, “SIDS could use their muscles” and have equal participation at the international level.

Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie urged frankness in discussions and regretted that his organization does not have a programmatic or regional approach within which to address SIDS issues. He called for more action and increased regional cooperation.

The SIDS Youth Network for the AIMS Region noted that the private sector does not differentiate whether or not a country is a SIDS when determining investments. He said that commercial byproducts, such as waste accumulation and a high-carbon footprint from the transportation of goods, have a bigger impact on SIDS compared to non-SIDS, and he called for rethinking the relationship between SIDS and the private sector so that it is mutually beneficial.

The IOC noted that one year remains between now and the Apia Conference, and suggested that international partners develop their plans for SIDS and be prepared to deliver them at that meeting.

UNDP, referring to Seychelles’ characterization of international observers and UN agencies, welcomed the healthy and open exchanges over the course of the afternoon session. He noted that as an agency, UNDP can do better since it has only put modest resources into coordinating on SIDS issues. He

advocated that SIDS enumerate highly specific suggestions for UN agencies in its outcome document and offered to assist the drafting committee in this regard.

Chair Payet told parties that it is essential that the AIMS meeting is successful and that parties communicate clearly, proactively and constructively to bring their message to Barbados.

The Maldives said that the strong presence of IGOs in Seychelles indicates seriousness to tackle SIDS' issues. He described his country's relationship with the UN, and said that improving weak project management in SIDS will attract additional resources as absorptive capacity improves. By improving human capacity in national institutions, he said SIDS can defeat a vicious cycle of "small smallness" wherein financing does not translate into tangible outcomes.

In closing the day's session, Chair Payet thanked parties and looked forward to a frank debate on how to clearly communicate priorities and ensure the AIMS regional message is not diluted but reinforced.

PARALLEL SESSION ON EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES AND BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Murray Stuart McCully, Minister for Foreign Affairs, New Zealand, began Thursday morning's high-level session by citing linkages between his country and Samoa, and pledged his commitment to a successful outcome at the Apia Conference. He explained that island nations reap marginal economic benefit from their fisheries, citing the example of Pacific tuna fisheries, from which US\$3 billion flows out of the region, to underscore this point. He emphasized the importance of renewable energy and encouraged delegates to reflect on the advantages of being small states, noting their ability to make decisions quickly and the relatively low cost of dealing with challenges.

Peter Sinon, Minister for Natural Resources and Industry, Seychelles, said that islands are true "rainbow nations" with variegated demographics, and thus represent the "conscience and example of a more integrated and globalized world." He emphasized that exploiting blue economy resources, such as fisheries and seabed resources, must be done in a sustainable manner for the sake of future generations, and urged SIDS to come together to responsibly manage their EEZs by sharing best practices and information to prevent illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Didier Dogley, Special Adviser to the Minister of Environment and Energy, Seychelles, noted that the blue economy provides numerous resources, encourages world trade through shipping routes, and enables the development of large tourism sectors. He underscored the importance of marine resource management in the context of sustainable development, especially where there is a paucity of arable land. He encouraged renewed international cooperation to preserve marine resources. He said challenges include marine dead zones, pollution and human waste.

OPEN DIALOGUE WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM MAURITIUS, CAPE VERDE, THE UAE, FAO AND

UNEP: On Thursday morning, Amb. Ronald Jumeau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Seychelles, chairing the dialogue, queried how SIDS can partner with other organizations to promote the blue economy within the green economy. Samba Harouna,

UNEP, outlined a number of actions for fostering partnerships, including: supporting implementation of the green economy; outlining marine spatial planning; engaging in institutional strengthening and capacity building; encouraging information sharing and knowledge management; and establishing and reinforcing national data collection systems.

Aubrey Harris, Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission, FAO, discussed opportunities from aquaculture, emphasizing the importance of protein from fish for SIDS residents. He echoed comments from the high-level session that SIDS represent more than 40 votes at the UN and should use this "clout" to promote fisheries and aquaculture so that international organizations like FAO can respond more favorably.

Amb. Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima, Cape Verde, observed that the international community still struggles to define "blue economy" and that agreement at the UN is difficult to reach. From the perspective of Cape Verde, he said the blue economy means seizing opportunities from oceans-based businesses and building economic security from this, for example through maritime shipping, logistics and supply chains, freight clearance and forwarding, naval repairs, carrier and fleet registration, and fish processing.

On how SIDS, particularly in the AIMS region, can contribute to furthering the blue economy concept, Phosun Kallee, Ministry of Environment and National Development, Mauritius, suggested "rediscovering what is forgotten," urging SIDS to use local and traditional knowledge. Underscoring that development is not only about projects and statistics, but also about people, he said collaboration and cooperation to further the blue economy is essential.

On the UAE's interest in the SIDS process, Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UAE, outlined the role ocean resources have played in building his country's national economy, but stressed that the UAE's coastal zones now face many risks. He said that promoting the blue economy requires clear definitions and objectives, must ensure universal stakeholder involvement and must identify challenges on a sectoral basis. He reiterated the importance of partnerships and data and information sharing, and stressed the need for a long-term perspective.

Chair Jumeau opened the floor for discussion. UNESCO warned of the potential dangers of overexploitation that can come from harnessing the blue economy. Within the blue economy concept, the SIDS Youth Network for the AIMS Region urged delegates to link youth unemployment in SIDS with the need for human capacity and ocean research. IMO highlighted the critical importance of maritime development, including ports, shipping and offshore energy, as they are key to SIDS' sustainable development. Singapore said urgent action is needed and advocated using existing frameworks, such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, to push toward blue economy goals.

UNDP said delegates should consider how to clarify and operationalize the blue economy concept, contrasting the AIMS regional preparatory meeting with the Caribbean and Pacific regional preparatory meetings where the blue economy was not discussed as intensely. COMESA, citing piracy and organized crime, said that peace and prosperity are a fundamental prerequisite for any economy, including the blue economy.

