

Report on the Regional Symposium on the Integrated Approach for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

October 4 and 5, Brasilia, Brazil

IBAMA Headquarters – Brazilian Institute for Environment and Natural Resources



Key Messages

- The 2030 Agenda includes a need to move towards sustainable development in an integrated manner. In Latin America and the Caribbean there are concrete examples of initiatives that have applied/are applying this approach with proven impact on the three dimensions of sustainable development (environmental – social - economic). The publication "Sustainable Development in practice: applying an integrated approach in Latin America and the Caribbean", which was launched at the Symposium, collects 22 experiences from the region.
- Within the 2030 Agenda's vision, there is no need to decide between economic progress, environmental protection and social wellbeing. The experiences presented at the Symposium prove that it is possible to comply simultaneously with all three, at different levels: locally, nationally and regionally. The region can therefore make a concrete contribution towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), if experiences are extrapolated to other contexts and developed at a scale that will have the greatest impact. As demonstrated by the large number of replicated experiences, regional South-South Cooperation is highly dynamic.
- Promoting an integrated approach towards the implementation of SDGs in the region can be enhanced in four regional cooperation areas in accordance with the Symposium conclusions:
(i) Implementation of sustainable alternatives that link productive areas, for social and environmental inclusion; (ii) encouragement of community learning and green social

entrepreneurship; (iii) financing of sustainable investments and (iv) construction of information systems and good practices platforms.

- To advance in the 2030 Agenda through the use of an integrated approach, countries require institutional changes that facilitate greater coherence and synergies between environmental and socio-economic aspects and development policies and strategies. Specific progress in the areas was identified at the Symposium as well as gaps and important challenges to be overcome.

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
Official Opening	4
Session 1. Integrated approach and policy coherence for the 2030 Agenda	7
Panel 1.1: Global Goals in Regional Focus – The Rio + 20 legacy for advancing sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean	7
Panel 1.2: Integrated policy making towards the 2030 Agenda - A Development Imperative	9
Session 2: Sustainable Development in Practice in Latin America and the Caribbean	11
Introduction – Messages from the Field: Introduction to experiences and compilation process	11
Panel 2.1: Integrating innovation and technology	12
Panel 2.2: Integration among sectors: approaches for coherence	13
Panel 2.3: Integrating finance: economic perspective	14
Panel 2.4: Integration of stakeholders	15
Session 3. A toolkit for an integrated approach	16
Panel 3.1: The SDGs as a network of targets – Innovation and Integration for synergistic action	16
Interactive Plenary Session Gap Analysis	17
Panel 3.2: Science - Policy Dialogue: Using science and information to report SDG implementation, monitoring and review, nationally and regionally	19
Session 4: South – South and Triangular Cooperation for the 2030 Agenda	20
Panel 4.1: Fostering opportunities for partnerships	20
Panel 4.2: Views on financial and technical assistance for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda	21
Interactive Plenary Session Needs and Opportunities for Regional Cooperation	22
Session 5: Official Closure	24

Reference Documents

- Symposium Agenda [\(link\)](#).
- Publication: “Sustainable Development in Practice: Applying an Integrated Approach in Latin America and the Caribbean” [\(link\)](#).
- Digital Compilation for Systematization [\(link\)](#).
- Panelists Talks [\(link\)](#).

Introduction

Based on the approval and launch of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), United Nations Environment (UN Environment) with support from the Government of Brazil, is implementing a regional pilot program in Latin America and the Caribbean, as part of the “Integrated Approach towards Environmental Sustainability in Development Planning”. Its goal is to support countries in meeting their sustainable development challenges by addressing the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner — in other words, by maximizing the economic, environmental and social benefits.

Within the framework of this project, from October 04 to 05, 2016 the “**Regional Symposium on the Integrated Approach for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean**” was held at the Brazilian Institute for Environmental and Natural Resources (IBAMA) to:

- Discuss regional sustainable development progress and challenges set forth in “The Future We Want”, after the Rio+20 summit.
- Present specific integrated approach experiences already being applied in the region that can be replicated.
- Identify elements and explore potential areas for regional cooperation to more toward the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The Symposium was designed by the team at the UN Environment Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean with the support of the UN Environment Country Office in Brazil and the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment. This report is a compilation of the discussions and action points provided by a group of ten moderators and speakers during the event.

