

## **Decision of the XIX Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (14/03/2014)**

### **Environmental Education for Sustainable Development**

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**Recognizing** the role of environmental education in transforming values, behaviours and visions towards peace-oriented development, social inclusion, respect for interculturalism, gender equity, youth participation, sustainable consumption and production, decent work, improvement of the quality of life and the protection of the environment;

**Considering** the need to further expand and strengthen the operational mechanisms of the UNEP Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean (ETN/LAC), through the active participation of all countries in the region and the strengthening of the education, communication and environmental public participation units of the Ministries of the Environment of the region;

**Taking into account** the results of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) 2004-2014, the definitions for the post-2014 ESD Agenda and the ESD provisions of the outcome document adopted at the Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20, held 20 to 22 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), "The Future We Want";

**Noting** the positive developments of UNEP's Global Universities Partnership on Environment for Sustainability (GUPES) in Latin America thanks to the joint work with ARIUSA (Alliance of Ibero-American Networks of Universities for Sustainability and the Environment) and its national partners and networks and, recognizing the need to expand GUPES to the English-speaking Caribbean countries, Suriname and Haiti through the initiative on Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in the Caribbean Universities (MESCA);

**Taking into account** that the youth has recognized its commitment and obligation to conserve and care for the Earth, and have expressed its concern about current complex environmental challenges, and have also stressed the urgent interest in improving regional integration mechanisms to facilitate youth participation on sustainability issues;<sup>1</sup>

**Considering** that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean are implementing mechanisms for South-South cooperation mechanisms through bilateral, multilateral and through intergovernmental regional

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<sup>1</sup> Youth Declaration, Regional Tunza meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean (21 November 2013, Panama City, Panama)

and subregional organizations arrangements in areas where education, communication and participation can reinforce the transfer of environmental knowledge, dialogue among fields of knowledge, best practices and technical resources, among others;

**Considering** the contributions and long-standing work of the Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean on the development of the Latin American Environmental Thinking, as well as the renewed efforts of the Network to strengthen environmental education in the context of most recent international and regional processes towards environmental sustainability in the Latin America and the Caribbean region.

## **DECIDE**

**1. Request that UNEP**, through the Environmental Education Network for Latin America and the Caribbean (ETN –LAC) and their focal points at the environmental authorities, coordinates the development of the ETN –LAC work plan with the participation of its focal points, for the period 2014-2016, including the identification of responsible people, actions, timeline, indicators, necessary financial resources, as well as synergies with other programmes and regional and subregional initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean on environmental education. This Plan should be finalised at the latest within six months and it will include the following guidelines and actions:

- a) promote environmental education through online and face-to-face and other innovative methods and technologies in different languages (e.g. Spanish, English, French, Portuguese and other languages) and, in particular, the organization of an online or partly face-to-face and onlinecourse on environmental education for sustainability during the first half of 2015<sup>2</sup>, targeting government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations, community leaders, workers organizations, indigenous people and special groups, youth and women, amongst other, in partnership with other organizations, universities and other stakeholders.
- b) continue participating and assisting technically and financially the regional Environmental Education Congresses organized by Latin America and the Caribbean countries, including the 7th

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<sup>2</sup>Taking into account the outcomes of the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (10 to 12 November 2014, Aichi-Nagoya, Japan)

Ibero-American Congress on Environmental Education organized by the Ministry of Environment of Peru to be held in September 2014, as well as congresses, seminars or similar events in the English Caribbean countries, Suriname and Haiti.

- c) continue promoting the participation of universities of the region in UNEP's Global University Partnership on Environment for Sustainability (GUPES), strengthening the relationship with ARIUSA, seeking new partners, from the perspective of the priorities and needs of the region, focusing on the three pillars of GUPES, namely, education, training and networking and, to promote initiatives such as Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in the Caribbean Universities (MESCA). And, in particular, to develop an assessment on mainstreaming environment in universities (on four areas that include curriculum, institutional management, extension and research), based both on common indicators, as well as country-differentiated indicators.
- d) promote the development of training programmes and tools for judges and prosecutors in matters of environmental law and sustainable development principles.

**2. Promote and strengthen** youth and children organizations dedicated to the environment in each of the countries in the region and work for the consolidation of a youth and children Network for Sustainability in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the support of the Environmental Training Network.

**3. Facilitate** the exchange of experiences and South-South cooperation among Latin American and Caribbean countries in the areas of education, environmental communication and public participation, including intercultural exchanges and dialogue among fields of knowledge. In this regard, UNEP is requested to identify and implement, together with ETN focal points, two or three South-South cooperation actions over the next two years.

**4. Ratify** the importance of the payment of the annual voluntary contribution to the ETN trust fund, by all countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

**5. Entrust** ETN focal points, with the support of UNEP as the Forum Secretariat, with the development of a strategy proposal for the identification and mobilization of resources and potential partnerships, as well as a review of the current scale of contributions

of the ETN<sup>3</sup> for consideration at the 20th Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

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<sup>3</sup> This scale was adopted at the Sixth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Brasilia, Brazil, 27 to 31 March 1989