In response, Harris said that SIDS should emphasize the inequity that exists between them and other, larger countries, which are driving climate change. Harouna advocated that the outcome document concretely define blue economy. Lima praised the UAE for its own implementation of sustainable development and proposed creating a special partnership between the UAE and SIDS to do “big things.” Kallee urged the AIMS region to stand “shoulder-to-shoulder” and not work in isolation. Al Zeyoudi called for holding a conference to work on defining the blue economy and moving the concept forward, offering to support such work.

Seychelles said that although AIMS SIDS do not have as strong an identity as the Caribbean or Pacific SIDS, they have a “mandate” to move the blue economy forward and make their voices heard as one. Harouna noted that through the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, the African Union is establishing a strategy to implement the Rio+20 outcomes and suggested that countries advocate for the specific inclusion of SIDS in the process.

OPEN DIALOGUE SESSION I: EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE REGION: On Thursday morning, Yannick Beaudoin, Head of Marine Division, UN-GRID Arendal, presented on the linkages between the blue economy and other sectors of society. He said that countries, when applying a “blue green economy” approach, should set out their intents in a clear, logical manner that aims to deal with low-hanging fruit first. He underscored the need for a collective realization that action and desired results can be a long-term vision. Quoting Albert Einstein, he said “we cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used to create them,” and suggested that “thinking from the future” may be the solution to creating a holistic blue carbon system in the AIMS region.

In response to a question from Cape Verde, Beaudoin elaborated that “thinking from the future” relies largely on “gut feelings.” The SIDS Youth Network for the AIMS Region suggested that education and youth mobilization could be a part of “thinking from the future.” She further suggested volunteering as a mechanism for sharing local and traditional knowledge. Seychelles queried what assistance can be obtained to increase the profile of the blue economy in relevant fora.

Tim Oyiwo, UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), provided an overview of a draft report entitled “The Paradox of the ‘Small’: Securing development opportunities in the face of climate change in African SIDS.” He said it details opportunities for African SIDS through addressing climate risks and disaster risk reduction initiatives, and investigates frontiers for transformation. The report, he noted, aims to identify, on a sectoral basis, key levers for and gaps hindering SIDS’ development. He invited delegates to review the report and submit their comments.

AOSIS, responding to comments made by UNDP earlier in the day, emphasized that oceans were in fact discussed in a lively manner during the previous regional preparatory meetings and urged that the blue economy should feature prominently in the Apia Conference, as well as in the SDGs, as a pathway to SIDS sustainable development. She suggested that AIMS delegates develop a “maritime resilience action plan” based on science and economics.

Cape Verde agreed that enshrining oceans as an SDG goal is “a brilliant idea.” UNEP said that specifically enumerating the value added by the blue economy is critical; otherwise the concept will remain ambiguous. UNESCO urged utilizing current research from UN agencies and partners to inform projects, deliverables and new partnerships.

Chair Jumeau ended the session by summarizing key issues that would be forwarded to the drafting committee, including: the issue of perverse subsidies; maritime transport; non-exclusivity of the blue economy; blue carbon trading; learning from existing initiatives; leapfrogging to action and development; delivering the AIMS message to all SIDS prior to Barbados; and defining the blue economy.

OPEN DIALOGUE SESSION II: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS: On Thursday afternoon, Tony Imaduwa, National Coordinator of SIDS DOCK, described collaboration in the context of SIDS DOCK, which was launched as a sustainable energy partnership between AOSIS, UNDP, the World Bank and Denmark, and now includes Japan. SIDS DOCK, he said, has more than 50 projects seeking approximately US\$500 million. Given that SIDS contribute less than 1% to greenhouse gas emissions, yet will be among the first countries affected by climate change and the least able to adapt, he said that SIDS need an energy sector transformation, noting that SIDS DOCK has a goal of mobilizing US\$10 billion by 2033.

Marina Confait, Vice-Chancellor, University of Seychelles, discussed collaboration in the context of the University Consortium of Small Island States (UCSIS). She described academic programmes at UCSIS member schools as potential platforms for achieving the principles of the blue economy by producing graduates to better manage nature, oceans and ecosystems in SIDS.

Chair Jumeau said that on financing, “SIDS are not coming with a begging bowl” and that UCSIS and SIDS DOCK represent two clear examples of SIDS helping themselves rather than waiting for people to provide funding before moving forward.

The SIDS Youth Network for the AIMS Region spoke on the opportunities for student exchange and offered to use its resources to facilitate exchanges among universities in the AIMS region.

UNDESA said that despite “temporary glitches,” the partnership model is a successful one that has made progress. He said that partnerships languish for various reasons, and that it is important to involve them in the political process, which provides a space to showcase their work. He said that the UN World Tourism Organization is considering creating global observatories of tourism in each region, which would present partnership opportunities. He advocated abandoning “loose partnership definitions” and focusing on five areas: climate; oceans; waste; disaster resilience and preparedness; and tourism.

The Commonwealth Secretariat asked delegates to consider how existing partnerships are being used, and urged avoiding duplication of efforts. OHRLLS suggested that SIDS DOCK utilize the High Representative to advocate for its issues within the High-Level Group on Sustainable Energy for All, recently formed by the UN Secretary-General. The SIDS Youth Network for the AIMS Region urged delegates to see them as partners,

and to incorporate eager, capable and trained young people into partnerships so they can contribute their skills.

Didier Dogley presented on debt-for-adaptation swaps, where SIDS can receive debt relief if they invest in nature conservation and climate change adaptation. He explained the history of debt swaps, which were first implemented in Latin America in the 1980s, and noted that while SIDS' debt grew 9% from 2007-2010, GDP in SIDS grew only 1.7% compared to 6.3% in developing countries during the same time. He said the fact that most SIDS can never get out of the debt trap actually provides an opportunity, and explained the mechanics of debt swaps.