The symposium gathered 137 participants, including representatives from government, private sector, civil society and cooperation organisms from 21 countries. At the event, 33 speakers spoke on specific topics, distributed into thematic sections moderated by 10 experts.

Official Opening

The Symposium began on Tuesday October 04, 2016, with a high-level panel composed of:

- Mr. Leo Heileman – UN Environment Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Mrs. Suely Mara Vaz de Araújo – President of IBAMA, Brazil.
- Mr. Niky Fabiancic – UN Resident Coordinator in Brazil.
- Mr. Herman Benjamín – Minister, Supreme Court of Justice of Brazil
- Mr. Sarney Filho – Minister of Environment of Brazil.

In summary, the main message exposed in the welcoming remarks was on the need to influence decision makers and makers of public policy on the importance of applying an integrated approach towards sustainable development as the basis for moving towards compliance with the 2030 Agenda and effectively facing the 17 global challenges expressed in the SDGs and the "leave no one behind" remark. It is indispensable for Latin America and the Caribbean Region to aim at social inclusion for the achievement of sustainable development, making it a more resilient, prosperous, fair and inclusive region. Recognition of the need to build a decent future that conserves the environment, where people can trust that they will have a long healthy life was also mentioned.

Accordingly, initiatives with an integrated approach are important because they effectively face the complexity of development challenges, particularly for poverty eradication in a scenario of climate change and socio-economic uncertainty. These challenges are of such magnitude that the human race is at a decisive point to face them jointly. This requires the responsibility and contribution of all social and economic sectors, stakeholders and a multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary and innovative view that includes new technologies and working arrangements in partnership. Hence, it is vital for countries to share experiences, as a way to enhance implementation of concrete actions and save time on the learning curve.

Pointing out that there is no need to decide between the economy, environmental protection and social wellbeing, synergistic implementation of SDGs may produce jobs and ensure future wellbeing, bolstering cooperation within the limits of a fragile, finite planet. In this sense, the experiences presented at the Symposium prove that it is possible to comply simultaneously with the three dimensions of the integrated approach at all 3 levels: locally, nationally and regionally.

Finally, authorities underscored the importance of periodically carrying out similar events in the region to foster knowledge exchange and South – South cooperation on common challenges to Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, they stressed the need for working together for populations facing the highest vulnerability, mobilization of new international cooperation and private resources and South – South cooperation to build a world that permits sustainable production while respecting the sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems.

" The 2030 Agenda is the main global challenge and invites all countries to unite on environmental and social issues and institutional methods for facing the 17 macro SDG challenges and their 169 goals, under the responsibility and accountability of all sectors, In Brazil, the 2030 Agenda comprises a multidisciplinary view where environmental issues acquire further strength. This event is a fundamental step, that must be repeated throughout the years until 2030"
Mrs. Suely Mara Vaz de Araújo – President of IBAMA, Brazil.

It requires the application of an integrated approach to build coherent projects. The 2030 Agenda is concerned with the three development dimensions, while the MDGs were identified as anti-poverty movements in history, SDGs are more ambitious, because they seek to leave no one behind. This means reaching out to everyone, regardless of their condition, race, religion and gender identity – to that end, the capacity for innovation is fundamental. It is vital to share experiences between countries. There is no doubt that an exchange of experiences provides help for concrete actions. LAC has particular characteristics for attaining development, e.g. for sustainable development it is indispensable to grow with social inclusion”

Mr. Niky Fabiancic – UN Resident Coordinator in Brazil.

“The purpose of the 2030 Agenda is a fair, inclusive, safer world with social, economic and environmental development that requires agreements between governments and the private sector to achieve objectives. The stories shared at this Symposium are inspiring, because they are led by many persons in the region and demonstrate that we are committed and innovators, showing what we can achieve when we put sustainable development into action. We don’t have to decide between the economy and personal wellbeing to meet the SDGs. Complied experiences demonstrate that environmental, economic and social goals can be reached simultaneously. We must fight poverty, inequality and help protect the environment. SDGs must generate jobs and ensure future environmental wellbeing. Bolstering cooperation is a key factor within the limits of a fragile planet, in addition to knowledge sharing to resolve common problems “

Mr. Leo Heileman – UN Environment Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean

“SDGs don’t give us anything new that we didn’t already know about. The great innovation of the SDGs is in how they are presented, as a logical index of easily understandable, easily communicable contents. They come with a message, a good story for any political or community leader to understand. SDGs are not merely a sector agenda; they touch people’s hearts; from the richest to the poorest citizen.

