**Final Report
Preparatory Meeting of High-Level Experts**

**Forum of Ministers of Environment of**

**Latin America and the Caribbean**

### Item 1 of the agenda: Opening of the meeting

1. The meeting began with an opening ceremony on 28th Monday March 2016 at 8:40 am with the participation of the Colombia Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Mr. Gabriel Vallejo. The Secretariat gave the podium to Mr. Enrique Lendo on behalf of Mexico's Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) and the presidency of the XIX Meeting of the Forum. Mexico thanked Colombia for its hospitality and said it was an honour to have held the Chairmanship of the XIX Forum of Ministers of Environment. The representative from Mexico welcomed Mr. Leo Heileman as the new UNEP Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, wishing him every success in his role. He also highlighted that the Forum held in Los Cabos in March 2014 promoted four main themes: climate change, sustainable development, biodiversity and the management of chemicals and waste. He noted that two important meetings took place during 2015 and these set the course for the global agenda; one was the United Nations General Assembly, which saw the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and the other was COP21 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), where the Paris Agreement was adopted. Additionally, he stated that 2016 would hail important meetings for the global environmental agenda; one will be UNEA-2 in May, where the aim will be for the region to adopt shared positions; and the other will be COP13 to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which Mexico will host in Cancun in December. Similarly, Mexico thanked each country for their support during its chairmanship of the Forum, anticipating an excellent meeting in the city of Cartagena de Indias, thus handing over the chairmanship to Colombia.

2. Mr. Gabriel Vallejo López, Colombia's Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, welcomed those in attendance and applauded Mexico's Chairmanship of the XIX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean. He expressed his agreement regarding the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and UNEA-2. He also stressed that the Forum will focus on key issues such as the forum's governance, environmental capacity building and education, and the sustainable management of chemicals in the context of sustainable production and consumption. He said that the region's leadership in international forums will be strengthened through greater unity and the generation of technical information on environmental issues, for which the Forum has been and will be a key instrument.

3. In his intervention, UNEP’s Regional Director announced the death of Mr. Mostafa Tolba, a former Executive Director of the UNEP from 1975 to 1992, and those attending the meeting observed a minute of silence in his memory. He stressed the importance of international events that were held during 2015, such as the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (in Addis Ababa), in addition to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement, all of which established the conditions for specific actions; furthermore, he also noted that the Forum’s discussions will contribute to the beginning of the implementation phase. He also shared his views regarding the main challenges faced by the region on issues of environmental sustainability and sustainable development, referring to UNEP sub-programmes and initiatives that add value to these regional agendas. In this regard, he mentioned that the UNEP has established a community of practice to act as a platform for information sharing and participation among member countries, and that the UNEP is ready to support and facilitate national and regional initiatives. He stressed that the UNEP, as Secretariat of the Forum, is eager to continue supporting the region’s Forum of Ministers of Environment.

### Item 2 of the agenda: Organisation of the work

#### ***2.1. Adoption of the rules of procedure of the meeting***

4. A proposal was made to the Experts, *mutatis mutandis*, regarding the UNEP Rules of Procedures of the United Nations Environment Assembly, in order to govern the meeting's procedures. The proposal was approved in full.

#### ***2.2. Election of the Bureau***

5. It was proposed to the Preparatory Meeting of Experts that, according to the practice established at previous meetings of the Forum, the Board of Directors is composed of a Chairman, seven Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur, taking into account the geographical representation and rotation criteria established by the ministerial meetings. The countries decided to choose the Vice-Chairs during the lunch break. At that time the Board was elected as follows:

Chair: Colombia

Vice-chairs: El Salvador

Costa Rica

Ecuador

Saint Lucia

Dominican Republic

Argentina

Uruguay

Rapporteur: Peru

#### ***2.3. Adoption of the meeting agenda and programme of sessions***

6. Under this point the Provisional Agenda and the Provisional Annotated Agenda, as well as the meeting programme proposed by the Secretariat, were presented for consideration by the Experts. After some clarification to questions submitted by the delegates, they were adopted without any modification.

**Item 3 of the agenda: Brief summary of the results of the second Open-Ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the UNEP (15th - 19th February 2016, Nairobi, Kenya).**

7. In order to address this item, the experts' meeting referred to the Chair’s Summary of the Second Meeting of the Open Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (OECPR-2) and the compilation of resolutions, dated 22nd February 2016 (UNEP/OECPR.2/10 document).

8. The Cuban Ambassador to Kenya and the representative of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) at the Committee of Permanent Representatives in Nairobi (CPR) made a short presentation of the topics addressed at the OECPR-2, and the negotiations taking place at the CPR in preparation for the second meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) to be held in Nairobi, Kenya from 23rd to 27th May 2016. The Peruvian representative, as Vice-President of the UNEA Board, briefed the participants on the eight decisions of the Board, as well as the process that has been ongoing for the design of UNEA-2, explaining the probable change in the UNEA cycle. Proposed resolutions are grouped into five areas, as well as the themes for the High Level Segment. Finally, he briefed participants on the protocol for coordination within the countries of the region.

9. In this agenda item, various delegations noted the implications of the limited representation of the region’s countries in Nairobi, and the lack of access to documents and flow of information relating to the discussions held in Nairobi. On the other hand, numerous delegations expressed their concern for the proliferation of decision drafts at UNEA-2, and that they go beyond the UNEP’s mandate. They highlighted the importance of having information and documentation in due time. They also expressed their desire of not having more than two parallel sessions at UNEA-2, because delegations of the region’s countries rarely have one or two people, and also for UNEP to provide sufficient funds to ensure the participation of at least one representative per country.