In response to a question from the Commonwealth Secretariat, Dogley said that Seychelles hopes to make a formal commitment to debt-for-adaptation swaps at the Apia Conference next year. He added that the Seychelles is at an advantage because the government has been involved at the highest level and is working with The Nature Conservancy to establish the modalities. The Global Island Partnership (GLISPA) noted that four or five SIDS are also doing trial debt swaps and that there have already been 17 successful swaps in Latin America. The Wildlife Conservation Society said that adaptation swaps also generate income from tourism, in addition to reducing debt. Chair Jumeau added that the relationship with creditors is important, and said that the Government of the Seychelles has held all-encompassing stakeholder consultations from the outset. The Commonwealth Secretariat said that credibility is an important factor.

Minister Payet described the work of the Global Partnership for Oceans (GPO), coordinated by the World Bank, which hopes to mobilize finance and knowledge to achieve integrated solutions for "blue growth."

Alemneh Dejene, FAO, addressed emerging threats to livelihoods and food security in AIMS SIDS. He said climate change is the biggest threat to food security and livelihoods in AIMS, noting that it affects fisheries, marine resources, agriculture and forestry. Diversification of livelihoods and value chains, he stated, makes countries more resilient and reduces the impact of climate risks. He discussed food security in AIMS SIDS and said that a strategy is needed to reduce reliance on imported food. In this regard, he supported the call by AIMS countries for a regional initiative on food and nutrition security and noted the importance of partnerships.

Raj Mohabeer, IOC Islands Project, examined the 20 themes of the MSI and listed the project and funding partners involved with each, concluding that the major implementation gaps existed in those themes that lacked partners. He explained that to achieve these objectives, SIDS must identify partners. Christophe LeGrand, IOC Islands Project, discussed a project in Seychelles that has been running for two years. He explained that the Islands Project is trying to strengthen competencies, exchange best practices and work with partners, and is not so much about implementation on the ground as it is about good governance.

Nirmal Shah, AIMS Civil Society Steering Committee, said that civil society in the AIMS region aspires to understand the meaning of the blue economy, urging clarification on whether or not it is "simply a branding tactic" that really represents the "brown economy" or business-as-usual. He said that partnerships are required in order to move beyond the failed economic model

of the 20th century. He pointed to UNDESA as being a barrier rather than a facilitator of partnerships by rejecting civil society participation in meetings such as this one.

Kate Brown, Coordinator, GLISPA, provided an overview of the partnership and its undertakings, saying that it focuses on mobilizing resources for countries to improve implementation. She said GLISPA aims to promote the blue and green economies, reduce the threat of invasive species, promote ecosystem-based adaptation, and assist in the successful implementation of commitments. She noted a study that outlined GLISPA's successful elements, including: influential and dedicated biodiversity champions as co-chairs; shared passion, values and commitment among members of the steering committee; mutually reinforcing activities; and "backbone" coordination support.

Wills Agricole, Principal Secretary for Environment and Energy, Seychelles, described the Western Indian Ocean Commission Challenge (WIOCC) and its efforts to catalyze progress in the region in the same way that the Caribbean Challenge and Micronesia Challenge have done in their regions. He looked forward to the Apia Conference and hoped that a high-level forum there involving early advocates of the WIOCC could build support to successfully launch it.

Chair Jumeau summarized the key findings from the afternoon session that would be forwarded to the drafting committee, including: capitalizing on existing partnerships; minimizing duplication of efforts; mainstreaming facilitation of debt-for-adaptation swaps; complementing debt swaps with income-generating innovations linked to the blue economy; seeking to review and streamline UNFCCC adaptation funding mechanisms; and AIMS endorsement of the GPO. He then adjourned the day's "long and heavy deliberations."

DRAFTING GROUP

On Thursday morning, the drafting group convened under the chairmanship of Jean-Paul Adam, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Seychelles. Representatives from Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Singapore, the SIDS Youth Network for the AIMS Region and UNDESA participated in the session. The Chair opened the meeting by noting the need for concrete action. *Editor's Note: The summary of this session will focus on the issues to maintain the confidentiality of the participants.*

Overview: The opening presentation noted that the challenges and needs of SIDS have been recognized since 1992 but much remains to be done, and addressed the following issues: the development of vulnerability indices has become an urgent issue and needs to be linked to development, especially since GDP per capita is an inadequate measure of development; most of the countries that have graduated from LDC status are SIDS and, thus, only receive aid in the form of commercial loans and, as a result, cannot move out of debt; those who have been successful should not be punished; SIDS require a special category in the UN system; initiatives, such as the IOC Islands Project, assist in creating vulnerability indices but more assistance is needed; and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is working on a proposal for a special trade regime for SIDS. Some called for a special financing mechanism for SIDS, innovative funding and debt reduction strategies.

Delegates discussed the fact that new and additional ODA is becoming increasingly rare, and that the request was made in Barbados and Mauritius for such ODA when the international financial situation was better, but to no avail. One delegate commented that, even after the tsunami in 2005, no fund was created. Other measures that can be taken, including trade, should be investigated, suggested another. He also commented that while governments and IGOs have not kept their pledges under the BPOA and MSI, neither have SIDS been vigilant in following up on these commitments.

There was discussion on the need for an AIMS secretariat to improve regional coordination. Many proposed that the IOC could serve this role, with one suggesting that its current role needs to be strengthened. Another suggested establishing a SIDS regional office within the UNECA. Some noted that AIMS is now a misnomer since the two Mediterranean countries, Malta and Cyprus, are now part of the European Union (EU) and no longer SIDS.

