



PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON THE TEN-YEAR REVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SIDS: 14-16 APRIL 2004

The Preparatory Meeting for the International Meeting on the Ten-year Review of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States took place from 14-16 April 2004, at UN headquarters in New York. The meeting commenced with the official opening of the 12th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which was tasked to undertake the three-day preparatory meeting for the International Meeting, scheduled to take place in Mauritius later this year.

During the three days, delegates conducted a first reading of the Strategy Document on the Further Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, adopted at the inter-regional preparatory meeting held in the Bahamas in January 2004, and endorsed and forwarded by the G-77/China to the Commission in preparation for the International Meeting. At the conclusion of the preparatory meeting, delegates decided to use a compilation text as the basis for further intersessional informal informals. Delegates also adopted draft decisions on the provisional agenda of and the accreditation of NGOs to the International Meeting. CSD-12 also considered preparations for the International Meeting at its high-level segment on Friday, 30 April.

Several trends emerged from the preparatory meeting: there was a positive and constructive dialogue between SIDS and their development partners; there is still a monumental amount of negotiating left to transform the compilation text into an action-oriented Strategy; and resolving issues regarding trade, finance and providing directives to the international community and organizations will require creative drafting solutions that meet the needs of both SIDS and their development partners. Despite these challenges, the preparatory meeting has laid a solid foundation for fulfilling the mandate set out by the General Assembly to renew international political support for SIDS.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BPOA

The vulnerability of islands and coastal areas was recognized by the 44th session of the UN General Assembly 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 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in June 1992, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, brought the special case of such 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 convening a global conference on the sustainable development of small island developing States (SIDS).

GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SIDS: Established by UN General Assembly resolution 47/189, the UN Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of SIDS was held in Bridgetown, Barbados, from 25 April to 6 May 1994. Some 125 States and territories participated in the conference, 46 of which were small island developing States and territories. The Conference adopted the Barbados Programme of Action on the Sustainable Development of SIDS (BPOA), a 14-point programme that identifies priority

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This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Alice Bisiaux <alice@iisd.org>, Lauren Flejzor <lauren@iisd.org>, Prisma Nuengsigkapien <prisma@iisd.org>, Anju Sharma <anju@iisd.org>, and Richard Sherman <rsherman@iisd.org>. The Digital Editor is Leila Mead <leila@iisd.org>. The Editor is Pamela S. Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org> and the Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are the Government of the United States of America (through the Department of State Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs), the Government of Canada (through CIDA), the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), the United Kingdom (through the Department for International Development - DFID), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Germany (through the German Federal Ministry of Environment - BMU, and the German Federal Ministry of Development Cooperation - BMZ), and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2004 is provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Government of Australia, Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Swan International, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES) and the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (through the Global Industrial and Social Progress Research Institute - GISPRI). Specific funding for the coverage of this meeting has been provided by the Norwegian Ministry of Environment. Funding for translation of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* in French has been provided by the International Organization of the Francophonie (IOF) and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The opinions expressed in the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-212-644-0217 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA.



areas and indicates specific actions necessary for addressing the special challenges faced by SIDS. The priority areas include: 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 several cross-sectoral areas that required 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 agreements contained in the BPOA. The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was given the responsibility to follow up on the implementation of the BPOA.

UNGASS-19: Five years after UNCED in June 1997, the 19th Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS-19) addressed SIDS issues as part of its general theme to "Review and Appraise the Implementation of Agenda 21." In that context, the Special Session requested that the CSD at its sixth session in 1998 undertake a review of all the outstanding chapters and issues of the BPOA. Delegates also decided that a two-day special session of the General Assembly would be held in 1999 to conduct a full review of the implementation of the BPOA, and requested the CSD to serve as the preparatory committee for the Special Session.

UNGASS-22: In September 1999, five years following the Barbados Conference, the 22nd Special Session of the UN General Assembly (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 problem 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 to these priority areas, the Special Session highlighted the need to focus on means of implementation through: sustainable development strategies, capacity building, resource mobilization and finance, globalization and trade liberalization, transfer of environmentally sound technology, a vulnerability index, information management through strengthening the SIDS Network, and international cooperation and partnership. UNGASS-22 also adopted a declaration in which Member States, *inter alia*, reaffirmed the principles of and their commitment to sustainable development embodied in Agenda 21, the Barbados Declaration and the BPOA.

MILLENNIUM SUMMIT: In 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 Summit negotiated and adopted two main documents: the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation

(JPOI). The WSSD reaffirmed the special case of SIDS, and dedicated a chapter of the JPOI to the sustainable development of SIDS, which 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.

Non-negotiated partnerships/initiatives for sustainable development, also known as Type II partnerships/initiatives, proved to be an important outcome of the WSSD. Since the WSSD, over 260 such partnerships have been launched, 18 of which focus on addressing the challenges facing small islands.

UNGA-57: In December 2002, the 57th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA-57) adopted resolution 57/262, which 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 of the Government of Mauritius to host the meeting. The General Assembly also decided that the review should seek a renewed political commitment by all countries to, and focus on, practical and pragmatic actions for the further implementation of the BPOA, including through the mobilization of resources and assistance for SIDS. The resolution further decided to convene regional preparatory meetings and an inter-regional preparatory meeting in order to undertake the review of the BPOA at the national, subregional and regional levels, and invited the CSD at its 11th session (CSD-11) to consider its role in the review process. The resolution also requested strengthening the SIDS Unit within the UN Division for Sustainable Development to enable it to assist in preparations for the review process.

CSD-11: During CSD-11, which convened in New York from 28 April to 9 May 2003, the Commission decided to undertake a three-day preparatory meeting during CSD-12 for an in-depth assessment and appraisal of the implementation of the BPOA, and finalize the preparations for the International Meeting (IM), including its agenda. The CSD further decided to invite the international donor and development communities, and international organizations to provide information on their activities in support of the BPOA's implementation, and specified the dates and venues of the regional and inter-regional preparatory meetings.

REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETINGS: From August to October 2003, three regional preparatory meetings were held for the: Pacific SIDS (4-8 August, Apia, Samoa); Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS) SIDS (1-5 September, Praia, Cape Verde); and the Caribbean SIDS (6-10 October, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago). Each of these meetings finalized regional positions, which were presented as Regional Synthesis Reports during the inter-regional preparatory meeting in the Bahamas in January 2004.

EXPERT MEETINGS: In preparation for the inter-regional meeting, a series of four expert meetings were convened from July to December 2003. These meetings addressed: capacity building for renewable energy and energy efficiency; vulnerability of SIDS and enhancing resilience; waste management; and capacity building for sustainable development. The reports of these meetings together with the Regional Synthesis Reports comprised the background documents for the inter-regional meeting.



UNGA-58: In December 2003, the 58th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA-58), in resolution 58/213, decided to convene the IM from 30 August to 3 September 2004, which would include a high-level segment to undertake a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the BPOA. The General Assembly also decided to hold, if deemed necessary by an open-ended preparatory meeting and funded from voluntary resources, two days of informal consultations in Mauritius, on 28 and 29 August 2004, to facilitate the effective preparation for the IM.