10. It was noted that there is little time remaining until UNEA-2 and that the process to provide comments to documents is insufficient. Delegates also mentioned the importance of including the environmental dimension to eradicate poverty in the UNEA-2 discussions.

11. The Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of UNEP informed about the creation of a community of practice in the UNEPLive platform of UNEP to facilitate the dialogue and consultation among Permanent Representatives to UNEP in the countries of the region located in Nairobi and governments without representation in Nairobi in preparation to UNEA-2, as well as access to documents for that meeting. The regional representatives at the Board of UNEA-1, Peru and Saint Lucia, explained that they have met virtually eight times and that those meetings set the direction and pace of the discussions. They have proposed the development of a protocol to guide the Bureau’s mode of operation.

12. The Chair of the meeting suggested focusing the discussion on three topics:

1. The UNEA cycles (that is, to change meetings to be held in odd years so that the UNEA can effectively influence the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) meetings held in odd years);

2. The type of document resulting from the UNEA-2 meeting (a ministerial summary or decision);

3. The Latin American and Caribbean country that could chair the next UNEA.

13. As to the UNEA’s **cycles,** delegations referred to the complexity of the situation due to the implications of the UNEP scheduling, budget planning, and for the country of the region taking the chair of the UNEA, as this would imply less time (one year) or more time (three years).

14. With respect to the **type of document** resulting from UNEA-2, delegations expressed various points of view. Many representatives agreed to define a negotiated document, although this implies a harder negotiation process, but this would lead to a more relevant document for all countries and to influence the global development agenda, leading to other forums like the HLPF. Another view expressed was that not all UNEA results should necessarily be part of a negotiated document especially in a situation like the current one, where recently have achieved various global development agendas agreed.

15. Regarding the rules of procedure regarding the election of the President of UNEA and if the choice is a personal or country one, the Secretariat explained what is set out in the rules of procedure of UNEA.

16. The Cuban Ambassador indicated that unfortunately many GRULAC proposals had not been considered in the UNEA-2 draft documents. He suggested that if this region's proposals are not considered, he does not see a favourably negotiated document.

17. The representative from Dominica indicated that the world is still divided between rich and poor. Moreover, the Rio principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is not being applied.

18. Delegates commended Cuba's leadership at GRULAC, and that of Peru and Saint Lucia at the UNEA Bureau.

### Item 4 of the agenda: Follow-up to the Nineteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (Los Cabos, Mexico, 11th to 14th March 2014)

***4.1 Governance and strengthening of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean****.*

19. The theme, already addressed at the intersessional meeting of the XIX Forum of Ministers of Environment in November 2015, was introduced by the Secretariat of the Forum. She referred to the Declaration of Los Cabos and to Decision One of the XIX Meeting of the Forum, setting out the progress achieved regarding various aspects of the decision, in particular: (1) strengthening of UNEP’s presence in the region; (2) promotion of political dialogue and the sharing of experiences; (3) establishment of an information exchange mechanism for national policies; and (4) updating of the Latin America and Caribbean Sustainable Development Initiative (ILAC) to align regional priorities with those agreed in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

20. The strengthening of UNEP’s presence has included the establishment of two sub-regional offices (Caribbean and Southern Cone), supplementing the Regional Office and the two existing country offices. Further, the regional office has been bolstered with a subprogramme coordinator for each of the seven existing subprogrammes. The Secretariat has established alliances and cooperation agreements with other organisations in the region and has strengthened its participation in regional and sub-regional forums, not only with respect to the environment, but also on other issues where the mainstreaming of environmental considerations is relevant.

21. With regard to political dialogue and experience exchange, in the Forum there are five networks in operation (sustainable consumption and production, environmental education, air pollution, climate change and indicators) and there is a proposal to establish a working group on chemicals and waste. Additionally, the Forum’s decisions have been disseminated, particularly in the framework of UNEA, thus influencing its resolutions.

22. Moreover, Mexico provided other countries with an information exchange on-line platform that is currently in operation and represents a useful tool available to countries so that they can strengthen regional work.

23. Lastly, concerning the ILAC update, following a regional consultation, the input from the intersessional meeting and subsequent exchanges, a new document has been developed in line with the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda. It has been agreed that the ILAC should be a platform to boost the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and fulfil the following goals: promoting greater regional cooperation, developing actions to drive greater participation among civil society and the private sector, promoting sustainable development models and contributing to the identification and establishment of technical and financial mechanisms for its implementation. The indicators issue has not been included, awaiting approval of the official indicators of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

24. The delegate from Peru stressed the importance of the proposal to create a working group on chemicals, as this is a core theme for environmental management, which directly reflects the efficacy of environmental management initiatives. Furthermore, given the current investment gaps in the region, there is an opportunity for exchange among the different countries. He also highlighted the importance of the ILAC indicators in relation to the SDGs, which may provide relevant political visibility to the Forum among citizens, and within the different contexts where such themes are addressed.

25. The representative from Jamaica embraced the proposal of the new chemicals and waste working group. He also commended the Secretariat for the opening of the sub-regional office for the Caribbean hosted by Jamaica and welcomed Vincent Sweeney (its Director) and Lorna Inniss (Coordinator of CAR/RCU).

26. The delegate of the Dominican Republic joined the positive comments made regarding the creation of the chemicals working group, not only as an opportunity for exchange, but also for the identification of financing opportunities and joint work in the region.