New and Emerging Challenges: The opening presentation noted that SIDS' economies are heavily based on the marine environment for tourism, fisheries and more, and described that the blue economy concept brings together issues that matter most for SIDS, including: new energy possibilities; biodiversity conservation; climate change adaptation; sustainable use of mineral wealth; building sustainable trade; sustainable tourism; and sustainable management of ocean space. The presentation emphasized the importance of proper governance of ocean resources, but noted a lack of financing hinders implementation of action plans and strategies.

One delegate noted the need to identify stakeholders who are interested in funding activities that would preserve and exploit marine resources in a sustainable manner.

Existing and emerging challenges identified related to: reducing energy imports and using more renewables; agriculture and food security; climate change adaptation; global governance of oceans; freshwater resources and wastewater; illegal activities in the oceans (piracy, drug trafficking and terrorism); management of the continental shelf; low absorption capacity with regard to employment and the need for labor mobility; declining fisheries and the role of distant water fishing nations; fisheries management and coastal zone management; waste management; transboundary air and water pollution; the increasing frequency of disasters; NCDs; the tourism sector; and the need to leverage cultural heritage to benefit development.

With regard to human capacity, brain drain is a problem but, as one delegate noted, SIDS also have to look at "brain gain" and take advantage of large diasporas and tap into their expertise. Some stressed the need to improve education, entrepreneurship and job training to give youth the necessary and innovative tools "to change the world." UCSIS was mentioned as a good start in this area. One delegate said that knowledge transfer, including between universities and civil society, is as important as technology transfer.

One delegate pointed out that the challenge is to avoid reinventing the wheel and to instead focus on building existing structures and resources to implement existing plans. What was once a constraint can become an opportunity, as has been demonstrated in Singapore with regard to reducing reliance on

imported water and fuel. Delegates emphasized that SIDS can be test laboratories where things can be implemented on a small scale.

Regional Priorities for the Sustainable Development of SIDS: Discussions in the afternoon largely focused on SDGs, particularly on a potential SIDS SDG that would be accessible to all SIDS and ensure their recognition internationally. Some expressed concern, saying that a "carefully crafted" oceans-related goal could address SIDS' concerns while being more acceptable internationally. Delegates identified issues that could be addressed by SDGs, including trade, debt, security (including piracy concerns), and sustainable energy for all. One delegate urged that SDGs must be specific, time-bound, measurable and achievable and said that an oceans or SIDS SDG must include indicators. Some delegates recommended that the drafting committee harmonize positions and ensure inclusiveness.

Participants also raised the following issues during the drafting group: SIDS need more support for data collection, which is imperative to measure progress; BPOA and MSI implementation progress has been difficult to assess because of a lack of indicators; and while many concerns raised are already addressed by the BPOA and MSI, guidance on implementation is needed.

Some said national enabling environments should be aligned with international ones for effective implementation, including alignment of legislative frameworks. Delegates also emphasized that: national strategies must be in place to encourage resource mobilization, and increase awareness and stakeholder involvement; regional organizations can provide support and play a monitoring role; and institutions should be strengthened.

The drafting committee met in the evening to prepare the draft outcome document.

FRIDAY MORNING PLENARY

The final day of the AIMS preparatory meeting began with a statement by Jean-Paul Adam, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Seychelles. He summarized Thursday's deliberations in the drafting committee, which had convened three sessions on: practical and pragmatic solutions for implementation of the BPOA and MSI; emerging challenges in the AIMS region and ways and means to address them; and regional priorities for SIDS, including elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda. He said that key issues addressed included: the need for a vulnerability index; the need for a dedicated financing mechanism for SIDS; the large amount of debt among SIDS; graduation of SIDS from LDC status; improving ocean governance; transboundary threats, such as air and oceanic pollution and drug trafficking; resilience against natural disasters; and the need for an oceans-specific SDG.

Mauritius thanked the minister for his report and lamented that after reviewing the draft outcome document, he felt there was a "huge gap between what was actually said" and what was captured in the document. He suggested that Adam provide his notes to the drafting committee so that it might fill in the lacunae. He also noted that two outcome documents were circulated and that it would be best if only one consolidated document emerged from the AIMS meeting. He underscored the need for the drafting committee to prepare a focused report

that describes clear recommendations for the Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting in Barbados.

Chair Payet responded that although two documents had been circulated, only one was the draft outcome document, while the other represented the report of the open high-level session from Thursday, designed to inform the drafting committee's work. He then proposed that delegates break for one hour to review the draft outcome document and submit comments to the rapporteurs, and reconvene in the drafting committee at 11:00 am. Cape Verde supported this change to the agenda and Chair Payet closed the morning session.

The drafting committee met until 5:00 pm during which members discussed the draft outcome document paragraph-by-paragraph.

CLOSING SESSION

Chair Payet opened the closing plenary at 5:50 pm on Friday. He thanked delegates for the long hours spent over the past two days to produce an outcome document. He thanked the partners and international organizations, youth, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and others for their active participation and patience while waiting for deliberations to conclude.

Rapporteur Amb. Lima described essential points of the outcome document that had been agreed by the drafting committee. Mauritius, Maldives and Guinea-Bissau endorsed the outcome document. The SIDS Youth Network for the AIMS Region requested that its recommendation to include youth on delegations at the Apia Conference be included in the document. The Chair said that this would be reflected in the report of the meeting.

Vuk Jeremić, President of the 67th Session of the UNGA, said that SIDS face tremendous challenges beyond their making and could literally be swallowed whole by the oceans in "a recasting of the ancient myth of Atlantis into modern day tragedy, emblematic of man's hubris." He suggested special consideration for financing of early warning systems, adaptation and mitigation strategies, and strongly urged funding of the GCF. On the post-2015 development agenda, he said it would be "impossible" to implement without peace and security and urged confronting piracy and terrorism on the high seas. He supported an oceans-related SDG and concluded by noting that the window of opportunity for action against climate change is closing.

