



Cartagena Declaration

XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

We, the participating Ministers and Delegation Leaders in the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean gathered in Cartagena, Colombia, from 28th to 31st of March 2016:

Reaffirming that to achieve sustainable development and face the challenges of implementing the 2030 Agenda, each country has different approaches, outlooks, models and tools, based on their national circumstances and priorities without prejudice of which innovative, transforming views, coordinated actions and consistent cooperation initiatives for countries and Latin America and the Caribbean, depending on their national circumstances and priorities;

Taking into account that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development requires the decisive and effective support of developed countries to developing countries;

Highlighting the work done by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on the indicators of the Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals, which were approved by the Statistics Commission in the framework of the United Nations;

Recognising that there are different approaches, views, models and tools, developed by United Nations Member States with the purpose of achieving sustainable development and, in this regard, takes notes of the proposal of Good Living in balance and harmony of Mother Nature, accepted by some countries, as a holistic, comprehensive approach of sustainable development that can guide humanity to live in harmony with nature and lead the efforts to restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystems and with reference to decision UNEP/E.A.1/L14 of UNEA1;

Noting that the UN General Assembly resolution 69/15 of 14 November 2014, entitled SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, including inter alia small island developing States remain a special case for sustainable development, in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities, and that they remain constrained in meeting their goals in all three dimensions of sustainable development, and recognising the ownership and leadership of small island developing States in overcoming some of these challenges, while stressing that, in the absence of international cooperation, achieving success will remain difficult;

Acknowledging that doubling efforts is required for the development of public policies aiming to preserve and use, in an inclusive, equitable and sustainable manner, the biodiversity and the ecosystem functions that abound in the region; in the framework of comprehensive development of the peoples and eradication of poverty always respecting the sovereignty of the countries with regard to their natural resources, as established by Principle 2 of the Rio Declaration of 1992; and fostering the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, the promotion of social inclusion and equality;

Recalling the need to move forward with the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and their relevant role in accomplishing sustainable development in our countries;

Welcoming the undertaking of the XIII Meeting of the Conference of the Parties on Biological Diversity in Mexico, to be held in Cancun from 4th to 17th December 2016 and whose core topic is "Mainstreaming Biodiversity for Well-being" (Mexico), and the III Meeting of the Regional Agreement Negotiation Committee on the Information Access, Public Participation and Access to Justice on Environmental Affairs in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in Uruguay (5th – 8th April 2016); the holding in Ecuador of the III Conference on Sustainable Urban Housing and Development –Habitat III (17th – 20th October 2016);

Acknowledging the importance of resolutions approved by the United Nations Environment Assembly during its first period of sessions that took place in June 2014; and its essential role on the promotion of full integration, and coherent and balanced application of the environmental dimension of sustainable development and its potential to identify opportunities and propose solutions to the United Nations Environmental Programme;

Bearing in mind that between 23rd and 27th May 2016, the second Meeting of the United Nations Environmental Programme – UNEP, will be held in Nairobi, Kenya, with the main subject being “Complying with the Environmental Dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”;

Considering the discussions held among the Heads of State and Government during the IX Summit of Latin America and the Caribbean States Community, held in Quito, Ecuador on 27th January 2016, as well as the First Ministers of Environment Meeting of the ECLAC held in that very city in January 2012;

Highlighting the importance of the undertaking of the first Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting, Ministers of Environment, and other high level national authorities related to climate change on the Member States of ECLAC, as well as the briefing of the Common Elements document of the ECLAC Member Countries on COP21;

Embracing the adoption - last September in New York - of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the General Assembly of the United Nations;

Bearing in mind the adoption of the Paris Agreement and its enabling decisions, within the framework of the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in December 2015, which will be applicable to the countries that become a Party,

Agree to:

- 1. Promote** the healthy functioning of ecosystems as a global, crosscutting and comprehensive condition, key for a better and fairer future for all, fundamental to achieve sustainable development and the eradication of poverty;
- 2. Commit** to the implementation and strengthening of environmental education programmes to transform collective and individual values and behaviours which promote sustainable consumption and production patterns and the comprehensive protection of the environment, promoting alliances and exchanges between our countries and other actors;
- 3. Reaffirm** our commitment to complying with that stated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the aim of eradicating poverty, protecting the environment and fostering inclusive, social and economic development in harmony with nature. In turn, make a call to take coordinated and accelerated action at all levels to implement the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda, recognising the profound connections and the interdependent relationship that it has with the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development, in a balanced comprehensive manner, pursuant to our countries' policies and circumstances;
- 4. Highlight** our commitment to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions, economic, social and environmental, in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development;
- 5. Welcome** the fact that the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development is of a universal nature, in accordance with the sustainable development outlooks of our countries, their legal frameworks and development policies and their capabilities, in line with the principle of 'leave no one behind';

6. **Acknowledge** that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is universal, equally applicable to all, through a revitalised world alliance of collaboration, with the spirit of global solidarity, particularly with the poorest and with those under vulnerable situation, and bringing together governments, private sector, civil society, social movements, the United Nations System and other agencies, and mobilising all resources available;
7. **Request** from the regional bodies of the United Nations their coordination and cooperation with the States regarding their national processes for defining the national indicators on each of the countries that make up our region, taking into account the existing asymmetries amongst the States, and the circumstances of each country;
8. **Also request** support and cooperation of those regional bodies in close coordination with States for the strengthening of their technical and methodological capacities of our countries by the regional bodies of the United Nations in a coordinated manner, with the process that will be carried out at the Statistical Conference of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) on the development of the regional indicators;
9. **Promote** the strengthening of UNEP at regional level, and recommend that this programme expands its cooperation with States and stimulates alliances which could include the private sector and other stakeholders to contribute to efforts to mobilise resources with the objective of implementing the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to meet our needs, priorities and realities in an effective manner;
10. **Acknowledge** the great challenges that the implementation imposes on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically, because the means of implementation approved do not respond to the challenges of the other 16 objectives, the goals and indicators and therefore recommend that UNEP strengthen its efforts to mobilise the means needed to implement this ambitious global development framework, based upon the spirit of solidarity and centred around the needs of the most poor and vulnerable, with the collaboration of all countries, all stakeholders and all people;