27. The representative from Bolivia also expressed the importance of establishing a chemicals and waste working group. Concerning the ILAC, he requested that the SDGs indicators and targets that should be addressed within the existing information systems in order to report at regional and national level with respect to the 2030 Agenda be clearly identified. This was proposed in order to avoid duplication of efforts and considering the work of various sub-regional forums and of CELAC itself, many of which are already suggesting indicators for the SDGs.

28. The Secretariat indicated that Mexico will later present the indicators work and the manner in which it will be ensured that work regarding the ILAC is in line with the SDGs. Furthermore, the Interagency Technical Committee of this Forum includes the presence of ECLAC and UNDP to ensure coordination. The aim is to align efforts to avoid duplication and create fewer burdens for the countries.

29. The delegate from Haiti gave his thanks to the government of Colombia, UNEP and the Ambassador of Cuba in Nairobi, expressing his willingness and desire to contribute to achieving positive results in this regional Forum, which in turn they hope will contribute to UNEA-2. He also expressed his approval regarding the creation of the working group on chemicals and solid waste. Finally, he thanked UNEP for its support, particularly in the field of green economy, with a study covering five sectors that was conducted by the Ministry of Environment and which could be replicated in other sectors and other areas of government.

30. The representative from Ecuador hailed the Government of Colombia for hosting this meeting, UNEP for the efforts made and the other institutions for their participation. He specifically referred to the need to contextualise the region's ongoing processes, including the CELAC and sub-regional processes, as well as the need to adjust priorities in order to target existing gaps regarding environmental management and sustainable development. He stressed that alignment should be the main element with regard to harmonising these different processes and bodies at regional and global levels. The goal should be for each area to play a role that aligns with objectives regarding sustainable development and, most importantly, its environmental dimension. The restatement and reappraisal of ILAC must be based on these factors.

31. The Chairman expressed his gratitude for the comments made, pointing out the widespread support for the creation of a Chemicals and Waste Working Group and the alignment of ILAC with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In relation to that last point, he confirmed that the Secretariat therefore has the mandate to produce a draft decision on the matter.

***4.2 Environmental Training Network***

32. The decision draft was presented by the Panama delegation. The new elements in the draft were highlighted, such as seeking synergies with multilateral environmental agreements, sustainable consumption and production, development of environmental standards related to sustainability (for public officials in all sectors), collaboration with regional training centres such as the International Centre for Implementation of the REDD+ programme (ICIREDD) and the Centre for capacity-building in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation, among others. She highlighted that, to a large extent, the proposal is the result of the analyses and input of the focal points of the Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean, and in particular the output of the meeting held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, from 8th to 11th March 2016. She requested that the Secretariat of the Forum of Ministers of Environment delve deeper into the progress achieved since the XIX Meeting of Forum of Ministers of Environment two years ago.

33. UNEP briefly presented the development of the work plan of the Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean, which includes activities, indicators, timeline, accountabilities and resource mobilisation. The report on the status of Environmental education in the region was also highlighted, responding to the request made during the intersessional meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment held from 17th to 19th November in Mexico City, Mexico.

34. During the discussion, the delegations expressed their support for the proposed decisions related to environmental education for sustainable development. Environmental education was considered fundamental for changing behaviours and conducts, in harmony with Mother Nature. Highlighting the opening remarks during the inauguration of the Forum made by the Minister of Environmental and Sustainable Development of Colombia, who said that “environmental education is a development priority of the country”. It was emphasised that environmental management is not viable without people properly trained with respect to environmental and sustainability criteria. It was also mentioned that environmental education facilitates developing an integrated view of reality.

35. It was noted that the Environmental Training Network operates actively, with a high level of collaboration and exchange of information and experience among its members.

36. Particular emphasis was placed on the following aspects for consideration in the decision draft:

* The need to break away from the inertia and segmented view of development. This network can promote a comprehensive and holistic view of the reality for sustainable development, and promote it within educational systems;
* The value of South-South cooperation and the creation of sub-regional working groups within the Environmental Training Network;
* The need to undertake actions for the next period related to:
* Developing activities on environmental training and education, including climate change and sustainable consumption and production;
* Preparing guidelines on environmental education and local plans;
* Establishing environmental education indicators and a strategy for assessment and follow-up; and
* Promoting the exchange of experiences, knowledge and technical resources among countries.
* Expand coverage of the network to other areas such as industry and the private sector;
* Promote synergies between training and other items in the agenda of the Forum of Ministers of Environment such as biodiversity, chemicals and waste, sustainable consumption and production and atmospheric pollution;
* Develop technical assistance aimed at capacity building for sustainable development, with more innovative approaches for sustainable lifestyles and the assessment of education plans implemented;
* Develop effective and appealing information and communication material for various key players such youth and children, but also for the public sector, including Congressmen and decision makers.

***4.3 Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration***

37. Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in environmental matters was introduced by the representative from Chile, who briefed about the progress made in the implementation of Decision Three of the XIX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers and the proposed decision for this forum, which takes into account the most recent developments at the regional and at global levels. In this regard, he referred to the access rights in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically goal 16 concerning the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, facilitating access to justice for all, and building effective, inclusive and accountable institutions at all levels.

38. As regards progress in the region, he referred to the implementation of the Declaration on the application of principle 10 (adopted in 2012), through which the signatory countries agreed to work on capacity building and a regional instrument, with support from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) as technical secretariat. A negotiating committee was established to move forward with this instrument, and it held two meetings in 2015 (in Santiago de Chile, from 5th to 7th May and in Panama, from 27th to 29th October) and it will meet again in Montevideo, Uruguay, from 5th to 8th April 2016.