The most important point in the SDGs is to have substantive institutional objectives. There’s a lot of discussion on environmental law under SDGs 13, 14 and 15, but let’s not forget the two basic goals: 16 which deals with access to justice and information and 17 as the principal innovation of the SDGs, that reminds us of the need for partnership implementation tools to give the Agenda permanence and durability “.

Minister Herman Benjamín – Supreme Court of Justice of Brazil

“Demonstrative experiences were selected for the Symposium, examples of good practices that point the way to be followed

and the South – South Cooperation options [...]

SDGs must inspire our decisions in the next 15 years. With more than 8 billion inhabitants, the world can no longer sustain the current production and consumption development model. Thus, we require inclusion and wellbeing to face climate challenges and achieve the Paris Agreement. [...] Decreasing poverty is the greatest challenge. In the “Future We Want” there is a global commitment to balance the three dimensions of sustainable development. We must work together to prioritize vulnerable populations through the mobilization of resources to build a world with sustainable production models that respect correct use of biodiversity. A resilient, fair and equitable planet that faces disasters and resolves conflicts, reducing the number of refugees, improving access to water and protecting of strategic ecosystems. [...] This is the defining moment to face challenges together. Climate change is the greatest threat and it has the paradoxical capacity to unite us for the preservation of life. The Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda together with good practices presented at the Symposium, prove that this possible”

Mr. Samey Filho – Minister of Environment of Brazil.

Session 1. Integrated Approach and Policy Coherence for the 2030 Agenda

This session was the starting point for the Symposium, which included a quick review of the background and the road taken since the World Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, referred to as Rio+20, and presentation of related sustainable development progress and challenges in the region. In addition, progress on the preparation of countries for its implementation since the approval of 2030 Agenda was analyzed. This session was developed in two Panels.

Panel 1.1: Global Goals in Regional Focus – The Rio + 20 legacy for advancing sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

Moderator: Ms. Denise Hamu, Director of UN Environment Country Office in Brazil.

Opening Talk: Mr. Aron Belinky - Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV).

Comments by:

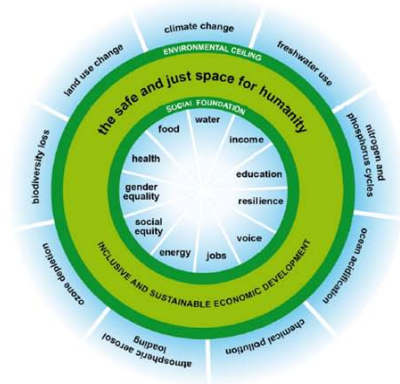
- Mr. Jorge Abraão – President of the Ethos Institute, Brazil.
- Mrs. Nicole Leotaud – Executive Director, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
- Mrs. Beatriz Martins Carneiro – Executive Secretary, UN Global Compact Network of Brazil.

A support document was prepared in advance for this panel by Aron Belinky, entitled “*The Río+20 Legacy for Advancing the Environmental Dimension of the Sustainable Development Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean.*” This document identifies regional stakeholders with initiatives and documents on policy and planning that prove that the inclusion of the Rio+20 agreements are consistent with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The author and the three speakers referred to the following as the main ideas:

Aron Belinky, spoke briefly on the global agreements made before, in and after Rio+20, mentioning that “we must understand SDGs as a process, with Rio+20 being a turning point. It's not only about the bilateral negotiations. Many stakeholders were mobilized because of this conference and knowledge was generated from the different spheres (official and semiofficial channel, and autonomous stakeholders).”