- 11. Invite** countries to work on the identification of synergies and connections between the objectives and goals, in order to implement the comprehensive approach of the 2030 Agenda;
- 12. Express** our support to the Mexican Government as incoming Chair and venue of the COP13 to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which is supported and endorsed by Latin American and Caribbean countries, especially to foster actions aimed at the integration, preservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the plans, programmes and policies of the different sectors, with an emphasis in key sectors such as Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Tourism;
- 13. Call** for support for the SIDS resolution that will be considered by UNEA 2;
- 14. Reiterate** that the Latin American and Caribbean region is highly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change due to, among other reasons, its biodiversity wealth, high endemism and the highly vulnerable populations that inhabit their islands and coasts, high mountain ecosystems and areas affected by drought, among others; therefore, it will be fundamental to continue ensuring broad and inclusive recognition of this vulnerability in the various multilateral forums;
- 15. Also reiterate** that efforts to reduce the region's greenhouse gas emissions and climate change vulnerability require urgent responses by all our countries and the international community, ensuring the provision of adequate, new and additional financial resources, technology transfer and capacity building by developed countries so that our adaptation and mitigation needs can be addressed, in accordance with the principle of common, but differentiated responsibilities;
- 16. Highlight** that the Paris Agreement and its enabling decisions, within the framework of the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in December 2015, which will be applicable to the countries that become a Party, acknowledges that both mitigation and adaptation require the attention and efforts of all, making it essential to fulfil the commitments made in the period prior to, and after 2020, including the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC), according to national capacities, the provision of means of implementation required by our countries for the implementation thereof;
- 17. Recognise** that the environmentally sound management of chemical substances and products and waste is essential for the protection of human health and the

environment, and thus we urge the region to adopt measures to minimise the adverse impact and effects from the production and use of chemical substances and products and waste generation, especially in the most vulnerable populations;

- 18. Recognise as well** that the environmentally sound management of chemical substances and products and waste is essential for the protection of human health and the environment, and therefore we reiterate the importance of promoting cooperation and coordination between the three conventions addressing the management of chemicals and hazardous wastes (Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm) and the implementation of 2030 Agenda, strengthening actions aimed at the early implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, as well as its ratification, with a view to the prompt entry into force of this instrument;
- 19. Reaffirm** the region's will to actively participate in the inter-sessional meetings to discuss the future of the Strategic Approach to Integrated Chemicals Management (SAICM) after 2020, and also participate in the operationalisation of the Special Programme for institutional strengthening nationwide, to thus fulfil the international chemicals agenda;
- 20. Reiterate** the commitment of the Latin America and Caribbean region to support the implementation of the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) and maintain a leadership role in its promotion. Additionally, encourage links and synergies with Sustainable Development Goal 12 of the 2030 Agenda;
- 21. Invite** countries wishing to do so, to implement the Good Living vision in harmony with Mother Nature, a common expression in some countries and regions, in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, in accordance with their national circumstances and priorities, and to ask the countries at the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to request that the UNEP fully implement Resolution 10 of the UNEA in Nairobi, in 2014;
- 22. Express thanks for and warmly welcome** the presence of representatives of the ministries of health in this Forum, given the close relationship between the environment and health, which brings to light the need for coordinated work and actions to address these issues holistically;
- 23. Highlight** our commitment to take measures for the sustainable protection, conservation and utilisation of the environment, biodiversity and ecosystem

services, and creation of capacity in developing countries, taking into account the conceptual framework of the Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES);

24. Urge countries and UNEP to continue implementing Montevideo Programme IV for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law, addressing the conclusions and recommendations of the Meeting of Senior Government Officials Expert in Environmental Law, held in Montevideo in September 2015;

25. Strengthen regional cooperation on environmental law, facilitating capacity building in order to help achieve results in the thematic areas prioritised by the Forum;

26. Reiterate the region's commitment to the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and the protection of biodiversity and the marine environment, as demonstrated by the recent measures of protection of the oceans such as by the creation of marine sanctuaries and marine protected areas and as expressed by the Special Declaration on Oceans and Seas adopted by the Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean, who met in Quito, Ecuador, as part of the IV Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) on 27th January 2016;

27. Reaffirm that it is essential to promote the complete implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, in line with the reality and national legislation, for which it becomes fundamental the strengthening of international cooperation and the creation of capacity in the countries of the region;

28. Express our commitment to use regional mechanisms created by the Forum of Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean for cooperation between our countries and achieve successful exchanges of experiences, with tangible and replicable impacts, as well as use the occasion of the meetings of the Forum to promote a dialogue which drives forward actions inspired by those experiences which permits the achievement of our environmental and sustainable development aims;

29. Request the Chairman of the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to present this Declaration on behalf of the region's countries, at the Second Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the UNEP, and other relevant forums and environmental processes;



30. Express profound thanks to the Government of Colombia for the generosity and solidarity it has shown in holding the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Cartagena, Colombia, from 28th to 31st March 2016.