39. He concluded by referring to exchange and capacity building in the region as an essential area of work for this issue, which is also reflected in the draft decision.

40. The delegate from Uruguay expressed support for the draft decision and highlighted the next meeting of the Negotiating Committee to be held in Montevideo, which will be opened by the Minister of Environment. He stressed how important it is for the public to have early access to environmental information, with this being a right recognised by law in Uruguay. In addition, he also referred to the importance of promoting public participation for greater citizen empowerment and responsibility regarding environmental management.

41. The representative from Peru highlighted the importance of this issue, which is global in scope, adding that a regional agenda has been created in relation to it. He said that the 2013 Lima Vision sets out guidelines for the process, aiming for a regional instrument based on our countries' experience. Finally, he referred to the opportunity that this issue presents regarding the integration of the environmental regulation with the society.

42. The representative from Cuba, after referring to the importance of Principle 10 and to the existence of national legislation in this area, recalled discussions held at the previous meeting of the forum, and stressed that the forum should focus on implementation issues and not issues related to the regional instrument process, as such negotiations fall within the scope of the ECLAC.

43. The representative from Panama joined in support for the draft decision and encouraged work on the regional agenda for Principle 10, highlighting the progress made at the meeting in Panama in October 2015 and at a national level, the creation of dialogue groups with civil society.

44. The delegate from Bolivia echoed the comments made by Cuba, and encouraged the Forum to direct its work towards capacity building, as the discussion regarding the regional instrument will take place in Montevideo.

45. In this regard, UNEP made reference to training and exchange activities that have been carried out in parallel to the regional negotiating process, particularly for the dissemination and implementation of the Bali Guidelines for the development of national legislation on access rights. As a recent development in this issue, guides have been developed for implementation of the guidelines and these will be presented in the region at the next meeting in Montevideo.

***4.4 Cooperation in chemicals and waste***

46. The delegate from Uruguay introduced the issue, highlighting the importance of moving towards a greater level of regional integration and cooperation, strengthening governance in this area, all in alignment with the other networks that operate within the framework of the Forum of Ministers. He also indicated that certain aspects of the new draft decision have been carried over from the previous decision, and that it also includes certain aspects to be focused on in light of UNEA-2. Following a brief description from the Secretariat regarding the region's progress in the various issues addressed, the delegate continued summarising the recommendations made by the countries during the last intersessional meeting. These recommendations form the basis for the new draft decision, which includes the establishment of a regional network on chemicals and waste, the development of a regional work plan for the network and consideration of the waste management issue.

47. The representative from Peru expressed his support for the proposed decision, in particular the creation of the network on chemicals and waste. He pointed out certain priority areas that should be reflected in the section relating to the Minamata Convention on Mercury, such as the rehabilitation of polluted sites and priority attention in river ecosystems, which seriously affects any populations that are exposed. He also noted the great challenge posed by illegal mining and urged this item to be included on the Forum's agenda, without prejudice to other regional and bilateral initiatives that already address this issue.

48. The delegate from Colombia expressed his support for the inclusion of contaminated sites and mentioned other potential priority issues that could be addressed within the framework of the proposed regional network, such as: exchanging information on emerging policy issues in the framework of the SAICM; increasing the prevention and recovery of waste; promoting the implementation of the globally harmonised system (GHS); or strengthening programmes for the prevention of chemical accidents, all promoting South-South Cooperation actions and engaging each relevant stakeholder.

49. The delegate from Cuba also supported the draft decision, pointing out the existence of strengths possessed by the region, such as the network of regional centres pertaining to the Basel and Stockholm Conventions. He suggested that, in the context of the political declaration, reference could be made to the importance of implementing the Special Programme for institutional strengthening in chemicals management, as well as the need for an information exchange mechanism for all chemicals and waste conventions, including the Minamata Convention, even at a regional level.

50. The delegate from Paraguay shared the concerns regarding contaminated sites and the presence of mercury in rivers. He added that consideration should be given to the specific challenges facing landlocked countries regarding the transportation and final disposal of hazardous waste.

51. The delegate from Bolivia, after echoing previous comments, said that the network could play a regional coordination role for conventions on chemicals and waste and she emphasised the importance of working on financing mechanisms, such as the application of extended producer responsibility. She also suggested establishing links with the environmental education network.

52. Finally, the representative from Mexico expressed his country's support for the proposal and emphasised the need to ensure coordination with other stakeholders beyond the environmental sector.

53. The Chairman, after summarising the points made by the various delegations, noted how important it is that region’s leadership in chemicals and waste is reflected at the next meeting of the UNEA.

**4.5 Small Island Developing States**

54. In introducing this agenda item, a brief presentation on behalf of Caribbean SIDS was made by the delegate from the Government of Dominica.

55. The delegate emphasised that SIDS, notwithstanding their vulnerabilities, are critically important members of the international community representing approximately 48% of the Member States of Latin America and the Caribbean. He also recalled that Caribbean SIDS requested and received from the XIX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers meeting held in Los Cabos support for SIDS' positions in international environmental negotiations. The delegate expressed satisfaction with the support received from UNEP since the last Forum. He also asked countries in the region to strengthen their support for SIDS, including the decision that will be considered at UNEA-2.