Wu Hongbo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Secretary-General of the 2014 Third International Conference on SIDS, reaffirmed UNDESA's commitment to ensuring that the future global development agenda will be one that is able to meet SIDS' needs. He encouraged greater coordination among AIMS SIDS and underscored the role of partnerships in overcoming challenges.

Amb. Marlene Moses, Nauru and Chair of AOSIS, said the "stars have aligned for SIDS like never before": Fiji has distinguished itself as Chair of the Group of 77 and China; John Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda will assume the presidency of the 68th UNGA; and multiple processes, such as the post-2015 development agenda, SDGs and ECOSOC reform, are moving forward. She said it may be decades before SIDS have another opportunity such as this to put their issues at the center of the

international agenda, and that being cognizant of the linkages between these processes is critical. She urged making clear proposals and refusing to cede the SIDS agenda to others.

Jean-Paul Adam Minister of Foreign Affairs, Seychelles, noted that while "we group ourselves into small groups," ultimately on the issue of sustainability, "we must act as the United Nations." He pointed out that if islands are not sustainable, then the planet is not sustainable. He highlighted core recommendations contained in the outcome document, including strengthening institutional support for SIDS and moving beyond the "stale" method of using GDP per capita to measure development and the blue economy. He stressed the importance of youth networks and announced the Seychelles will have a young leader on its delegation at the Apia Conference. He thanked everyone for their contributions, and closed the meeting at 6:57 pm.

OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THE AIMS REGIONAL PREPARATORY CONFERENCE FOR THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SIDS

I. INTRODUCTION: The six-paragraph introduction sets out the objectives of the Apia Conference and summarizes the opening statements and organization of the AIMS Regional Preparatory Meeting.

II. PROGRESS TO DATE AND REMAINING GAPS

IN IMPLEMENTATION: The nine paragraphs in this section recall, *inter alia*:

- the commitment to the principles and priorities of the BPOA, MSI, Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, the JPOI, and *The Future We Want*, the Rio+20 outcome document;
- the unique vulnerabilities of SIDS that have been acknowledged by the international community since UNCED in 1992;
- that a lack of financial resources has, despite considerable efforts, hindered progress in implementing the BPOA and MSI, and AIMS SIDS continue to suffer from, among other things, food insecurity, lack of appropriate sanitation infrastructure, inadequate waste management, lack of freshwater, lack of adequate transport networks and dependence on carbon-based energy sources;
- that the international community is urged to ensure a "smooth transition" for AIMS SIDS that have recently graduated from LDC status;
- the lack of a concrete definition of SIDS, which is fundamental to their inability to gain special treatment from development organizations and donor countries;
- that SIDS have repeatedly appealed for alternative measures to GDP per capita that take full account of their vulnerabilities and resilience in the context of economic development and climate change;
- the gap in enabling environments at regional and national levels, with inadequate integration of the BPOA and MSI into national plans and strategies, lack of an AIMS regional coordination mechanism, and a severe lack of monitoring and evaluation capacity;
- that sustainable development of AIMS SIDS has suffered from severe deficits in the international enabling environment; and
- that without peace and security, no sustainable development is possible.

III. PRACTICAL AND PRAGMATIC ACTION FOR FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION: The first paragraph calls for a paradigm shift in the approach to SIDS' sustainable development, recognizing that each country requires its own unique tools, and emphasizing the concept of SIDS solidarity as a necessary prerequisite to implementation. A number of subsections follow.

Blue Economy: This subsection calls for:

- AIMS SIDS, as large ocean states, to seize their competitive advantage and carve out a niche in the global economy;
- a conference on the blue economy, supported by the UAE, to be hosted during the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week in January 2014; and
- establishing a dedicated regional oceanographic center, developing a land-based ocean industry including renewable energy generation, and eliminating subsidies supporting IUU and other unsustainable fishing activities.

Financing mechanisms and trade instruments: These two paragraphs call for:

- access to adequate financing to implement the SIDS development agenda, including: capacity building for negotiating trade and partnership agreements and navigating the complex requirements for accessing certain funds; simpler, more flexible and favorable access to funds; new and additional sources of finance; and
- UNCTAD to further develop ways and means to facilitate international movement of SIDS' goods, capital and professional services, and preferential access to key markets with flexible rules of origin.

Regional collaboration and institutional arrangements:

The paragraphs in this subsection:

- reiterate the coordinating role played by the IOC;
- call on UN agencies to collaborate with the IOC in implementing the BPOA and MSI;
- call for an AIMS regional mechanism to ease the process for AIMS SIDS to access finance, technology transfer and capacity building, and to facilitate potentially transformative SIDS-SIDS partnerships;
- arrange for Portuguese translation at AIMS SIDS meetings;
- recommend that UN entities and regional organizations build institutionalized support for SIDS into their programmes and undertake activities that are responsive to the needs of SIDS; and
- call on the UN Secretariat to enhance the human and financial resources currently available to the UNDESA SIDS Unit.

Partnerships: This paragraph highlights existing partnerships, including GLISPA, SIDS DOCK, the WIOCC and UCSIS, and calls for support from relevant UN agencies.