APPOINTMENT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING: In December 2003, UN Under-Secretary-General Anwarul Chowdhury was appointed the Secretary-General of the International Meeting. Chowdhury is also the UN High Representative for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries and SIDS.

INTER-REGIONAL SIDS PREPARATORY MEETING: The Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting for the Ten-year Review of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS took place from 26-30 January 2004, in Nassau, the Bahamas. At the conclusion of the meeting, the SIDS adopted the Nassau Declaration and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) Strategy Paper for the Further Implementation of the BPOA. The AOSIS Strategy Paper was forwarded to the G-77/China for consideration in advance of the SIDS preparatory meeting. The Paper contains chapters on the priority areas of the BPOA and identifies new and emerging issues, including graduation of SIDS least developed countries (LDCs), trade, health and culture.

G-77/CHINA'S LETTER TO THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL: In a letter transmitted to the UN Secretary-General on 26 March 2004 (E/CN.17/2004/12), the G-77/China indicated its endorsement of the AOSIS Strategy Paper and proposed to use it as a basis for negotiation for the 10-year review of the BPOA.

INFORMAL INFORMALS: Facilitated by New Zealand's Ambassador to the UN, Don MacKay, informal informals on matters related to the SIDS preparatory meeting took place on 24 March and 8 April 2004. During the consultations, delegates expressed views on and conducted an informal reading of the Strategy Document for the Further Implementation of the BPOA.

PREPARATORY MEETING REPORT

On Wednesday morning, 14 April, CSD-12 Chair Børge Brende, Norway's Minister of the Environment, opened the session, noting that it is the first to be held under the new CSD work programme. He said CSD-12 and 13 offer unique opportunities to focus on implementing actions to achieve the internationally-agreed goals on water, sanitation and human settlements. He also drew attention to the first three days of the session, devoted to the preparations for the IM.

The Commission then elected by acclamation as its Vice-Chairs, Toru Shimizu (Japan), Bolus Paul Zom Lolo (Nigeria), and Eva Tomic (Slovenia), with Vice-Chair Zom Lolo serving as Rapporteur. Chair Brende and Vice-Chair Bruno Stagno Ugarte (Costa Rica) were elected to the CSD-12 Bureau on 9 May 2003.

Following minor amendments and a brief comment by the Secretariat on the provisional agenda and other organizational matters, the Commission adopted its agenda (E/CN.17/2004/1) and organization of work, including documents on the *Status of docu-*

mentation for the session (E/CN.17/2004/1/Add.1) and the *Participation of intergovernmental organizations in the work of CSD-12* (E/CN.17/2004/L.1).

Delegates then heard opening statements in preparation for the International Meeting to review the implementation of the BPOA. During the three days, delegates met in informal consultations to conduct a first reading of the Strategy Document on the further implementation of the BPOA. Delegates also considered the draft provisional agenda of and adopted the list of NGOs and Major Groups accredited to the IM. The following report summarizes the discussions that took place during the preparatory meeting.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING TO REVIEW THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SIDS

On Wednesday morning, José Antonio Ocampo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, welcomed the CSD-11 decision to include the vulnerability of SIDS as a cross-cutting issue in the CSD's multi-year programme of work. Introducing the UN Secretary-General's report on *Review of Progress in the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS* (E/CN.17/2004/8), he said the report provides a comprehensive review of the overall implementation of the BPOA, describes the continuing challenges facing SIDS, and identifies areas where additional support of the international community is required.

Underscoring the General Assembly resolution on the IM, Anwarul Chowdhury, Secretary-General of the Mauritius International Meeting, said the IM must examine the shortfalls in the implementation of the BPOA and examine why matters have not advanced since the BPOA+5 review in 1999. He said the foremost questions for the IM are how the meeting can make a positive difference in promoting the welfare and wellbeing of the people in SIDS, and how SIDS can gain the support, genuine commitment and political will of all partners to make substantive headway in implementing the BPOA. He also proposed the creation of a dynamic monitoring mechanism that allows for the shortfalls in implementation to be identified on a periodic or annual basis.

The Bahamas presented the outcomes of the inter-regional preparatory meeting held in Nassau, Bahamas, in January 2004, highlighting the *Nassau Declaration* (A/58/709) and the *AOSIS Strategy Paper for the Further Implementation of the BPOA* (E/CN.17/2004/12 annex). She noted that during the meeting, delegates renewed calls for political will, increased financial resources, and greater support from the international community to facilitate SIDS' implementation of the BPOA.

Stating that they had endorsed the AOSIS Strategy Paper, which was referred to as the Strategy Document at this meeting, Mauritius, on behalf of the G-77/China, presented and outlined its document, highlighting the special challenges faced by SIDS in sustainable development and urging greater understanding and cooperation from members of the international community in honoring their commitments from "Rio and Barbados." Noting concerns raised during the informal consultations that the Strategy Document is too long and lacks prioritization, he stressed that the document reflects the range of issues confronting SIDS and under-



lined the need to address these concerns in a holistic manner. On the UN Secretary-General's report, he cautioned against the impression that SIDS can resolve their sustainable development challenges by themselves, and said this idea does not embrace the spirit of partnership of the BPOA and WSSD. He welcomed a "full and frank" discussion on the best way forward.

Stating that the IM provides a unique opportunity to follow up on the implementation of agreements in the Millennium Declaration and the WSSD, Ireland, on behalf of the EU, said the IM should add value and not renegotiate the BPOA. He said the IM should reinforce the importance of country-driven and country-owned strategies for poverty reduction and sustainable development, adding that it should focus on the role of the international community in supporting these national initiatives.

The US expressed concern over the structure and contents of the Strategy Document, indicating that it: is a list of demands; is too long and detailed; seeks to change the international community's rules; seeks to alter language negotiated in other international fora; and contains issues that are not SIDS-specific. He highlighted that the concerns of the US are reflected in a non-paper, which was circulated during the intersessional informal consultations on 8 April.

Tuvalu expressed hope that all delegations would see this meeting as an opportunity for dialogue, and asked delegates not to disregard the work of the SIDS ministers in developing the Strategy Document. He called on international financial institutions (IFIs) to fund the BPOA's implementation.

The Russian Federation said the IM should make a significant contribution to the implementation of the WSSD outcomes, and must be carried out within the parameters of other international agreements.

Don MacKay, Facilitator of the informal consultations, reported on the two consultations that took place before the preparatory meeting. Prior to closing the opening Plenary, Chair Brende proposed, and the Commission agreed, to designate MacKay as Facilitator of the preparatory meeting's informal consultations.

ACCREDITATION OF NGOS TO THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING: On Wednesday morning, the Commission considered and adopted the list of NGOs and other Major Groups accredited to the IM, included in the document on the *Accreditation of non-governmental organizations and other major groups to the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS and its preparatory meeting* (E/CN.17/2004/9).

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: During the informal consultations facilitated by MacKay, delegates undertook a paragraph-by-paragraph "walk through" the Strategy Document, where developed countries provided initial comments, proposed new text or requested clarification on the G-77/China's document. Throughout the Document, developed countries proposed amending language to place greater obligations on SIDS for their sustainable development. Developed countries also expressed concern regarding the use of mandatory language giving directives to the international community. In response to the proposals and suggestions from developed countries, the G-77/China provided the meeting with further clarification on the importance of certain issues, and agreed to consult internally on these amendments.