As the figure shows, sustainable development arises from an organizational combination of all development elements lifting its impact higher to the one achievable by the sum of the environmental, social and economic outcomes. The recently agreed SDGs are the minimum reasonable goals for current and future societies. They cannot be seen in isolation or as a checklist, as they are a network that provides feedback for itself, for simultaneous progress. Likewise, he presented what he called the “cake model”, where the exterior represents the environmental limits, the base the social issues and in the middle is the economy and the space for wellbeing, as shown on the following figure.

The challenge of integration



gather

combine

integrate



Source: Aron Belinky Presentation - Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV).

Jorge Abraão mentioned that the SDGs are configured as a utopic horizon important for societies. This future horizon is a continuous construction that begins today, and builds an opportunity to resolve unattended historical problems. Financing is fundamental, particularly from the richer and corporate sectors. This translates into having to face concentration of wealth and re-arrange short-term development priorities to long-term.

Within this context, economic growth is only a means for reaching sustainable development, in which companies play a basic role as agents for social transformation. They can exert an influence on their employees, suppliers and markets, requiring redefinition of their values and to switch the corporate goal of achieving maximum possible profit to sufficient profit in a finite planet with enormous inequality. This requires information transparency and innovative visions to involve the private sector and how it contributes to SDGs.

In addition, Nicole Leotaud recognized that the civil society is another fundamental stakeholder in implementing the 2030 Agenda and complying with the SDGs. However, it has not been sufficiently integrated into the decision making and policy making processes regarding participative management of natural resources and when an invitation to participation is done, it is superficial. Therefore, civil society must be strengthened to increase technical and financial capacity and facilitate its participation in design and decision making spaces. International agencies can significantly contribute to this by, i.e, supporting the existing proposal for the creation of a national nongovernmental organization (NGO) network to implement and monitor SDGs.

Finally, Beatriz Martins Carneiro emphasized the importance of involving the private sector for SDG compliance and mentioned the basic aspects of the 10 principles of the Global Compact, a corporate sustainability initiative that fosters multisector partnerships and that designed 5 steps for companies to include SDGs in their corporate strategy. The private sector can play a fundamental role in SDG compliance, to the extent that companies can influence their employees, supplier chains, markets and consumers. Lastly, she commented on regional corruption, the establishment of priorities of the development agenda and partnerships to influence public policy as the great challenges of the 2030 Agenda.

Panel 1.2: Integrated policy making towards the 2030 Agenda - A Development Imperative

Moderator: Ambassador Fernando Coimbra – Head of Office for International Affairs - Ministry of the Environment, Brazil.

Panelists:

- Mr. Henrique Villa de Costa Ferreira – National Secretary of Social Coordination – Secretariat of Government, Brazil. *Stakeholders consultation and involvement.*
- Mrs. María Virginia Cajiao – Commissioner of the Presidential Council on Environment, Costa Rica. *Integrated approach to sustainable development in national planning.*
- Mrs. Nadine Brown – Sustainable Development and Regional Planning Division – Planning Institute of Jamaica. *Vision 2030 and SDGs.*
- Mr. Mario Ruiz – Technical National Planning Secretary, Paraguay. *Articulation of SDGs in the National Development Plan.*
- Mr. Carlos Andrés Alape – Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development, Colombia. *Advances in SDG Planning and Mainstreaming the Environmental Dimension.*

During this Panel, presentations were made by representatives of the Governments of Paraguay, Brazil, Costa Rica, Jamaica and Colombia, who shared the steps that they have already taken to initiate the 2030 Agenda implementation at the national level. These countries have made progress by permeating institutional arrangements, National Development Plans and / or shaping long term visions (as in the case of Paraguay and Jamaica).

They also coincided on the challenges in integrating policies that imply internalization of SDGs at the different government sectors, inter-sectoral management; territorializing and operationalizing at subnational levels, availability of tools and infrastructure for information monitoring and management; and translating the goals into the particular contexts and languages of each country and sub regions (“tropicalizing” the SDGs).

To put the 2030 Agenda into effect and comply with the SDGs, Henrique Villa de Costa Ferreira presented a management and governance initiative: The National SDG Commission, with plural participative representation. Through this initiative, Brazil has demonstrated that social participation is key and reiterated his commitment to take no step backwards in this regard.