IV. NEW AND EMERGING CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

The paragraphs in this section address a number of issues, including:

- economic development through investment in capacity and infrastructure to, *inter alia*: further benefit from oceanic resources, including ocean governance; reverse decreasing fish stocks; and conserve coastal and marine ecosystems;
- climate change-induced ocean acidification, natural disasters and extreme weather events that continue to set back human and economic development in SIDS and affect national security in and around SIDS regions;

- disappointment at the non-replenishment of the Adaptation Fund under the Kyoto Protocol;
- early fulfillment of pledges made with respect to the GCF;
- the elaboration of a SIDS strategy for disaster risk reduction to enhance their capacity to address disasters;
- vulnerability to international organized crimes, such as drug and human trafficking, and trade in counterfeit goods and piracy, which increasingly threaten national and regional peace, security and progress toward sustainable development;
- population growth and urbanization, which put additional pressures on freshwater, sanitation and housing;
- the complexities arising from increasing international mobility of labor, which creates both unemployment and underemployment, but also opportunities for economic development;
- chemical and hazardous waste management, including electronic waste and the need for regional mechanisms, oil spill contingency plans, and increased investment and cooperation in developing integrated waste management and technologies;
- access to affordable, clean energy, continued diversification of energy sources, enhanced technology sharing and promotion of renewable energies that are readily adaptable to SIDS, with assistance from the UNDP Renewable Energy Fund and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA);
- regional cooperation and agreements to address transboundary pollution, such as air pollution and marine litter;
- the need for strengthened health systems to provide universal coverage to address communicable and non-communicable diseases; and
- the need to support the development and production of climate change-resistant food varieties, technologies for improving productivity, and capacity building to improve food security and nutrition strategies.

V. REGIONAL PRIORITIES FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SIDS (POST-2015): This section:

- recognizes the importance of the Apia Conference in ensuring the inclusion of SIDS' priorities in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda;
- calls for strengthening national governance mechanisms to promote long-term planning, with sustainable development mainstreamed into national development;
- asserts that oceans should have prominence in the post-2015 development agenda, with a dedicated SDG on oceans and support for the blue economy mainstreamed into the development agenda as a whole;
- calls for aggressive and innovative efforts to promote renewable energy, including wind, solar and ocean energies, in the post-2015 development agenda and SDGs;
- calls for investment in programmes to develop the human capacity of SIDS and build the resilience of SIDS' societies and economies;
- recognizes the imperative of the efficient and effective management of natural resources—water, land, and biodiversity—and calls for the international community and SIDS to advance sustainable consumption and production patterns;
- calls for the elaboration of appropriate indices that better reflect SIDS' vulnerabilities and guide them to adopt more

- informed policies and strategies for building and sustaining long-term resilience, and calls for resilience-building to be a goal of the post-2015 development agenda;
- calls for integrating the critical climate change adaptation needs of SIDS, including water, sanitation, coastal protection and protection of critical coastal infrastructures, into the post-2015 development agenda, supported by measurable targets by developed countries for adaptation assistance to SIDS;
 - calls for health issues to feature prominently in the post-2015 development agenda under a goal entitled “universal health coverage;” and
 - calls for the establishment of a robust global monitoring system to strengthen accountability at all levels and to ensure adequate and timely analysis of the implementation of the BPOA, MSI and the outcome of the Apia Conference as an integral part of the post-2015 development agenda.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

“We can all sink or we all float,

‘Cause we’re all in the same big boat” – Sting

The AIMS Regional Preparatory Meeting marked the third and final regional meeting for the September 2014 Third International Conference on SIDS in Apia, Samoa. It provided an opportunity for the AIMS SIDS to assess progress and remaining gaps in the implementation of the BPOA and MSI, and to identify new and emerging challenges, opportunities and priorities for the sustainable development of SIDS.

The AIMS region has the smallest membership among the three SIDS regions with only eight countries: Cape Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Maldives, Mauritius, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles and Singapore. Unlike the Pacific and the Caribbean regions, there is neither a distinct regional identity nor an overarching organization to unite them. The countries are diverse geographically (situated in three different bodies of water), economically (ranging from middle- and high-income to LDCs), regionally (from Asia and Africa) and culturally (with 10 official languages across eight islands). In addition, with Malta and Cyprus—the former Mediterranean SIDS—now part of the EU, the name “AIMS” itself has become a misnomer. What they do have in common, however, is that they are not part of the two major SIDS regional groups and they all share similar vulnerabilities, challenges and opportunities.

This brief analysis examines three major themes that emerged from the meeting, namely the blue economy, the economic realities in SIDS, and challenges and opportunities, and concludes by looking ahead to the next steps on the voyage to Apia.

“SYNCHRONICITY”

While the concept of the blue economy was referenced in both the Caribbean and Pacific regional meetings, it was front and center at the AIMS Regional Meeting. The host government pointed out that although AIMS SIDS do not have as strong an identity as the Caribbean or Pacific SIDS, they do have a mandate to move the blue economy forward and make their voices heard as one. The sustainable development of islands relies on the health and vitality of the marine environment, which involves improving ocean governance, maintaining the health of the oceans, and the sustainable development and management of

ocean resources. Indicative of the importance that SIDS attach to the blue economy, Seychelles President James Alix Michel, in his opening remarks, stressed that the blue economy is a shared opportunity to address the issues that matter most to SIDS, while AOSIS Chair Marlene Moses underscored that it captures the nature of and challenges facing SIDS.

However, while many called for promoting the blue economy, it was evident that further consideration is needed to clearly define the blue economy before it can be effectively and properly operationalized. With this in mind, the host government made an effort to move delegates beyond well-tread discussions to address questions of implementation by focusing strongly on partnerships and the blue economy. Delegates simultaneously recognized both the unique opportunity before them to define the blue economy concept and the risk of leaving the concept ambiguous and allowing non-SIDS to define it for them. Perhaps the Apia Conference will provide the synchronistic opportunity to define and operationalize the blue economy concept so it can be a concrete outcome in Samoa.