On Wednesday, delegates concluded their first reading of the introduction, and the sections relating to climate change and sea-level rise, and natural and environmental disasters. They also began consideration of the section on waste management.

On Thursday, delegates completed a first reading of sections on waste management, coastal and marine resources, freshwater resources, land resources, energy resources, tourism resources, biodiversity resources, transport and communication, science and technology, graduation of SIDS LDCs, and commenced discussion on the section relating to trade: globalization and trade liberalization.

On Friday, delegates concluded their reading of sections on: trade: globalization and trade liberalization; sustainable capacity development and education for sustainable development; sustainable production and consumption; national enabling environments; health; knowledge management and information for decision making; culture; implementation; access to financial resources; and monitoring and evaluation.

Introduction: The EU proposed introductory text to this section reaffirming SIDS' commitment to the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, the JPOI, the Monterrey Consensus, and other relevant international agreements. The G-77/China underscored the BPOA as the central strategy for the sustainable development of SIDS.

On common but differentiated responsibilities, delegates supported an amendment by Australia to reference the full title of the principle as outlined in Rio Principle 7.

The US and the EU proposed deleting text on financial support and official development assistance (ODA), suggesting instead to reference text from the Monterrey Consensus. The G-77/China suggested including such text in a political declaration, stressing their preference to focus on the BPOA in the Document.

On good governance and the urgent need for greater democracy, transparency, and inclusiveness in international financial and economic systems to allow for the effective participation of SIDS in decision-making processes, the EU, Japan, Norway and the US proposed deleting this paragraph and replacing it with language from paragraph 11 of the Monterrey Consensus, which recognizes, *inter alia*, that good governance is essential for sustainable development. While supporting the agreements reached in Monterrey, the G-77/China underscored that the text should highlight the need for the democratization of IFIs. He said IFIs and the Bretton Woods Institutions are not paying enough attention to the vulnerability of SIDS, and proposed using related text from the JPOI instead.

On security, Japan, Australia, the EU and the US proposed deleting text concerning the diversion of financial resources from the sustainable development agenda to address security concerns. Australia proposed an alternative paragraph noting the international community's acknowledgment of the increased financial and administrative pressure at the national level on SIDS as part of the global fight against terrorism, and reaffirming the importance of international cooperation.

On paragraphs relating to international law, human rights and the UN Charter, and to the role of UN bodies, the EU and the US proposed deleting and/or streamlining the text to make them more relevant to SIDS issues.



Delegates supported, without discussion, paragraphs addressing the need to achieve sustainable development through the adoption of integrated and holistic approaches, the importance of culture and cultural diversity, and the integral role and participation of youth in sustainable development.

On South-South cooperation, the US expressed concern that this paragraph does not relate specifically to SIDS alone. The paragraph was amended to include a reference on oceans cooperation.

On gender equality and access to education, healthcare, economic opportunities and decision making systems for sustainable development, the EU said the text should reference the relevant Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Canada proposed additional references to women's full and equal access to political participation at all levels, and the full and equal access of girls, boys, women and men to all levels of education.

Climate change and sea-level rise: Australia, the EU and the US recognized that the issue of SIDS' vulnerability and adaptation to climate change is of particular importance, and that the text should emphasize moving toward a common goal to reduce greenhouse gases. The G-77/China indicated that climate change is a global problem that requires global action, and that developed countries need to take responsibility for contributing to sea-level rise. Mexico noted that it attaches great importance to the emphasis on the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol in the text. The US and the EU called for merging the paragraph concerning Global Environment Facility (GEF) support for adaptation strategies with a paragraph on the role of regional development banks and IFIs in supporting regional and national climate change coordination mechanisms. The Russian Federation said the paragraph should draw less attention to the GEF's procedures, and instead focus on promoting technical capacity for SIDS. The G-77/China said the paragraphs should remain separate, and noted that adaptation measures under the GEF are of utmost importance to SIDS, and called for the simplification of the GEF's rules in order to expedite the disbursement of resources.

Natural and environmental disasters: The G-77/China, opposed by the EU, Canada and the US, underscored the importance of maintaining text calling for the establishment an international fund for disaster reduction, and references to insurance and re-insurance arrangements for SIDS. The US, Canada and the EU proposed amendments highlighting: the vulnerability of SIDS to natural and environmental disasters; that the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) should strengthen its capacity in SIDS regions; and that the international community should use opportunities, including during the 10-year review of the Yokohama Strategy on Natural Disaster Reduction in 2005, to consider SIDS-specific issues.

Waste management: On several subparagraphs specifying actions to be taken by international bodies and processes, the US, Canada, Japan and the Russian Federation noted that requests in the Document should not "usurp" the work of such bodies, and called for the deletion of these references. Objecting to these proposals, the G-77/China underscored that in many cases SIDS are not adequately represented in some international bodies, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency, and often lack the capacity to effectively participate in the decision-making processes of those

bodies. The US and Japan, opposed by the G-77/China, urged the deletion of a subparagraph calling on the international community to provide financial support by 2015 for the development, transfer and implementation of appropriate technologies that can be adapted by SIDS.

On the transportation of radioactive wastes, the G-77/China objected to proposals by the US and Japan to delete related text, saying this was agreed language from the BPOA and that the objective of the IM is not to renegotiate the BPOA.

On the responsibility for addressing pollution and accepting liability for rehabilitation of World War II shipwrecks, the US, Japan and the EU proposed deleting the associated subparagraph, with Japan suggesting that this issue be addressed bilaterally. The G-77/China stressed the importance of recognizing this issue at the international level.

Coastal and marine resources: The establishment of a new financial mechanism to assist SIDS in the implementation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) was opposed by the EU and the US, who stressed the need to make better use of existing mechanisms. The G-77/China emphasized the need to enhance SIDS' access to such mechanisms.

On fisheries management, the EU and the US, supported by Japan, Canada and Australia, proposed strengthening language to assist SIDS in addressing illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and problems relating to flags of convenience. Noting that SIDS lack the capacity to control IUU fishing, the G-77/China welcomed this proposal.

Japan and the Republic of Korea opposed targeting distant water fishing nations to provide support for sustainable fisheries management. The G-77/China maintained that such nations should take responsibility for their part in depleting SIDS fisheries. Noting the difficulty of assessing "equitable" resource management, the Republic of Korea and Canada suggested, and the G-77/China supported, an amendment to replace the word "equitable" with "effective."

On coastal management, Norway proposed a reference to the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) work programme on marine and coastal biological diversity, and the Russian Federation noted the need for consistency with international law in applying management approaches such as marine protected areas. The G-77/China said they would consider these proposals. On Japan's proposal to qualify that management approaches be based on scientific information, the G-77/China expressed concerns regarding SIDS' access to this information.

Freshwater resources: Delegates supported, without amendment, the introductory paragraph outlining challenges faced by SIDS on this issue. The G-77/China said they would consider Mexico's proposal to reference the 4th World Water Forum to be held in Mexico in 2006, but stressed that support for the implementation of the Joint Programme for Action for Water and Climate launched at the 3rd World Water Forum should be provided prior to 2006.