Moreover, María Virginia Cajiao presented the recent National Pact to move SDGs forward, signed between the three national powers, the civil society and the private sector, and the creation of a High-Level Commission and a Technical Coordination Committee responsible for

its implementation. She also commented that the national commitment for de-carbonization is vital to enhance the other existing efforts, something which has implied and still does, re-arrangement of economic and social priorities.

Likewise, Nadine Brown mentioned the role of the Inter-Ministry Working Group and the Thematic Working Group, responsible for defining the scope of the SDGs in the country and its alignment with the national 2030 Vision.

Mario Ruiz commented on how strong support from the civil society and involvement of governmental authorities led to the approval of the National Development Plan with a 2030 horizon. This entails a transformation of the budgetary framework for all public intuitions. Continuity of this plan was given to the National Development Council, which brings together the four branches of the State, civil society, representatives of farmer organizations and the private sector.

Finally, Colombia described the creation of a High-Level Inter Institutional Commission on SDGs, as well as pilot projects which are developing the local baseline in high biodiversity risk areas and in urban centers with strong environmental conflicts. Colombia is also working on a national public policy document (CONPES) that defines the SDG implementation strategy.

The presentations on the alternatives undertaken by each country demonstrate that the 2030 Agenda implementation road map will have a different emphasis and priorities in accordance with each national reality. However, knowing the existing options and progress steps makes it possible to extract lessons learned as well as mechanisms and useful methodologies adaptable to other contexts.

Session 2: Sustainable Development in Practice in Latin America and the Caribbean

Introduction – Messages from the Field: Introduction to experiences and compilation process

Piedad Martin – Regional Development Coordination Officer, UN Environment Regional Office

UN Environment presented the publication “**Sustainable Development in Practice: Applying an Integrated Approach in Latin America and the Caribbean.**” For its elaboration, UN Environment consulted 33 countries in the region and worked with a systematization team. The process, developed during 2016, included interviews with 96 persons and reviewed more than 100 experiences. Of these, 57 were identified as compliant with all the established criteria in the sustainable development integrated approach. Lastly, 28 of these initiatives were documented in depth. These and a database of the additional experiences are available at the digital platform: [UNEP Live](#). The analysis of these experiences has resulted in a preliminary definition of six messages from the field that comprise a large part of the learning acquired from the application of a sustainable development integrated approach and advance part of the recommendations to move sustainable development forward in a practical manner:

1. [Breaking](#) silos versus bridging them: The role of sector-specific initiatives in advancing integrated policy.
2. [Global](#) vs. local responses: Sustainable development is context-specific, but broader policies matter.
3. [Transforming](#) realities: Sustainability requires innovation and cultural shifts
4. [Knit](#) the network: Partnerships as a tool for coherent implementation and scaling up impact
5. The role of the private sector: To push for an integrated approach from the economic perspective.
6. Monitoring comprehensive implementation: Balanced long-term decisions require data.

These six central topics were discussed at later sessions of the Symposium, divided in four thematic groups and presented by thirteen representatives.

Panel 2.1: Integrating innovation and technology

Moderator: Mr. Juan Bello. UN Environment ROLAC.

Panelists:

- Mr. Renato Saraiva – Director of Revitalization of Hydrographic Basins – Secretariat of Water Resources and Urban Environment, Brazil. *Agua Doce Program.*
- Mr. José María Bonilla Argueta - Director of the Technical Community Institute, Honduras. *Quesungual.*
- Mr. Jeffrey Villanueva – President of the Conservationist Association of Rural and Alternative Community Tourism, Costa Rica. *ACTUAR.*
- Mrs. Kadijah Edwards– Technical Officer of the UNDP ICCAS Project, Granada. *Rain water harvesting at the Grenada School for Special Education.*

The analysis of the compiled experiences shows that 40% of them successfully applied a new technology for sustainable development. However, this could not have been done without undertaking true cultural change. In this regard, the four presentations made by this panel, agreed on how technology and innovation were key factors for success, but also on how empowerment of local stakeholders involved in the transformations is needed to attain expected improvements in quality of life.

For example, the “*Agua Doce Program in Brazil*” (presented by Renato Saraiva), demonstrated that implanting salinization technologies in response to water scarcity in the semi-arid region of Brazil, requires a strong link between state governments and communities to ensure an integral vision on health, environment and income generation and therefore sustainability of improvement in the quality of life.