56. In highlighting some of the key achievements over the past two years, the following issues were highlighted:

* The convening of the Third International Conference on SIDS and the adoption by the international community of the Samoa Pathway: He pointed out a number of important areas which have been highlighted by Caribbean SIDS requiring attention for their implementation. These include: the systematic collection of environmental data and its use for policy decision making; the SCP for SIDS Initiative within the framework the 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) and Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA). The Samoa SIDS Conference (and resulting Samoa Pathway) which took place in September 2014 was considered to have been effective in building partnerships for the benefit of SIDS, including Caribbean SIDS. The work on Ecosystem-based Adaptation, in particular the demonstration EbA project being undertaken in Grenada: In this regard, the representative of Grenada was called upon to give an update of the EbA project taking place in Grenada and more specifically the recently held Regional Training Workshop on EbA Integration into Development Planning. Reference was made to the proposed establishment of the Policy, Legal and Technical Network and the Meeting was informed that the first meeting of the Network will be held in Cuba from 2nd to 3rd June 2016.
* The preparation of a SIDS Resolution for UNEA-2: In this regard, the representative of the Bahamas gave an overview of the progress made in the negotiation of this resolution. He made an appeal for the meeting to include a reference in the Ministerial Declaration that the meeting supports the SIDS Resolution.
* The appointment of a Caribbean SIDS national as the new Director of ROLAC; and the opening of the Caribbean Sub-Regional Office for UNEP.

57. The representative from Dominica, while noting that the region is engaged with this topic, felt that more countries need to be on board in the context of the global environment, and encouraged greater participation of SIDS in the 10YFP. He felt that the region should raise its voice on common but differentiated approaches. He also noted that, while funds are channelled towards mitigation, in relation to integration of EbA into national planning, ecosystem-based adaptation is an important area that needs more support. Grenada and the Seychelles are implementing a project on EbA.

58. The delegate from Grenada, Mr. Trevor Thompson, complemented the presentation by summarising the outcomes of the project, which works with communities in coastal areas, and the workshop held in Grenada earlier in February 2016. He highlighted the need to protect these vulnerable ecosystems. The workshop and the related pilot projects demonstrated the multiple benefits from ecosystem services. Mr. Thompson also highlighted the training delivered on integrating EbA into national policy, which included representatives from the Caribbean Community, the Dominican Republic and Cuba. He further noted the involvement of Permanent Secretaries in the workshop and the decision to establish a network of Permanent Secretaries, with the intention to integrate EbA into development policy. Grenada is to also lead a network of legal, technical and policy professionals, who will meet in Cuba in June 2016.

59. The representative of Dominica continued his presentation by referring to the upcoming UNEA and the draft SIDS Resolution/Decision, which was presented to the OECPR in February 2016 by the Government of Samoa. The delegate from the Bahamas provided further details and informed the Meeting that the reaction by the OECPR to the draft Decision had been very positive, although the decision is yet to be adopted. However, he expressed concern that Caribbean representation at UNEA-2 might be limited and therefore called on the Forum to strengthen this draft UNEA decision by including reference to it in the Forum Declaration. He did not think that a specific decision on SIDS was needed in the context of this Forum, but rather that support should be provided to the passing of the resolution at UNEA. A suggestion was to include reference to the Samoa Pathway in the Ministerial Declaration of the Forum.

60. The Delegates, including from Mexico, Chile and Cuba, confirmed support for the Caribbean SIDS and called for solidarity in presenting the resolution on SIDS at UNEA-2. The meeting agreed on the need for suitable wording to be included in the Forum Declaration which would highlight the specific needs of SIDS. Keys issues for SIDS such as climate change, SCP and environmental information can then be discussed in the proposed thematic decisions.

61. In conclusion, the delegate from Dominica congratulated the new Regional Director of UNEP and recognised the importance of the newly established sub-regional office, noting that remarkable improvements have been made to recognise the importance of SIDS and provide them with support.

***4.6 ILAC Environmental Indicators***

62. The delegate from Mexico said that his country has chaired the indicators group and he offered to continue coordinating dialogue, in particular with the national authorities responsible for the environmental information systems. The proposed decision that has been shared consists of six aspects: (1) the definition of options for updating existing environmental indicators in accordance with the new ILAC, and the proposal of new indicators in this respect; (2) the inclusion of a specific component regarding indicators for sustainable consumption and production; (3) the inclusion of a resource mobilisation component; (4) the harmonisation of the ILAC indicators with those proposed for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; (5) the effective use of environmental indicators and their dissemination using platforms such as UNEPLive to feed into global, regional and national environmental reports; and (6) the approach to science-policy interaction, including more coordinated work with the region's scientific community.

63. The representative from Colombia welcomed this proposal and confirmed the country's commitment to this working group. She considered that it should begin efforts to harmonise the ILAC indicators with the 2030 Agenda, with a view to creating synergies. She also reported that in 2014 Colombia published the update to the ILAC indicators in its environmental information system and that this publication will be shared as part of this forum.

64. The delegate from Cuba joined in supporting this proposal and considered that this is an area where progress has been made in recent years. He recommended holding face-to-face meetings (if possible) since remote meetings make it difficult for Cuba to participate. In addition, he confirmed the country's willingness to continue contributing to this work.

65. Moreover, the delegate for the Bahamas thanked Mexico for its presentation and asked whether the proposed decision will take into account not only harmonisation with the Sustainable Development Goals, but also with the Global Environmental Goals, to thus avoid duplication and ensure greater coordination between the regional proposal and the global proposal. He also mentioned the importance of considering specific indicators that more adequately reflect the needs of the Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean.