On providing assistance for appropriate technologies to meet the MDG on safe drinking water, the EU proposed text recognizing SIDS' commitment to the WSSD sanitation and integrated water resources management targets. The G-77/China stressed the need for assistance in meeting these targets. Japan noted that the mecha-



nisms and programmes specified in this section, such as the GEF and the World Water Assessment Programme, are relevant for all developing countries and not just SIDS.

Land resources: The US and the EU proposed reformulating paragraphs addressing land degradation, and trade in agricultural products, which they said should emphasize that SIDS have primary responsibility for their land resources. The G-77/China indicated the need to highlight the role of the GEF, the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) and the CBD as mechanisms to address the issue of land degradation.

The EU and the US proposed deleting a paragraph on mining and minerals, with the EU offering an alternative text on this issue. The EU proposed that SIDS, with the support of the international community, improve national capacity for: policy and legislation formulation; development of databases and assessment of mineral and aggregate resources; negotiations with transnational corporations; and evaluation of mineral sector projects.

Energy resources: On forms of energy that should be listed as commercially viable options for SIDS, Norway proposed adding geothermal, while the EU and US proposed adding biomass and hydropower to the existing list of wind, solar and ocean energy. The US said the section on energy resources focused too much on what other countries should do, and did not reflect actions to be taken by SIDS. The G-77/China underscored that this section builds on language already agreed to in Chapter VII of the JPOI (Sustainable development of SIDS). The US also introduced text calling on SIDS to identify their needs and seek regional and international assistance, as appropriate, to fulfill JPOI targets on energy supply and services, and to make a renewed effort ahead of the CSD session in 2006 to ensure real and demonstrable progress.

Tourism resources: On the role of tourism as a contributor to SIDS' economies, delegates supported a US amendment, recognizing the environmental impact of unsustainable tourism development. On the use of guidelines for monitoring the impact of tourism development, the EU suggested referencing the CBD guidelines on biodiversity and tourism development. The G-77/China said they would consider the proposed language. The EU also suggested integrating national tourism development plans with national sustainable development strategies.

Biodiversity resources: On bio-piracy and access and benefit-sharing (ABS), the EU called for language noting that measures for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources should be in accordance with the Bonn Guidelines on ABS, and ensuring that SIDS participate in the *Ad Hoc* Open-Ended Group of the CBD on an international regime on ABS.

The G-77/China noted that there was no reference to SIDS in the CBD Work Programme on Protected Areas, and requested specific text recognizing the unique situation of SIDS in relation to the CBD's implementation.

The EU and the US proposed changing language on financial and technical support for biodiversity particularly through the GEF, noting that it is just one of the mechanisms that provide technical and international assistance. The G-77/China indicated that the emphasis of the paragraph is on the simplification of the GEF's disbursement procedures, and underlined their need to have predictable, not necessarily new, sources of funding.

Transport and communication: On the challenges faced by SIDS in transport and communications, the US suggested opening the section with an acknowledgement of recent developments in communications technology that have reduced the isolation of SIDS. The G-77/China stressed the need for support to access new communication technologies. On assistance for developing and managing airports and ports, G-77/China highlighted, *inter alia*, costs involved in meeting new international security requirements. Japan suggested expanding the language to include assistance for other forms of transportation infrastructure.

On regional transportation arrangements, the US suggested operationalizing the language to state that SIDS should expand their participation in such arrangements, and requested clarification of the concept of "rationalizing" air services. The G-77/China highlighted the challenges of developing air policies based on market forces for SIDS, noting the need for intervention to ensure air services in under-served areas.

On the need for SIDS to further liberalize their telecommunications sector, the US opposed seeking cost reduction measures from international service providers, and the EU said the WSIS process was not an appropriate forum to address this issue. The G-77/China stressed the importance of such measures noting the high costs incurred by monopoly service providers.

Science and technology: On increasing support for regional organizations to promote science and technology capacity, the US and the EU recommended deleting the paragraph calling for the creation of a regional clearinghouse mechanism. The G-77/China said it will redraft the section to reflect that the aim of the clearinghouse is to identify SIDS-appropriate technology and help SIDS obtain access to these technologies. Regarding maintaining, strengthening and enhancing SIDSNet, Japan requested clarification on the sources of funding for this.

Graduation of SIDS LDCs: The EU, with the US, indicated that ECOSOC was already conducting work on this issue and called for the deletion of this entire section. The G-77/China noted that although ECOSOC is looking into LDC graduation issues, it is important to further discuss: the results of a country's graduation from LDC status; the methodology used to determine LDC graduation; and the issue of graduation itself. The G-77/China indicated that the IM needs to look at the environmental vulnerability of SIDS and come up with specific recommendations for the graduation of SIDS LDCs.

Trade: globalization and trade liberalization: The US proposed deleting this entire section, saying there was no mandate to address trade issues in this process. He said the UN was not the appropriate body to address trade-related issues, as they are being addressed by the WTO. Welcoming the inclusion and relevance of this section in the Document, the European Commission (EC) raised concerns about some elements of the text, in particular the creation of new groups under the WTO. Japan, Canada and the US also expressed concern that the text could be interpreted to imply that SIDS were calling for the recognition of a new group under the WTO. Canada also called for greater reference to the WTO work programme on small economies.

The G-77/China clarified that these references did not imply the creation of new groups under the WTO, that the language was intended to emphasize the special case of SIDS, and builds on



agreed text from paragraph 58(f) of the JPOI, which notes that the ongoing negotiations and elaboration of the WTO work programme on trade in small economies should ensure that due account is taken of SIDS issues. He stressed that the Doha Development Agreement recognizes that trade is an instrument of sustainable development, and highlighted that many trade issues are already addressed outside of the WTO. He emphasized that the BPOA+5 review, the JPOI and the Monterrey Consensus all addressed trade-related concerns of SIDS, and said the Document should build on these provisions. He also underscored the central role of the UN in addressing these concerns, noting that it is the only forum where all SIDS' voices are represented.

The EC urged more positive language to reflect the economic benefits to SIDS from trade. She also called for the insertion of paragraph 26 of the Monterrey Consensus, which addresses, *inter alia*, the need for a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system. She proposed deleting a reference that SIDS-specific concerns have not been addressed by the WTO.

The G-77/China stressed the need to consider the Monterrey Consensus as a whole, and not in isolated compartments. He said the group would consider how to address Monterrey as a package throughout the Document. Regarding a subparagraph calling for the adoption by the WTO and other relevant international organizations of an integrated framework for technical assistance and cooperation for development in SIDS, the EC said this should be deleted and replaced with paragraph 47(e) of the JPOI, which calls for enhancing the delivery of coordinated, effective and targeted trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building programmes. The EC also called for the deletion of subparagraphs dealing with: WTO provisions to facilitate a "smooth transition" for SIDS graduating from LDC status; the creation of "WTO policy spaces" to enable SIDS to effectively pursue their sustainable development goals; recognition by the WTO of the maintenance of non-reciprocal preferential trading arrangements; and references to compensatory mechanisms. The EC also proposed additional text calling for the continued examination of the relationship between trade measures in the WTO and multilateral environment agreements.

Sustainable capacity development and education for sustainable development: On the recognition of the capacity development challenges facing SIDS and the integrated approach required to address them, Canada proposed replacing the reference to Major Groups with "concerned stakeholders."