The experience of the “*Quesungual Model in Honduras*” (presented by José María Bonilla Argueta) shows a social transformation process which combines traditional and scientific technologies to manage sustainable soils through the promotion of agroforestry systems. The results present radical changes by making people part of the solution while participating in the benefits of a road-map towards more sustainable development.

The “*Conservationist Association of Rural and Alternative Community Tourism in Costa Rica (ACTUAR)*” (presented by Jeffrey Villanueva) is an innovative form of association for conservation of an alternative rural tourism that has become an ethno – eco – tourism, food safety process, land recovery and conservation movement that ensures that 80 to 85% of the income due to economic activities is distributed at the community level.

Lastly, “*Rain water harvesting at the Grenada School for Special Education*” (Kadijah Edwards), shows that technologies that adapt to climate change are not only response mechanisms to water scarcity but when applied to a school, also strengthen the sense of community, the self-esteem of special needs students, and promote healthier lifestyles and sustainability through links with the private tourism sector.

Panel 2.2: Integration among sectors: approaches for coherence

Moderator: Mr. José Dallo. Director of South Cone Sub regional Office. UN Environment

Panelists:

- Mr. David Latchman – Head of Planning for the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. *Greening Safe Hospitals*
- Mrs. Mauro Oliveira Pires - Director of Extractivism, Secretariat of Extractivism and Sustainable Rural Development of the Ministry of the Environment, Brazil. *Bolsa Verde Programme*
- Mr. José Antonio Torres – General Manager Asociación Municipios Los Nonualcos, El Salvador. *Municipal Synergies*.

The systemized experiences reveal that inter-sectoral efforts that enhance links between the three dimensions of sustainable development provide an excellent starting point for the improvement of policy integration and coherence. Beyond recognizing the importance of inter-sectoral and interinstitutional coordination mechanisms, this panel presented inter-sectoral experiences driven by a specific sector and discussed on multidimensional aspects to implement its strategies.

“Greening Safe Hospitals” (presented by David Latchman) is a safe hospital strategy that has been broadly implemented in the region to decrease vulnerability to disasters at these critical health sector infrastructures. However, a key factor in the process has been that these institutions have to be environmentally friendly and efficient, with a small carbon footprint, better use of water and waste treatment.

In addition, the “Bolsa Verde Programme in Brazil” (presented by Mauro Pires) was established as a complement to Brazil’s No Misery Programme, through a mechanism that compensates families living under conditions of poverty, many located in protected natural areas, to carry out environmentally friendly activities and protect their territory. In this way, the fight against poverty becomes compatible with the conservation of natural heritage.

Locally, municipal collaboration has proven to be a source of many synergies in sustainable development as demonstrated by the experience of the "Association of Los Nonualcos Municipalities in El Salvador" (José Antonio Torres). The local association arose after the 2001 earthquake, as an opportunity to rebuild and develop resilient territory. However, within a short time they recognized that municipal synergies go well beyond what was originally planned and include many other aspects of land management and local development, including planning and innovation processes in political dialogue and in the public agenda.

Panel 2.3: Integrating finance: economic perspective

Moderator: Mrs. Dolores Barrientos. Director of the UN Environment Country Office, Mexico.

Panelists:

- Mr. Marcelo Fernández – Centro Mario Molina, Chile. *Healthy Air and Green Taxation.*
- Mr. Bert de Bievre – Technical Secretary, Water Fund of Quito (FONAG), Ecuador. *Water Funds*
- Mr. Jaime Andrés García Urrea - Executive Director Corporación Más Bosques, Colombia. *BANCO2.*

It is important for the innovation process to include tax toolkits and other financial mechanisms to permit sustainable development initiatives to continue to achieve the expected impact. For all the three initiatives considered during this part of the Symposium, alternative financial toolkits were analyzed, identifying replicable schemes in other contexts.

In the case of “Healthy Air in Santiago de Chile” (presented by Marcelo Fernández), the green tax is just one of a long list of measures designed to improve air quality in the metropolitan area and to finance the Decontamination Program. The key has been to enact regulations along with the taxes and implement reliable pollution measurements. In addition, the simplicity in defining the tax makes it easy for users to understand.