66. In response, the representative from Mexico said that this is not a proposal from Mexico, but rather from the indicators expert group, in which several countries participate, and which Mexico chairs. He also stated that the global proposal has been considered, but that this link will be reinforced in paragraph four of the operative paragraphs. The idea is to create synergies with ongoing processes, not only with the SDGs but also others into which countries must feed global data, such as Integrated Environmental Assessments (GEO). Moreover, one of the decision's central issues is how to build capabilities in the region in order to improve the indicators and how experiences are exchanged among the technical officials that generate information who, in certain cases such as Mexico, are not from the Ministry of Environment.

67. The representative from Saint Lucia referred specifically to paragraph five, page one, and she considered that the mention of data collection should specifically reflect how this data is processed, in order to ensure its usefulness. Moreover, she said that it's important to include resource mobilisation, but suggested including information on how such resources will be used and distributed later.

68. The delegate from Dominica referred to criticisms that developing countries have put forward in terms of the lack of relevance regarding the indicators adopted for the 2030 Agenda. He considered that if this represents the source for the development of national indicators, then this basis would not be appropriate. For example, SDG 17 (which focuses on the means of implementation) has been avoided, despite its relevance in terms of reflecting the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities.

69. The delegate from Bolivia indicated that he agrees with the proposed decision, and that they only have comments regarding form rather than substance. However, he said that Bolivia has substantive comments on some of the points relating to indicators in the document ‘Draft Update of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development’ (UNEP/LAC-IGWG.XX/4), specifically in terms of aspects relating to the different approaches to sustainable development that Bolivia has positioned globally. He thought that too much emphasis is placed on green economy issues, such as environmental assessment and the incorporation of natural capital into national accounts. Therefore, he suggested a thorough review of this document in order to maintain the proposal's plurality and representativeness.

70. Finally, the Chair expressed his thanks for the efforts of the expert group and the proposal that has been shared, as well as the efforts to generate synergies with the 2030 Agenda. He also said that, based on the comments made, the ministerial decision will continue being fine-tuned tomorrow.

***4.7 Sustainable Consumption and Production***

71. Following up on the request made by Peru during the Intersessional Meeting (Mexico, November 2015), a brief presentation on the International Resource Panel was given through a video with a message from Mr. Tim Kasten, Deputy Director of the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE). The International Resource Panel (IRP) was set up in 2007 to provide sound scientific information to politicians and decision-makers regarding the availability, extraction, use and management of natural resources in the global economy. Its reports show the overall level regarding per capita use of natural resources, which has increased from 4.6 to 9.2 tonnes between 1905 and 2005, and that the annual extraction of materials will increase from 7,000 to 140,000,000,000 tonnes between 1900 and 2050.

72. The International Resource Panel studies and suggests alternatives with a view to changing these trends. It analyses innovative technologies and policy solutions to decouple economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation. The Panel has published 15 scientific reports in various areas such as biofuels, sustainable land management, opportunities for decoupling in cities, the environmental impact of international trade systems and studies on metal reserves and recycling around the world, among many others. It is currently preparing about seven global studies, including one that will quantify the economic potential for the adoption of more efficient practices in natural resource management.

73. Subsequently and on behalf of Barbados, which due to delays in flights could not arrive on time, the Secretariat (UNEP) gave a presentation on the main progress achieved regarding Decision Seven, on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). The Secretariat thanked and highlighted the valuable support provided by the countries in the region in the promotion and implementation of SCP through an active Regional Council of Government Experts on SCP. This Council was established in 2003, along with the Regional SCP Strategy.

74. The most significant developments since the XIX Regional Forum of Ministers (March 2014) include the following: a) the review and update of the Regional SCP Strategy - which already integrates the links with the relevant SDGs (and not only with SDG 12) - and the development of its action plan for 2015/16; b) the generous contribution from Brazil (US$ 1 million) to the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP) Trust Fund and the commitment to organise a South-South cooperation meeting between Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa, which will be held at the end of 2016; c) the leadership shown by Latin America and the Caribbean during the First International Meeting of the 10YFP (May 2015, in New York, USA), presenting recommendations for action to the 10YFP Board and Secretariat in order to accelerate the implementation of the 10YFP. Similarly, four SCP/10YFP meetings have been held: Meeting of the SCP Executive Committee (Santiago, Chile, in November 2014), the Caribbean sub-regional Meeting on Decisions Five and Seven of the Forum of Ministers of Environment (Barbados, January 2015), the Eighth Meeting of the Regional SCP Council (Panama, May 2015) and the meeting of the Editorial Committee for the Sustainable Lifestyles Publication.

75. Significant progress has been made at the national level on SCP policies, in particular in the area of sustainable public procurement (SPP). Cooperation has been built with the Organisation of American States, the Pacific Alliance and GIZ. In addition, more than 10 countries have initiated national SCP plans and some other countries have established national inter-ministerial SCP committees. Countries are also working on integrating SCP in key sectors such as waste management, sustainable tourism, sustainable construction and buildings and sustainable food chains, among others. SIDS have also made progress on issues related to sustainable tourism and sustainable lifestyles. It is necessary to strengthen the "SCP initiative for SIDS within the 10YFP". Likewise, the region is working on a regional publication to analyse the understanding and visions of sustainable lifestyles in the region, as well as developing an online platform on SCP in joint cooperation with UNITAR, and finally has developed a regional mapping on SCP for the creation of strategic partnerships.