Canada and the US suggested, and the G-77/China supported, text underscoring the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in achieving educational goals. The EU and Japan suggested deleting language calling for a SIDS capacity development fund. The G-77/China explained that SIDS were not calling for the creation of a new fund, but for coordination of existing assistance.

The G-77/China supported amendments recognizing the ongoing work in the area of capacity development and education, and the importance of strengthening primary education.

Sustainable production and consumption: The US said the reference urging the creation of a new "institutional setting" to facilitate the implementation of the 10-year framework of

programmes on sustainable production and consumption, as called for in the JPOI should be removed, since the WSSD and the international expert meeting held in Marrakech did not agree to establish such settings. The G-77/China noted the need for new mechanisms to track achievements on the 10-year framework of programmes.

National enabling environments: Canada proposed broadening the title of this section to also include regional enabling environments. The US urged deletion of the reference to the MDGs and instead suggested using "internationally agreed development goals," including those in the Millennium Declaration.

Health: Canada suggested calling for enhanced health-related data collection in SIDS to facilitate decision making, and the US proposed text to emphasize the sharing of this data both nationally and internationally. The G-77/China agreed that these were important, but expressed concern that they would place an additional reporting burden on SIDS. The US also suggested the development and implementation of effective human and animal surveillance initiatives at the local level, in addition to national and regional levels.

Japan circulated text for a subparagraph on providing bilateral or multilateral technical assistance to help SIDS access the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The EU proposed text calling for commitment from SIDS, with support from the international community, to effectively control diseases such as HIV/AIDS, including through strengthened political leadership. The G-77/China noted concern that without the provision of adequate support, this would place an additional burden on SIDS.

Knowledge management and information for decision making: Canada proposed a new chapeau underscoring the importance of information management technology (IMT) for SIDS and identifying SIDS-appropriate IMT. The EU and the US proposed deleting language on the creation of a financial mechanism to implement the Digital Solidarity Agenda in SIDS. On the elaboration of a task force to elaborate a resilience index, the US expressed doubt over the usefulness of such an index, given the existing vulnerability index. The G-77/China explained that the proposed index was intended to be a management tool to assist SIDS in their decision making on building resilience.

Culture: The EU called for the deletion of text on venture capital and access to credit for small and medium cultural enterprises. The G-77/China noted that references to cultural support funds and access to venture capital are essential, since they support cultural industries that create jobs in SIDS, and that they are not looking to create new mechanisms but to reinforce existing ones.

Implementation: The EU proposed additional text emphasizing the importance of enhanced efforts on the part of SIDS and the rest of the international community in implementing Agenda 21 and achieving the goals set out in the MDGs and JPOI. The EU also recognized the importance of significantly increased and effectively used financial resources; improved trade opportunities; transfer of environmentally sound technologies on a concessional or preferential basis; education and awareness raising; capacity building and improved information for decision making and scientific capabilities; and country-driven plans for poverty reduction and sustainable development in achieving these goals.



The EU and the US objected to text calling for special status for SIDS as a group in international institutions and agreements, and for differentiated treatment by multilateral institutions. The US said that SIDS' special status would have to be negotiated within each of those institutions and agreements. The G-77/China responded that short of establishing a special category, SIDS needed to be recognized as a group with special circumstances by international institutions, in order for these institutions to take appropriate action.

Canada said the section on implementation listed too many priorities, and suggested creating clusters of priorities to provide clearer direction. The G-77/China said the main priority for SIDS is sustainable development, and that the text in this section lists tools for achieving this priority. He cautioned against the social implications of prioritizing one sector over another in SIDS.

The EU recommended deleting text calling for a review and update of project proposals tabled by SIDS at the 1999 SIDS-Donors Meeting, to secure financing for viable projects by 2004.

Japan objected to text on identifying new and innovative sources of funding to facilitate transfer of appropriate technologies, saying such a mechanism already exists within the GEF. The G-77/China pointed out that in addition to problems in accessing funds, the GEF's scope is limited to environmental projects. He stressed SIDS' desire for regional clearinghouses to enable access to appropriate technologies.

Access to financial resources: Regarding assistance to SIDS to fulfil their international sustainable development obligations, the US, supported by Japan, proposed substituting this paragraph with paragraph 4 of the Monterrey Consensus, which contains internationally-agreed language on these goals, and stresses, *inter alia*, the need for good governance, mobilizing domestic resources, attracting international financial flows, and addressing sustainable debt financing and external debt relief.

On references to meet the internationally-agreed ODA goal, the US questioned the appropriateness of the 0.7% goal as a measurement of financial assistance for SIDS. He also proposed a general reference to all forms of financial assistance, in particular partnerships. Canada and Japan proposed referencing paragraph 42 of the Monterrey Consensus, which contains language on ODA commitments for developing countries and LDCs, and encourages them to ensure ODA is used effectively to achieve development goals and targets. The G-77/China underscored the importance of the 0.7% target, noting it was mentioned in the UN Secretary-General's report on SIDS. He also said partnerships should be based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and should mobilize resources to support SIDS' priorities.

The EU, Japan and the US suggested deleting language on the establishment of specialized trust funds and investment facilities for SIDS. The EU proposed an additional paragraph underlining the role of domestic and foreign private sector investments in SIDS' as key to increasing growth and employment and reducing poverty.

Japan urged deleting language calling for multilateral financial institutions to establish special SIDS-specific debt reduction criteria. The US also opposed such references, noting that it was not appropriate for the IM to make such requests to organizations that do not fall under the ambit of the UN. The G-77/China said the

IM, as a UN meeting, could issue instructions to such institutions to take SIDS' issues into account. He said references to SIDS-specific debt reduction criteria is an important follow-up to the language in paragraph 51 of the Monterrey Consensus, which, *inter alia*, encourages the need to explore innovative mechanisms to comprehensively address debt problems of developing countries.

Monitoring and evaluation: The EU proposed that monitoring and evaluation of BPOA implementation be considered within the overall framework of the integrated and coordinated follow up of UN summits and conferences. The G-77/China noted that this mechanism has not been fully put in place. The EU requested clarification on, *inter alia*, a subparagraph relating to reducing the reporting burden of SIDS. Noting the lack of capacity for reporting, the G-77/China highlighted the potential for joint reporting, exemptions and extension of deadlines.

On enhancing international coordination within the UN system, the EU suggested replacing a reference to strengthening the SIDS Unit with language on continuing support for the Unit. On strengthening regional SIDS institutions, the EU proposed substituting a reference to the establishment of a framework for SIDS-SIDS cooperation with language reinforcing such cooperation, and proposed deleting references to strengthening or establishing dedicated regional sustainable development coordination mechanisms.

The US said it would circulate new text for the entire section, calling for a streamlined and pragmatic approach built into national strategies, and calling on UN agencies to assist by identifying best practices and ensuring implementation of a simple, uniform reporting system.

The EU further proposed a final paragraph to the Document, welcoming that the CSD has agreed in its work programme to follow up on commitments related to SIDS in 2014 and 2015, in line with the overarching 2015 target of the Millennium Declaration.