The “Quito Water Protection Fund” (presentation done by Bert de Bievre), is an example of just one of 18 tools in the region. This is a public – private partnership that ensures water supply by conserving its sources in the upper mountain regions. It has been successful in maintaining financial sustainability through a trust and the application of a local rate on water distribution.

The “BANCO2 initiative in Colombia” (presented by Jaime Andrés García Urrea) developed tools to facilitate forest conservation by farmer and indigenous families, who receive financial compensation, access to banking services and technical assistance. This is a public – private initiative through which individuals and companies can offset their ecological footprint. The project focuses on the fact that conservation must be considered a productive project, and not an obligation of the most vulnerable.

Panel 2.4: Integration of stakeholders

Moderator: Mrs. Esther Corral – SDG Coordinator of the UN Environment Country Office, Brazil.

Panelists:

- Mrs. Ileana Saborit – Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment, Cuba. *Recycling Cooperatives.*
- Mr. Rolando Vargas Nina – General Manager of Asociación Forestal Indígena Nacional, Bolivia. *AFIN National Forest Association*
- Mrs. Vicki Assevero – Founder and Executive Director. *Green Market of Santa Cruz*

The analysis of these experiences indicates that 75% of the initiatives involve five of the six types of different stakeholders considered, making this one of the factors for success and sustainability. The most common partnerships among these involve government institutions, civil society and the private sector. In fact, what the three experiences in this panel have in common is that to attain sustainable development outcomes, it is fundamental to integrate key interested parties from the starting point of the process.

The “Recycling Cooperatives in Cuba” (presentation undertaken by Ileana Saborit) were able to involve a vulnerable, traditionally excluded group as the recyclers in a formal scheme. To make these cooperatives viable, they signed contracts with state generators (industry and services), with a fixed purchase raw material rate from the population, and were encouraged to undertake purchases in isolated communities and promote actions in the schools. All of this was supported by national economic policy guidelines that seek “to promote the intensification of recycling and increase the added value of the products recovered”.

The “National Forest Association in Bolivia” (presented by Rolando Vargas Nina) uses partnerships to integrate another population excluded from economic circuits, specifically indigenous people, permitting them to benefit from the sustainable forest management of 1.8 million hectares in eighteen indigenous territories. This has been possible since 2005 through a forest law that has permitted the development of a forest and social model to improve the quality of life in these communities.

“The Santa Cruz Green Market in Trinidad and Tobago” (presented by Vicki Assevero) is proposed as a consumption alternative that has changed ecological systems and the balance between humanity and nature. More than a physical space for exchange, it is an experience where producers, small business people, nature and consumers are integrated to foster values such as solidarity, trust and inclusion and the principles of safety and social mobility. The biggest challenge in this experience is encouraging stakeholders to serve sustainability further.

Session 3. A toolkit for an integrated approach

This session had two thematic panels and one interactive plenary session on gap analysis for the integration of environmental and socio – economic aspects into sustainable development policies and strategies. The main conclusions of each panel are presented below:

Panel 3.1: The SDGs as a network of targets – Innovation and Integration for synergistic action

Moderator: Mr. Rodrigo Rodríguez – Chief Cabinet Advisor for the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Argentina.

Panelists:

- Mrs. Raquel Breda – Director of the Department of the Ministry of the Environment, Brazil. *Sustainable Consumption and Production: SDG 12 and more.*
- Mr. Carlos Tamayo – General Manager for Solidaridad y Desarrollo Empresarial (EDPYME), Peru. *Microfinance for Ecosystem Based Adaptation: SDG 13 and more.*
- Mrs. Elsa Guevara de Melchor – President of the Municipal Association of Los Nonualcos and Mayor of Santa María Ostuma, El Salvador. *SDG at the local level: a necessary synergy.*

The primary message of this segment was the demonstration that it is not necessary to have many programs to implement specific SDGs as individual objectives or goals. Rather, despite the analyzed experiences not being conceived to implement the 2030 Agenda; they however, effectively contribute in practice to the implementation of a range of two to eight SDGs. By adopting an integrated approach, most of them contribute to four or five SDGs and to several targets.