76. The discussion and contributions received from the countries were focused on the following issues:

Peru highlighted the importance of the International Resource Panel (IRP) for the region and its relevance to the priority areas of the ILAC. Peru invited countries to consider opening space for a scientific dialogue on the use of natural resources use and management, and even consider the possibility of producing national reports. The delegate also mentioned the possibility of increasing the participation of the LAC countries in the Panel's Steering Committee (currently only four countries in the region are members: Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru) and also the option of inviting scientists from the region to contribute to the panel's studies.

77. Regarding the proposed Decision on Sustainable Consumption and Production, the delegates expressed their support for the decision and stressed the importance of the SCP as one of the most important issues with great transformational potential. The representatives expressed their thanks for the progress achieved and work done by the Secretariat. The following requests were made to include in the decision on SCP:

* Include reference to and emphasis on the need to promote innovation in the private sector;
* Include the issue of sustainable public procurement, which has great potential to transform patterns of consumption and production, and where countries can lead by example. Public procurement also represents an opportunity to generate greater value and benefits (social, environmental and economic).

Emphasis was placed on the relationship between SCP and the food production sector, which is a priority for the region.

Appreciation was expressed for links with the issues on waste management and the environmental education programme.

Paraguay highlighted the specific situation faced by "Landlocked Developing Countries," a factor that limits their production practices.

***4.8 Regional Plan of Action on Air Pollution in Latin America and the Caribbean***

78.The forum Secretariat highlighted the importance of the work carried out by the group of experts on air pollution, pointing out that although it was performed with limited resources, it had achieved very good results. It was also mentioned that the regional plan approved in Mexico is comprehensive and that the region has shown great progress in air quality discussions and such progress could be presented within the framework of UNEA-2. Additionally, it was noted that there has been a significant increase in South-South cooperation at the regional level. As a result, four air quality seminars have been held where countries with greater technical abilities have been supporting other countries in the region.

79. The Secretariat also mentioned the progress of the air quality agenda in various countries such as Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, Peru, Paraguay and Chile, in terms of improvements to fuel regulation, no-driving programmes (vehicles), awareness raising, standardisation work, eco-labelling, consumer information and improved public transportation. Mention was also made of the Network's achievements through more organised work, regular meetings; work on national plans for air quality management, the establishment of a community of best practice, the promotion of South-South cooperation, as well as greater synergy in identifying cooperation on other issues.

80. The representative from Mexico highlighted the interest of several countries in the region to strengthen relevant South-South cooperation, measuring and monitoring systems, public policies, as well as synergies with other initiatives such as short-lived climate pollutants and energy efficiency. He added that this is due to an increased urbanisation in the region and the need to identify new approaches to improve air quality, which is a challenge shared by most countries.

81. Mexico's initiative seeks to emphasise the continued importance of aligning air quality with issues such as short-lived pollutants, climate change and integrated policies relating to environmental, health and economic challenges. Additionally, the initiative considers issues such as climate change adaptation and mitigation, specific cases regarding air quality monitoring and the use of meteorological models and data that could be shared. The design and presentation of a 2016-2018 work plan was proposed, exploring possibilities for financing sources such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) which has expressed its interest, the Green Climate Fund and other potential financing sources.

82. The Secretariat presented the progress made in the first regional assessment of short-lived pollutants, which will be presented in the framework of UNEA-2. This represents a significant achievement for the region and will help in terms of establishing specific policies and actions to reduce the effects of these pollutants.

83. The Secretariat also reported that the four main results of this assessment are: 1) A first measurement has been made of short-lived pollutants in the region: in 2010, 508 kilotonnes of black carbon and 54,018 kilotonnes of methane were quantified; it is estimated that in that year, there were 47,000 premature deaths in the region caused by exposure to PM2.5, as well as 5000 caused by ozone. This assessment also estimates that in 2010, crop exposure to tropospheric ozone resulted in the loss of approximately 7.4 million tonnes of corn, soybeans, rice and wheat; 2) It was noted that, if action is not taken to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs), the benchmark scenario indicates that impacts will increase significantly in the forthcoming decades until 2050; premature deaths from exposure to PM2.5 and ozone will double, and crop losses will also increase. 3) A limited number of measures to reduce SLCP emissions by 2050 could potentially reduce warming in the region by up to 0.9 degrees Celsius, reduce premature deaths by up to 26% per year and avoid the loss of 3-4 million tonnes of crops annually. Finally, 4) the report indicates that experiences and efforts already exist with regard to reducing SLCP emissions in the region and these could be scaled up. Many of the measures identified have already been implemented at the national and sub-national levels. The report also notes that by strengthening current policies and improving regional cooperation, a large-scale reduction of SLCP emissions could be achieved.

84. Meanwhile, representatives from various countries (Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Haiti, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Venezuela), expressed support for the draft decision, emphasising the importance of addressing this issue at the regional level, as well as strengthening South-South cooperation in this regard.

85. Several delegations highlighted the priority they place on this issue, and reported on the progress and activities carried out in their respective countries, including the development of regulations related to fuel and the transport sector (Paraguay, Uruguay), awareness raising actions (Venezuela), monitoring activities (Costa Rica), or the implementation of economic instruments (Chile).

86. The delegate from Bolivia expressed the need to revise references made in the draft decision to certain documents that have not yet been reviewed. The importance of the interaction between science and decision-making to support public policies and regulations on the issue was also mentioned.

87. The delegate from Costa Rica called on UNEP to continue supporting actions concerning air pollution, and in this regard expressed that this issue should be included in the discussions at the upcoming UNEA-2 meeting.