“SENDING OUT AN SOS”

Another issue that came to the fore was the need to move beyond the “stale” method of using GDP per capita as a measure for development. As delegates pointed out, this is particularly important when determining LDC graduation, as the current criteria do not adequately consider SIDS’ vulnerability concerns. For example, studies have shown that SIDS are 33% more vulnerable to external shocks, often with severe economic consequences. Of the 49 LDCs, ten are SIDS. Three countries have recently graduated from LDC status, including two in the AIMS region: Cape Verde and Maldives. Of the four countries recommended for graduation, three are Pacific SIDS: Vanuatu, Samoa and Tuvalu. Once they have graduated, countries no longer qualify for concessional loans. The AIMS SIDS, led by Cape Verde, felt very strongly that SIDS should not be “punished by their success.”

At the same time, SIDS are some of the most indebted countries. The International Monetary Fund projects that by the end of 2013, 13 SIDS will have a public-debt-to-GDP ratio greater than 60%, and seven will have a ratio greater than 100%. On top of this, since the beginning of the financial crisis, SIDS have experienced an annual average decline in GDP growth of 4.8%, with some experiencing as much as a 10% decline. This trend of indebtedness has led many to claim that this is “the price of small island-ness.” Others have argued that SIDS may never get out of the debt trap. Yet the paradox is that SIDS’ GDPs appear healthy when compared to those of most LDCs.

Delegates argued passionately for vulnerability to be taken into account when reviewing the development status of SIDS. All three regional meetings noted that it takes only one storm or natural disaster to wipe out an entire economy. To wit, Hurricane Ivan wiped out two years’ worth of Grenada’s GDP in 2004. In addition to renewing calls for the development of a vulnerability index, many advocated for establishing a special category for SIDS within the UN system to enable these small, vulnerable countries to receive the level of attention they deem necessary.

“CANARY IN A COAL MINE”

On the opening day of the AIMS Regional Meeting, Seychelles Environment Minister Rolph Payet commented that

SIDS are “the canary in a coal mine,” referring to the fact that they are the first to be affected by sea level rise from climate change, and what happens in SIDS is an indicator of what will happen elsewhere. As UNGA President Vuk Jeremić said in his closing remarks, SIDS face tremendous challenges beyond their making and could literally be swallowed whole by the oceans in “a recasting of the ancient myth of Atlantis into modern day tragedy, emblematic of man’s hubris.”

At the same time, as mentioned during the interactive discussions, SIDS are the perfect test laboratories in which to implement renewable energy and other emerging technologies. Investors understand that when something works on a small scale, as is the case with SIDS, it can be scaled up and become a solution for larger countries, a fact that was underscored by the presence and participation of delegations from the UAE and Masdar, the UAE’s renewable energy research and development body, which has already developed a wind farm on Mahé in Seychelles. This provides an opportunity for SIDS to position themselves at the cutting edge of environmentally sound technology and other innovations.

“ONE WORLD (NOT THREE)”

The challenge for SIDS, however, is to ensure that these and other opportunities are not lost or diluted during the process leading up to the Apia Conference and beyond. A common theme during all three regional meetings was that SIDS cannot let their development partners off the hook for their failure to implement commitments made in the BPOA and MSI. Indeed, at all three meetings, SIDS also reminded themselves that their sustainable development constraints can also represent opportunities.

Samoa has proposed that the theme for the Apia Conference should be “The Sustainable Development of SIDS through Genuine and Global Partnerships.” This theme was enthusiastically embraced at the AIMS regional meeting. In Seychelles, partnerships were promoted and showcased. The SIDS Youth Network for the AIMS Region participated throughout the meeting and even attended sessions of the drafting group. NGOs, civil society, UN agencies and regional organizations were allowed to participate in almost every session and their valuable contributions were noted in the outcome document. In fact, “partners” in the meeting room greatly outnumbered government delegates from the six AIMS countries.

As the process moves on from the three regional meetings to the Inter-regional Meeting in Barbados at the end of August, Preparatory Committee meetings in New York in 2014 and, ultimately, the Apia Conference, the SIDS from all three regions must now come together as one. As one participant remarked, “SIDS survival is based on unity in diversity.”

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to Study Issues Relating to the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity beyond Areas of National Jurisdiction: The *Ad hoc* Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction will continue its deliberations. **dates:** 19-23 August 2013 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea **phone:**

+1-212-963-3962 **fax:** +1-212-963-5847 **email:** doalos@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/Depts/los/biodiversityworkinggroup/biodiversityworkinggroup.htm>

Asia-Pacific Ministerial Dialogue: Hosted by the Government of Thailand, this regional consultation is being organized to provide input to the New York-based discussions of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. **dates:** 26-27 August 2013 **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **contact:** Adnan Aliani, UNESCAP **email:** aliani.unescap@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=13&nr=464&menu=23>

Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting: The Inter-regional Meeting to prepare for the 2014 International Conference on SIDS will bring together delegates from all three SIDS regions. **dates:** 26-28 August 2013 **location:** Bridgetown, Barbados **contact:** Barbados Ministry of Foreign Affairs **email:** barbados@foreign.gov.bb or **contact:** Barbados Ministry of Environment and Drainage **fax:** +1-246-437-8859 **www:** <http://www.sids2014.org/>

Diplomatic Plenipotentiary Conference on a Global Legally Binding Instrument on Mercury: The Conference will adopt the Minamata Convention on Mercury and a final act that addresses: how to promote and prepare for the early implementation of the Convention; arrangements for the interim period between the signing of the instrument and its entry into force; and secretariat arrangements. **dates:** 7-11 October 2013 **location:** Kumamoto, Japan **contact:** UNEP Mercury Programme **phone:** +41-22-917-8192/8232 **fax:** +41-22-797-3460 **email:** mercury.chemicals@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/MinamataConvention/DipCon/tabid/106193/Default.aspx>

28th General Meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative: ICRI will hold its 28th General Meeting in Belize. ICRI brings together governments, the CBD and the Ramsar Convention Secretariats, NGOs, development banks such as the World Bank, regional organizations, and international organizations. **dates:** 14-17 October 2013 **location:** Belize City, Belize **contact:** ICRI Secretariat **email:** icri@gbmpa.gov.au **www:** <http://www.icriforum.org/ICRIGM28>