WRAP-UP: Following the conclusion of the initial exchange on the Strategy Document on Friday afternoon, delegates considered the way forward. Facilitator MacKay noted that while agreement can be reached quickly in some areas, there are many others where more discussion is required. He also proposed to convene two to three days of informal informals in New York to begin negotiations on a compilation text, based on the Strategy Document and proposals that have been tabled during the preparatory meeting. The US, supported by the EU, expressed its willingness to participate in the informal informals, with the understanding that the consultation process would not be open-ended. Japan agreed to the informal informals, with the understanding that there would be no extra-budgetary implications. Stressing that SIDS discussions should not occur during CSD-12, the US requested that the compilation text be made available only after the conclusion of the session. The G-77/China, with the Republic of Korea and Canada, called for the text to be distributed as soon as possible. It was agreed that the text would be made available during the week of 19 April.

In light of the number of outstanding issues, MacKay recommended, and delegates agreed, that informal consultations should be held on 28 and 29 August 2004, in Mauritius to facilitate preparations for the IM.



The Republic of Korea requested clarification on the status of the US non-paper, distributed during the informal consultations held on 8 April. The US noted that while they did not circulate the non-paper at the preparatory meeting, they have not “discarded” it.

AGENDA FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING:

Informal consultations were held throughout the Preparatory Meeting to discuss the draft provisional agenda for the IM. On Friday morning, a draft Provisional Agenda (E/CN.17/2004/L.2) was circulated. The G-77/China proposed, and delegates agreed, to amend the agenda, by removing a sub-item on “Special Events” under the General Debate, and by replacing agenda items on the draft Strategy and Political Documents with an agenda item on the adoption of the final outcomes of the IM.

CSD-12 PLENARY

CSD-12 Chair Brende convened a CSD plenary session on Friday afternoon, inviting the Commission to resume consideration of the preparations for the review of the implementation of the BPOA. Following a report from Facilitator MacKay on the informal consultations that took place over the previous three days, the Commission:

- adopted the *Draft Provisional Agenda for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS* (E/CN.17/2004/L.2);
- agreed to designate MacKay as the facilitator of the informal informals to be held in New York in the middle of May; and
- decided to hold informal consultations on 28 and 29 August in Mauritius prior to the IM.

IM Secretary-General Chowdhury said his office plans to work closely with the host country and consult with delegations on organizational issues concerning the IM agenda. He informed participants that previously-issued documents in this process would be reissued under the General Assembly document numbering system. On the Civil Society Forum scheduled for 27-29 August 2004, he highlighted the decision taken on NGO accreditation and noted that only eight new NGOs have been accredited thus far. He urged delegates to consider how to best allow for additional NGOs, who have not met the deadline for submission of accreditation applications, to participate in the IM. He called on the international community to contribute to the voluntary trust fund to allow for SIDS’ full and effective participation in the informal consultations prior to the IM. He praised delegates for their engagement and MacKay for his able leadership in facilitating the informal consultations, and thanked delegates for their spirit of cooperation.

Noting that the SIDS agenda has expanded since the Barbados Conference, CSD-12 Chair Brende said the IM offers the international community an opportunity to review challenges and emerging issues, and called for finding practical solutions. He informed participants that CSD-12 would consider the preparations for the IM at its high-level segment on Friday, 30 April, and closed the SIDS preparatory meeting at 5:40 pm.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING

High-level discussions on preparations for the IM took place on Friday, 30 April. Mauritius, for AOSIS, identified four main areas impeding the sustainable development of SIDS: lack of resources;

insufficient access to appropriate technology; lack of human capacity; and poor trading capacity. Regarding the preparatory meeting for the IM, he said delegates were able to identify several areas of convergence, some issues which require more work to reach consensus, and some issues which will require a political decision.

Qatar, on behalf of the G-77/China, noted that the Mauritius event is of critical importance and must result in a renewed commitment to the further implementation of the BPOA. He said there should be no renegotiation of the BPOA, and that the review must embrace new and emerging socioeconomic issues recognized as critical obstacles to the sustainable development of SIDS.

The EU said the outcome in Mauritius should focus on implementation, be action-oriented and have strong added-value. He underscored the importance of programmes and measures aimed at the increasing SIDS’ resilience by building their capacity to react and adapt to economic, social and environmental shocks and trends beyond their control. New Zealand said the IM should focus on key issues not covered in the BPOA, and deliver value through a renewed global commitment to the special case of SIDS. The US called for a short, practical and balanced outcome document, and urged a business oriented partnership approach.

In order to capitalize on the advantages of globalization, Bahamas, on behalf of the Caribbean Community, urged taking the necessary means to develop capacity and enhance the resilience of SIDS. Barbados expressed concern over the graduation of SIDS classified as LDCs, as well as the premature graduation of other SIDS from concessionary financing. She also called for the establishment of a regional coordination mechanism for the further implementation of the BPOA in the Caribbean. Guyana said the CSD and DESA must provide a firm framework to support SIDS, and stressed that the “survival of SIDS is not a business deal, but a mission for humanity.”

Dominica said that trade liberalization and trade rules have had a negative impact on their “banana regime,” and noted that the international community has not lived up to their BPOA commitments. Tuvalu said the IM should focus primarily on actions that can be implemented and can make a difference to the sustainable development of small islands. The Marshall Islands called on the international community to support and strengthen partnerships with SIDS. Palau urged the GEF and UN agencies to simplify disbursement procedures to address the special circumstances of SIDS.

Secretary-General of the IM Anwarul Chowdhury emphasized: partnerships; prioritized and focused outcomes to catalyze the implementation process; appropriate arrangements for implementation, monitoring and follow-up, preferably on an annual basis and by a dedicated body; and a greater role for intergovernmental regional bodies to follow-up on the IM outcomes.

Many speakers underlined the need for special and preferential trade treatment for SIDS, including market access, as well as the importance of the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol and the need to address the impacts of climate change on SIDS.



A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE SIDS PREPARATORY MEETING

DEVELOPING THE FULL STORY

As in all UN-related processes, particularly those addressing sustainable development, there are many paths to forge agreement. Foremost on the minds of delegates attending the SIDS preparatory meeting was the selection of avenues for concluding work and forging a new global agreement for SIDS in time for the Mauritius International Meeting later this year. This analysis traces the development of the Strategy Document, looking at major trends that emerged from the first official exchange of views between SIDS and their development partners.

NEGOTIATING TRENDS

During the preparatory meeting, discussions centered on the exchange of formal views and the tabling of new proposals by SIDS' development partners in an attempt to transform the Strategy Document into the main outcome of the International Meeting. Many observers felt that the Strategy Document reflected only "half the story" - the SIDS' priorities - and the New York preparatory meeting presented an opportunity for SIDS' development partners to ensure that the Strategy Document contains the views of the international community, and thus reflects the "full story."

Among the difficult issues that arose while writing the "full story" was reaching agreement on the outcome of the International Meeting, prioritizing the actions to be taken by SIDS and the international community, and placing action-oriented measures within the confines of existing international agreements on sustainable development.

