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Developing a CBTF Capacity Building Programme on Trade, Environment and Sustainable Development for the Caribbean Region

Introduction

The following elements of a CBTF capacity building programme for the Caribbean Region have been drawn up by the UNEP and UNCTAD secretariats, based on priorities expressed by Caribbean countries in a series of intergovernmental and technical cooperation meetings of the two institutions over the last few years. It also takes into account the expertise of the two institutions, as well as practical considerations, and builds on their experience in providing capacity building to SIDS in general and the Caribbean region in particular.

It also takes account of capacity building needs identified in:

- the AOSIS Workshop on Trade, Sustainable Development and Small Island States held in Jamaica in December 2001;
- the WTO Regional Seminar on Trade and Environment held in St. Lucia, in January 2002;
- presentations and discussions at the UNEP Meeting on Capacity Building on Environment, Trade and Sustainable Development held in Mexico City, in March 2003;
- responses by some Caribbean countries to a questionnaire distributed at the latter meeting;
- an ongoing project in Cuba and the Dominican Republic implemented by UNCTAD;
- bilateral discussions with some of these countries that have taken place over the past two years.

This outline will be discussed at the CBTF Workshop on Trade, Environment and Sustainable Development that will take place in Kingston, Jamaica on 27-28 November. The aim is to secure an endorsement for a draft programme from the countries present and commitments to future cooperation from regional organisations present. UNEP and UNCTAD will then seek the financial resources necessary to undertake a three-year programme in the region.

Any capacity building programme on trade, environment and sustainable development for this region should recognise the special situation of SIDS and address their particular difficulties. Given the size of the countries and their respective governments, the active engagement of regional organisations (CARICOM, OECS, ECLAC, Caribbean Development Bank, IADB, UNEP-ROLAC) In this programme will be critical to its success. It will also be necessary to promote networking and information exchange at national and regional levels on trade, environment and sustainable development.

Modalities

The programme will combine the following elements:

- *Multistakeholder country projects* to enhance in-country capacity to develop mutually supportive trade, environment and development policies
- *Thematic research* on key issues and sectors for the region, to inform the design of mutually supportive policies
- *Training* to enhance countries' capacity for policy analysis and design
- *Policy dialogues* to facilitate exchange of information and collaboration among experts, practitioners and negotiators at national, regional and international levels
- *Networking and information exchange* to provide technical and operational support at the national and regional levels, and to widely disseminate training materials and the results of CBTF activities

A well-sequenced set of capacity-building activities will be developed, based on a comprehensive needs assessment (including confirmation that capacity building activities can be effectively delivered and commitment of beneficiary countries to effectively support the programme) and ongoing consultation with stakeholders and other capacity building providers. Activities will be designed to complement ongoing capacity building activities in the region, and will be designed to be self-sustaining in the long-run.

Priority Capacity Building Needs

The following issues have been identified in the prior events and discussions listed above. The list of issues should be updated in the CBTF workshop in Kingston, and then distilled into a realistic and achievable draft programme. This process should be completed in the afternoon session of the second day, which will be initiated based on a revised version of this paper. It is understood that the list of potential issues identified below may not be complete. More importantly, constructing an effective and achievable programme will require a narrower focus than the full list.

Sustainability/integrated assessment

- Support efforts to undertake sustainability/integrated assessments at the national level to determine the economic, environmental, social and developmental effects of trade and trade liberalization.
- Identify and apply appropriate tools and techniques for economic valuation of tradeable environmental resources and services.

Environmental Goods and Services (EGS)

- Review environmental services which are not technology driven but which are product driven, and which are potential exports from the Caribbean and SIDSs generally.
- Support national consultations and coordination between Government ministries, suppliers of EGS and other stakeholders to identify the implications of liberalization in environmental services and strengthen coherence between

liberalization and national sustainable development objectives (e.g. by ensuring appropriate legal frameworks)

- Identify environmental goods and services, including environmentally preferable products, of export interest to Caribbean countries

Environmentally preferable products (EPPs)

- Support for organic farming and exports of organic products, with special attention to small and medium-sized producer.
- Develop tools and policy recommendations to ensure that local and indigenous communities benefit from Fair Trade programmes and labels presently in existence, so as to reward craft production and Traditional Knowledge.
- Develop regional ventures so that quality, volumes and regular supply of these products can be maintained for buyers in international markets.

Environmental requirements, market access and competitiveness

- Enhance the capacity of local industry to deliver services and products which meet international environmental standards with particular focus on agriculture; forestry; fisheries, tourism and small-scale manufacturing (includes awareness raising and dissemination of information on standards and requirements).
- Enhance teaching, training and research capacity on testing, verification and certification of standards.
- Assistance to SMEs on market research, meeting environmental standards and management systems (EMS), and product development.

MEA-WTO interactions

- Strengthen the capacity at the national and regional levels to analyze and respond to potential conflicts between trade and environmental policies both at the national level and with regard to MEAs and WTO agreements.

Tourism

- Integrated assessments of socio-economic and environmental effects of increased trade liberalization on the tourism sector, arising from provisions under the FTAA, the WTO and other multilateral agreements
- Development of comprehensive Green Tourism and Eco-tourism policies

Fisheries

- Integrated assessments of socio-economic and environmental effects of increased trade liberalization on the fisheries sector, arising from provisions under the FTAA, the WTO and other multilateral agreements

General Needs

- Strengthening cooperation at national, subregional and regional levels, and between regional institutions.

- Development of train-the-trainers programmes to build local expertise and capacity in the respective sectors of trade, environment and sustainable development.
- Identification, design and application of appropriate economic instruments (taking into account the political, social and economic situation) to encourage the sustainable environmental practices, especially at the community level
- Support the establishment and/or strengthening of regional mechanisms and/or networks to promote the exchange of knowledge and actions on sustainability/integrated assessment and economic cooperation relating to trade and environment issues generally.
- Improve the negotiating capacity of Caribbean countries on trade and environment issues in the WTO, regional trade agreements and MEAs, in particular to take into account special situation of SIDS.
- Enhancement of existing mechanisms to facilitate the active participation of civil society in policy development and decision-making.

Structure and staffing for a 3-year programme

This purely indicative outline of a programme of capacity building activities for the Caribbean region is provided to structure discussions in the CBTF workshop on 27-28 November. It includes the usual elements of CBTF activities which can be adapted to the specific needs of the region. It also foresees the creation of a new post of Caribbean CBTF coordinator, whose location in the region will depend on the collaboration forged with other organizations based there.

5 country projects on issues to be selected by countries in the region

4 thematic research projects on EPPs relating to either agriculture and tourism, EGS relating to products of export interest to the Caribbean, or trade-related fisheries issues

3 training workshops (not covering all countries necessarily, 20 beneficiaries, local trainers, UNEP or UNCTAD staff)

3 full regional workshops, one in each year (36 funded participants)

Establishing and servicing a database and network of collaborating institutions for the Caribbean Region, located there, supported by UNEP and UNCTAD in Geneva and Mexico City, including production and dissemination of a quarterly newsletter

One Caribbean CBTF coordinator based in the region, for 3 years

50% CBTF officer to be located in UNCTAD, for 3 years

Effective implementation of this programme requires close collaboration with relevant regional organisations such as CARICOM, OECS, RNM, IADB, Caribbean Development Bank, ECLAC and possibly also UNDP and the World Bank. This potential will be investigated during the CBTF workshop on 27-28 November. The financial resources to fund these activities still have to be secured.