88. The representative from the Dominican Republic also mentioned the importance of the assessment as a baseline to measure future progress. Furthermore, the delegate from Peru noted the interlinkage with the issue of poverty, as well as the potential link to sector and sub-national policies.

89. Finally, the delegate from the Bahamas expressed the need for defining next steps in order to lead to results that are significant and relevant to the countries’ decision-making.

***4.9 Cooperation on Climate Change***

90. The proposal presented was developed by the governments of Mexico and Peru. Activities and agreements prior to the Forum were initially reviewed, specifically the agreement of the intersessional meeting of the Forum of Ministers of November 2015 in Mexico.

91. Peru referred to the role that the region has played since the COP in Cancun, followed by the one in Lima, which led to the relaunch of the global climate change negotiation process. Thanks to this regional leadership, the outcomes finalised in the Paris Agreement were reached.

92. Peru also indicated that the Regional Climate Change Platform draft is in line with the regional leadership on the matter and aims to respond and provide rapid support to the countries. Three areas of action were presented: governance and dialogue on policies, climate action and financing mechanisms. Refer to the Peru presentation for further details.

93. The Peru presentation and the basic contents of the Regional Platform draft were embraced by participants. However, some participants mentioned the need for more time to review the platform in greater detail.

94. Some countries made reference to the significant regional weakness in research related to climate change. The Central American Isthmus has been identified as a region highly sensitive to climate change (El Salvador, Nicaragua). The development of technical information should be targeted to decision-making and should be used to have positive impact during negotiation forums (El Salvador).

95. The delegates from Uruguay and Argentina highlighted the region's strength when acting as a whole. There is certain disassociation between development policies and mitigation/adaptation actions. It is also important to be careful with the sector-based approach that may put the blame on certain economic sectors, such as food production.

96. The Uruguay delegate suggested further clarification of governance regarding the Regional Platform proposal, so that the processes of development of the work plan and its approval with the participation of countries are clear.

97. Many countries pointed that further emphasis on adaptation is required as this is a common need across the region. Also, Colombia and Bolivia expressed the benefits of performing joint actions and policies on adaptation and mitigation, wherever there are synergies between them. It was also noted that it would be important that the platform supports capacity building for development of funding proposals. Bolivia requested for the text not to emphasise "low-carbon development", but to emphasise low greenhouse gas emission development instead.

98. Some countries as Cuba and Saint Lucia commented on the need for a regional platform, which must serve as flexible mechanism to accommodate the different problems at hand and the regional approaches.

99. Further, it was mentioned the importance of including the economic quantification of the climate change commitments of the Paris Agreement in the new platform.

100. Colombia proposed regional cooperation and public-private financing approaches, oceans and climate change as working areas in the Cartagena Declaration.

101. Venezuela requested some time to add to Mexico and Peru's proposal.

102. Saint Lucia pointed out that the matter of damage and losses should be further addressed in the document. Contributions determined at a national level should not be the only success measure / indicator.

103. Ecuador and Chile highlighted the work done in the CELAC’s framework that served as the basis for the COP in Paris.

104. Chile supported the proposal and contributes with further efforts for the scientific research regarding climate change.

105. Responding to some comments of several delegations, the representative of Chile said that the Regional Platform proposal features biennial plans and therefore did not consider it necessary to define all the details at this time, but agree on the major areas of work.

106. Argentina adhered to the Peru and Mexico proposal, but noted that links to other platforms available in the region must be clarified. It shared Uruguay's concern on the food industry. It also mentioned the challenge of working with sub-national governments and suggested adding a work stream on capacity building.

107. Nicaragua expressed strong reservations regarding the proposal from Peru and Mexico. An important limitation for Nicaragua is that according to its representative, the Platform proposal is limited to the Paris Agreement.

108. To close, the Forum Chair suggested that countries submit specific comments on the text and to hold later discussions on the matter to reach a common understanding to satisfy all parties and go to UNEA with a unified position.

**Item 5 of the agenda: Conclusions and recommendations for the ministerial segment**

109. During discussions, eleven draft decisions were proposed for discussion. Eight of them related to issues covered beforehand by decisions at the previous meeting of the Forum and there were three new themes: biodiversity, oceans and the environmental aspect of the 2030 Agenda.

110. In order to review the draft decisions and draft ministerial declaration, several discussion sessions were held on Tuesday 29 and Wednesday 30 March. On the latter date, the delegates agreed to meet in the morning of 31 March to conclude the meeting of high-level experts, under the agreement that no new paragraphs would be accepted for inclusion into the text agreed on the 30th, and that consideration would only be given to changes regarding texts that did not reflect what was agreed during the negotiation meetings held.

111. On 31 March, the meeting of high-level experts resumed its work to consider recommendations for the ministerial segment. Upon reviewing the draft decisions, the delegation from Bolivia proposed new paragraphs for the draft decision.

112. The Chairman and all the other countries present did not agree with the inclusion of new paragraphs, considering the agreement made on the previous day. The draft decisions and the draft declaration were approved by the meeting of high-level experts.

**Item 6 of the agenda: Review and approval of the Draft Report of the Meeting and the Cartagena Declaration**

113. The rapporteur introduced the draft report of the meeting, asking delegates to send their comments to the Secretariat within a period of days, so that they could be incorporated into the report.

114. The delegation from Colombia presented the approved draft text to be submitted to the Ministers. The meeting approved the draft.

**Agenda Item 7: Other matters**

### 115. No other business was discussed.

**Agenda Item 8: Closing of the meeting**

### 116. The meeting ended on Thursday 31st March at 12:00 p.m.