The first set of issues to be addressed in the preparatory meeting related to defining the outcomes of the Mauritius meeting. The position of the US and several other development partners was that the Strategy Document had been developed by the SIDS alone and therefore did not reflect the viewpoints of all UN Member States. These countries, wanting possibly to avoid negotiations on a lengthy text, as in the negotiations of the BPOA in 1994, proposed that if the meeting was to be a success, a short, practical and balanced document was needed, with the US suggesting that the Strategy Document be discarded as the basis of negotiations. On several occasions, the US argued that it would be unwise to exclude the option of adopting the Strategy Document as an informal outcome, possibly annexed to the report of the International Meeting, raising the option of considering an alternative, shorter document, particularly if future negotiations led to limited progress in removing bracketed text. They also saw this as an easy option to avoid ironing out differences on a lengthy compilation text.

The adoption by the CSD of the International Meeting's agenda was seen by some as favoring the US position. Initial tabling of the draft agenda was delayed, pending the continuation of informal consultations between the CSD-12 Bureau, Secretariat, the G-77/China, AOSIS and other governments. Some development partners raised concerns over the agenda item calling for the adoption of a "draft Strategy for the Further Implementation of the BPOA," which they argued prejudged the adoption of the Strategy Document as an official outcome in Mauritius. After informal discussions, this agenda item was removed and replaced with a more

generic reference to the adoption of the outcomes of the International Meeting. While cursory, deleting this reference to the adoption of the draft Strategy leaves the options for the nature of the outcome of the International Meeting open.

Within this debate, some attention was given to the need for prioritization of issues in the Strategy Document and the need to reflect a limited number of SIDS-specific priorities. For example, instead of addressing the 14 chapters of the BPOA as well as new and emerging issues, the US suggested five priorities for consideration: water, sanitation and waste; coastal and marine resources; transport and communications; governance; and health. These issues were outlined in a US non-paper tabled during the informal informals held prior to the preparatory meeting, and formed the basis of the US proposals for an alternative text to the Strategy Document. The EU expressed willingness to work with the Strategy Document, however, they wanted the text to reflect a greater prioritization of the MDGs and an emphasis on country driven and owned strategies. The G-77/China, on the other hand, recognized the importance of addressing all 14 chapters of the BPOA, within a cross-cutting framework addressing the lack of resources and capacity, insufficient access to appropriate technology, and their inability to participate in the global economy.

The second major issue to surface during the preparatory meeting was the desire from both SIDS and their development partners to situate the Strategy Document in the context of international agreements since the Millennium Summit. Early on in the debate disagreement surfaced on the interpretation of such outcomes, their relevance to SIDS, the selective use of agreed text on good governance, official development assistance (ODA), trade and finance, and moving beyond the bargaining details previously agreed upon in the Monterrey Consensus and the World Trade Organization's Doha Development Agreement. The most contentious reference was to the Monterrey Consensus, which was raised on several occasions by donors, when seeking to delete reference to numerous commitments to provide finance, in particular ODA, and the establishment of new financial mechanisms to support SIDS' implementation efforts. For some observers the "ghosts of Monterrey" were coming back to haunt the Mauritius outcome. While the development partners were not prepared to go beyond their commitments and pledges made in Monterrey, the SIDS argued that the BPOA is the central document to address sustainable development and the Monterrey Consensus should be viewed as an additional measure to support its implementation. They therefore wanted to consider Monterrey as a package and were opposed to the selective use of certain components of the Monterrey outcomes, which would allow their development partners to avoid making new financial commitments.

The section on trade also witnessed differing interpretations over the mandate of the International Meeting and the authority of the UN system to issue directives to international financial institutions and the WTO. Resolving issues of capacity and representation in such decision-making fora, as well as access to the benefits of the global trade regime, were seen by SIDS as crucial components of the International Meeting. Their development partners, however, were keen not to prejudice ongoing negotiations in the WTO, and in particular the WTO work programme on small economies, either voicing concerns that SIDS were attempting to create a new negoti-



ating group under the WTO, or arguing that the meeting was not the appropriate venue for such discussions. In a similar vein, development partners were quick to “pounce” on language referencing the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, fearing that, as in Johannesburg, SIDS may use this principle to substantiate their calls for special and preferential treatment in the global trade regime, and arguing that the principle cannot be applied outside its environmental context. Another trend to emerge in this debate was the concern that attempts were being made to renegotiate the BPOA, which was most evident in the reluctance of some development partners to support text, previously addressed in the BPOA, relating to the transportation and disposal of radioactive wastes in and through SIDS’ territories.

The third issue that caused some debate centered on the use of language providing directives to the international community to take action in favor of SIDS’ sustainable development. The US, the EU, Japan, Canada and Australia wanted to delete all references to text stipulating actions to be taken by the international community, preferring language placing the emphasis of action on SIDS themselves and inviting the support of the international community. To some extent this view was supported by an assumption made in the UN Secretary-General’s report, which the G-77/China argued created the false impression that SIDS can take care of their sustainable development problems themselves. After numerous requests to delete text suggesting actions that must be undertaken by the international community, the G-77/China spokesperson, Mauritius, jokingly reminded the development partners that ever since Barbados, SIDS have been “inviting” the international community to the “party” with little or no reciprocal attendance, and now was the time to be more persuasive in their requests.

CHARTING A COURSE TO MAURITIUS

With only one reading of the Strategy Document completed, and numerous alternative paragraphs, amendments and deletions proposed, the first substantive dialogue between SIDS and their development partners has highlighted large differences in approaches and priorities between the two groups. However, the challenge ahead is not insurmountable. It is possible that the next round of informal informals will develop creative solutions allowing SIDS and their development partners to move beyond the confines of Monterrey and the WTO negotiations, and prioritize new and emerging challenges. The responsibility for charting this course lies foremost in the hands of New Zealand’s Ambassador to the UN, Don MacKay, and the Secretary-General of the International meeting, Anwarul Chowdhury.

Amb. MacKay was requested by the CSD-12 Bureau to facilitate informal informals prior to the preparatory meeting, as well as the consultations leading up to the International Meeting. This was in recognition of MacKay’s ability to facilitate negotiations that allowed for a positive exchange of views. With MacKay’s facilitation ability, as well as New Zealand’s donor role in the Pacific and its participation in regional programmes and deliberations through the Pacific Islands Forum, SIDS have an able Chair familiar with the challenges and problems facing their development.

In addition to MacKay, the role of the International Meeting’s Secretary-General, who is also the UN High Representative for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing

Countries and SIDS, is seen by some as the “trump card” that could turn Mauritius into a highpoint for SIDS. Chowdhury, whose office is just two years old, has already overseen the conclusion of similar international meetings achieving important milestones for the cause of vulnerable countries. He brings to the Mauritius process considerable experience forging partnerships between vulnerable groups and their development partners, as witnessed in his role as Coordinator of the LDCs at the Brussels LDC Conference in 2001 and as Secretary-General of the Almaty Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries in 2003. The combination of Chowdhury’s advocacy role with that of the SIDS Unit’s programmatic work within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has led to the development of a UN system-wide approach to SIDS-related issues in the Mauritius process.

SMALL ISLANDS: BIG STAKES

Many core issues for both SIDS and their development partners were not resolved in New York, clearly highlighting a difference in approach in operationalizing the General Assembly’s mandate to renew political commitment to the special case of SIDS.