Third International Marine Protected Area Congress: The third International Marine Protected Areas Congress aims to define actions to promote cooperation through different initiatives, and to inspire a new way of thinking to face global challenges, such as climate change, poverty reduction and resource sharing. **dates:** 21-27 October 2013 **location:** Marseille and Corsica, France **contact:** IUCN **email:** info@impac3.org **www:** <http://www.impac3.org/en/>

25th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol: MOP 25 will consider a number of issues, including nominations for critical- and essential-use exemptions, as well as amendments to the protocol to phase out HFCs and to consider the unique and particular vulnerabilities of SIDS when discussing SIDS’ Montreal Protocol obligations and transitions to ozone-friendly alternatives. **dates:** 21-25 October 2013 **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **contact:** Ozone Secretariat **phone:** +254-20-762-3851 **fax:** +254-20-762-4691 **email:** ozoneinfo@unep.org **www:** <http://ozone.unep.org>

First Annual Sustainable Development Implementation Forum (SDIF): The SDIF aims to serve as a global platform for sharing best practices in formulating and implementing sustainable development programmes, reviewing evidence of impact, and charting new and improved pathways for sustainable development implementation. **dates:** 5-7 November 2013 (tentative) **location:** Incheon, Republic of Korea **contact:** SDIF Secretariat, UN Office for Sustainable Development **phone:** +82-32-822-9088 **fax:** +82-32-822-9089 **email:** unosd@un.org **www:** <http://www.unosd.org>

19th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC: COP 19, the 9th meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties for the Kyoto Protocol, the third meeting of the *Ad hoc* Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action, and the 39th meetings of the Subsidiary Bodies will convene. **dates:** 11-22 November 2013 **location:** Warsaw, Poland **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** <http://www.unfccc.int>

Fourth General Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency: IRENA is an intergovernmental organization dedicated to renewable energy. **dates:** 18-19 January 2014 **location:** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates **contact:** IRENA Secretariat **phone:** +971-2-4179000 **fax:** +971-2-6581726 **email:** secretariat@irena.org **www:** <http://www.irena.org/>

World Future Energy Summit: The seventh WFES will promote innovation and opportunities in energy efficiency and clean energy technologies by engaging political, business, finance, academic and industry leaders. **dates:** 20-22 January 2014 **location:** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates **contact:** Ara Fernezian, Management Team **phone:** +49-9133-867200 **fax:** +49-172-88-33-577 **email:** Ara.fernezian@reedexpo.ae **www:** <http://www.worldfutureenergysummit.com>

International Water Summit (IWS) 2014: IWS is a platform for promoting water sustainability in arid regions, bringing together world leaders, field experts, academics and business innovators. **dates:** 20-22 January 2014 **location:** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates **contact:** Ara Fernezian, Management Team **phone:** +49-9133-867200 **fax:** +49-172-88-33-577 **email:** Ara.fernezian@reedexpo.ae **www:** <http://iwsabudhabi.com/portal/home.aspx>

Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States: The modalities for the Preparatory Committee will be set by the 68th session of the UNGA. The Committee is expected to begin work in early 2014. **dates:** to be determined **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Hiroko Morita-Lou, UNDESA SIDS Unit **phone:** +1-212-963-8813 **fax:** +1-212-963-3260 **email:** morita-lou@un.org **www:** <http://www.sids2014.org/>

31st Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries: COFI reviews the work programmes of the FAO in the field of fisheries, and their implementation, conducts periodic general reviews of international fishery problems and examines possible solutions. **dates:** 9-13 June 2014 **location:** Rome, Italy **contact:** FAO Fisheries **email:** FAO-COFI@fao.org **www:** <http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsbhome/committee-fi/en/>

Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States: The Third International Conference on SIDS will include a high-level segment to build upon the BPOA and MSI and will identify new challenges for the sustainable development of SIDS. The conference will be preceded by related activities from 28-30 August 2014. **dates:** 28 August - 4 September 2014 **location:** Apia, Samoa **contact:** Hiroko Morita-Lou, UNDESA SIDS Unit **phone:** +1-212- 963-8813 **fax:** +1-212-963-3260 **email:** morita-lou@un.org **www:** <http://www.sids2014.org/>

GLOSSARY

AIMS	Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea
AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
BPOA	Barbados Programme of Action
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
EEZ	Exclusive economic zone
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GLISPA	Global Island Partnership
GPO	Global Partnership for Oceans
IGOs	Intergovernmental organizations
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
IUU	Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
JPOI	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
LDC	Least developed country
MSI	Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action
NCDs	Non-communicable diseases
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
ODA	Official development assistance
OHRLLS	Office of the High Representative for the LDCs, Land-Locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
Rio+20	UN Conference on Sustainable Development (or UNCSD)
SDGs	Sustainable development goals
SIDS	Small island developing states
UCSIS	University Consortium of Small Island States
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	UN General Assembly
WHO	World Health Organization
WIOCC	Western Indian Ocean Commission Challenge



SIDS Policy & Practice

<http://sids-l.iisd.org/>

A knowledge management project carried out by the International Institute for Sustainable Development Reporting Services (IISD RS) in collaboration with the European Union (EU) and SIDSnet.

New posts to the knowledgebase are circulated via the *SIDS Update*, which is distributed exclusively through the SIDS-L listserve.

SIDS-L is a companion project managed by IISD RS. This community listserve offers participants an opportunity to post announcements regarding publications and meetings.

To receive the *SIDS Update* and to subscribe to the SIDS-L community listserve:

<http://sids-l.iisd.org/about-the-sids-l-mailing-list/>



To subscribe to the iCal of SIDS-related events:

<http://sids-l.iisd.org/icalendar/>

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