However, at the conclusion of the preparatory meeting several trends were evident: there was a positive and constructive dialogue between SIDS and their development partners; there is still a monumental amount of negotiating left to transform the compilation text into an action-oriented Strategy, if there is to be one at all; and resolving issues regarding trade, finance and directives to the international community and organizations will require creative drafting solutions that meet the needs of both SIDS and their development partners. Nevertheless, the three-day preparatory meeting has laid a foundation for fulfilling the mandate set out by the General Assembly, and mapping out many constructive inroads for renewing international political support for SIDS.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING

WORKSHOP ON BANKING AND FINANCE IN SMALL STATES: ISSUES AND POLICIES: This workshop, scheduled to take place from 3-14 May 2004, in Valletta, Malta, aims to disseminate knowledge and provide training on banking and finance, covering a variety of themes with a focus on small States. For more information, contact: the Director, Islands and Small States Institute, Foundation for International Studies, UN; tel: +35-6-2124-8218; fax: +35-6-2123-0551; e-mail: islands@um.edu.mt; Internet: http://home.um.edu.mt/islands/brochure_21jan04_comsec.doc

UNFF-4: The fourth session of the UN Forum for Forests, scheduled to take place from 3-14 May 2004, in Geneva, Switzerland, will organize a special event on the role of forests in SIDS. For more information, contact: Elisabeth Barsk-Rundquist, UNFF Secretariat; tel: +1-212-963-3262; fax: +1-917-367-3186; e-mail: barsk-rundquist@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests>

WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION PREPCOM 1: This meeting will take place from 6-7 May 2004, in Geneva, Switzerland, to prepare for the 10-year review of disaster reduction activities since the first World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, which was held in Yokohama, Japan, in 1994. The review process will culminate in the Second World Conference



on Disaster Reduction to be held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, from 18-22 January 2005. For more information, contact: UN/ISDR; tel: +41-22-917-2103; fax: +41-22-917-0563; e-mail: isdr@un.org; Internet: <http://www.unisdr.org>

ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT PRACTICE WORKSHOP - MATCHING THEMES TO RESOURCES: This workshop will be held from 10-14 May 2004, in Bangkok, Thailand. The objectives of this workshop are to identify and address regional/subregional energy and environment needs, and determine how GEF resources can be used as a catalyst for mobilizing resources at the national level for implementing strategies. For more information, contact: Bethany Donithorn, UNDP; tel: +1-212-906-6197; e-mail:

bethany.donithorn@undp.org; Internet: <http://whoiswho.sidsnet.org/index.cfm?module=Events&page=Event&EventID=33>

SIDS INFORMAL INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: Informal informal consultations in preparation for the SIDS International Meeting are scheduled to take place from 17-19 May 2004, in New York. For more information, contact: Diane Quarless, UNDSO, SIDS Unit; tel: +1-212-963-4135; fax: +1-917-367-3391; e-mail: Mauritius2004@sidsnet.org; Internet: <http://www.sidsnet.org/>

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION MEETINGS: Meetings of the WTO's various councils, committees and negotiating bodies, relevant to the environment and development sectors, are scheduled to take place in 2004 in Geneva, Switzerland. The General Council is to reconvene on 17-18 May, 27 and 29 July, 20-21 October, and 13, 14 and 16 December. The Committee on Trade and Environment will convene from 6-7 July, and from 12-13 October. The Committee on Trade and Development is scheduled for 11 May, 28-29 September, and 16 November. For more information, contact: WTO Secretariat; tel: +41-22-739-5111; fax: +41-22-731-4206; e-mail: enquiries@wto.org; Internet: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/meets.pdf

GEF NGO CONSULTATION AND COUNCIL MEETING: The GEF NGO consultation will take place on 18 May 2004, followed by the GEF Council Meeting, which will convene from 19-21 May. Both meetings will be held in Washington, D.C. For more information, contact: the GEF Secretariat; tel: +1-202-473-0508; fax: +1-202-522-3240; e-mail: secretariat@TheGEF.org; Internet: <http://gefweb.org/>

SECOND CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM AND EXHIBITION (CEF-2): This forum will take place from 31 May to 4 June 2004, in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad. The Forum aims to convene key Caribbean and international stakeholders to discuss issues and share experiences related to environment and development. The meeting will also provide a regional forum for presenting and discussing issues related to the IM. For more information, contact: CEF-2, Conference Secretariat; tel: +758-452-2501; fax: +758-453-2721; e-mail: cef2@cehi.org.lc; Internet: <http://www.cehi.org.lc/cef2/index.htm>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGIES: This conference will take place from 1-4 June 2004, in Bonn, Germany. The conference is expected to add to the momentum generated by the coalition of like-minded countries for the promotion of renewable energy formed at the WSSD (known as the Johannesburg Renewable Energy Coalition). Themes to be

considered include financing, market development, formation of enabling political framework conditions, and capacity building. For more information, contact: Renewables 2004 Secretariat; tel: +49-6196-794404; fax: +49-6196-794405; e-mail: info@renewables2004.de; Internet: <http://www.renewables2004.de/>

UNCTAD XI: UNCTAD XI is scheduled to take place from 13-18 June 2004, in São Paulo, Brazil. This year's theme is "Enhancing coherence between national development strategies and global economic processes towards economic growth and development, particularly of developing countries." For more information, contact: UNCTAD; tel: +41-22-907-1234; fax: +41-22-907-0043; e-mail: info@unctad.org; Internet: <http://www.unctad.org/>

20TH SESSIONS OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES TO THE UNFCCC: The 20th sessions of the subsidiary bodies to the UNFCCC will take place from 16-25 June 2004, in Bonn, Germany, to continue discussions on the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. For more information, contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; Internet: <http://unfccc.int/sessions/sb20/index.html>

FOURTH SUMMIT OF AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC (ACP) HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT: This Summit will be held from 21-24 June 2004, in Maputo, Mozambique. For more information, contact: ACP Secretariat; tel: +32-2-743-0600; fax: +32-2-735-5573; e-mail: info@acp.int; Internet: <http://www.acpsec.org/>

TENTH INTERNATIONAL CORAL REEF SYMPOSIUM (ICRS): This meeting will take place from 28 June to 2 July 2004, in Okinawa, Japan, to address the stability and degradation of coral reef ecosystems. For more information, contact: Plando Japan Inc.; tel: +81-3-5470-4401; fax: +81-3-5470-4410; e-mail: icrs@plando.co.jp; Internet: <http://www.plando.co.jp/icrs2004/>

25TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY: This meeting is tentatively scheduled for 4-8 July 2004, in Grenada. For more information, contact: CARICOM Secretariat; tel: +592-226-9280; fax: +592-226-7816; e-mail: carisec1@caricom.org; Internet: <http://www.caricom.org/>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE TEN-YEAR REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BARBADOS PROGRAMME OF ACTION: The International Meeting, which is tentatively scheduled to take place from 30 August to 3 September 2004, in Port Louis, Mauritius, will undertake a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the BPOA. It will include a high-level segment and it will be preceded by two days of informal consultations. For more information, contact: Diane Quarless, UNDSO, SIDS Unit; tel: +1-212-963-4135; fax: +1-917-367-3391; e-mail: Mauritius2004@sidsnet.org; Internet: <http://www.sidsnet.org/>