To demonstrate this topic in practice, the panel presented concrete cases that achieved these positive synergies. Sustainable consumption and production strategies (SDG 12) was used as a model to present specific clear synergies that have a direct impact on SDGs 8, 9, 12, 13 and 17. In the case of Brazil, for example, the “Sustainable Consumption and Production Action Plan” (presented by Raquel Breda) has leveraged other public action sectors and society.

Climate action is another way to foster synergies on food safety, resilient agriculture, sustainable water management and ecosystem conservation. This is particularly effective by integrating “Microfinances into Ecosystem based Adaptation” (presented by Carlos Tamayo) permitting, in the case of Peru, the incorporation of productive aspects through viable financial mechanisms that ensure sustainability in production and in family income, while fostering environmental conservation. “SDGs on a Local Level are a necessary synergy” (presentation undertaken by Elsa Guevara de Melchor) because of the role of local stakeholders and specifically, mayor’s offices, local government and civil society organizations have in achieving coherence and to generate social, environmental and economic outcomes which have an impact on SDG 1, 5, 9, 11, 15 and 16.

Interactive Plenary Session Gap Analysis: Institutional changes required to achieve coherent progress in SDGs and integrate environmental and socio – economic aspects into sustainable development policies and strategies.

There were ten institutional changes extracted from an analysis of the systematized experiences that were considered vital to move forward with the integrated sustainable development approach in Latin America and the Caribbean

1. Create trust between stakeholders.
2. Have public information available for participation.
3. Overcome resistance to change.
4. Put individual interests aside.
5. Ensure economic – Financial Sustainability.
6. Ensure political and institutional will for continuity.
7. Go beyond sectoral fields and achieve coherence between their policies.
8. Allow flexibility of public planning process and project financing.
9. Make technical information available for decision making.
10. Transcend the vision of short term benefits.

Group works were initiated afterwards, with orienting questions formulated for discussion on concrete proposals to overcome these challenges as shown on the following table:

1) Key elements for generating change towards sustainable development:

- **Involve all parties from the start:** This is essential to achieve the sustainability of initiatives, as social networks and associations help to consolidate the process. Within the “leave no one behind” inclusive approach, each involved stakeholder carries out part of the change, which must be based on win-win relationships. Just as important as this is the involvement of the private sector, because of the role it has in promoting continuity beyond political changes and as a supplementary source of financing. Communication is vital in this context as a strategy to promote changes that advocate for the adoption of an integrated approach to sustainable development.
- **Empower communities and create multiple leaderships and incentives,** so that communities obtain capacities for participative negotiation in top-down initiatives and foster bottom-up initiatives. In this scenario, the government must generate the necessary incentives for civil society and the private sector to become involved and promote the integration of the SDGs. It is important that community involvement is multi-leadership to depersonalize processes. This is vital for the continuity of actions and generation of collective governance. More effective spaces for consensus between civil society and the private sector are required. At the same time, social control, accountability and transparency are important factors to attain democratic decisions and obtain trust and legal security.
- **Generation of a framework that favors SDGs in countries,** to ensure the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in legislation and public action, recognizing the multiple social contexts within countries (regionalize priorities), ensuring political tools are available to facilitate an integrated approach to sustainable development and sustainable financing and access to credits is viable for integrated approach initiatives. For this last point, coordination mechanisms between donor and cooperation agencies are necessary (possibly in working groups) to align the priorities for the country.

2) Institutional changes and elements are needed to adopt an integrated approach in development policies and strategies and to proceed with SDGs in a coherent integrated manner.

- **Build and consolidate inter-sectoral and inter-ministry synergies and fora** for the creation of collective agendas that foster greater government efficiency along with vertical and horizontal political coherence, including at the different subnational levels.
- **Governmental appropriation of the integrated approach to achieve SDGs,** as a mainstreaming commitment, which requires to:
 - a. Overcome resistance to change and individual interests.
 - b. Move beyond sectoral fields and attain policy coherence.
 - c. Ensure the participation of local stakeholders as a vital factor.
 - f. Generate incentives for the application of the integrated approach to sustainable development
 - h. Innovate at the institutional level: Do things differently, recognizing that current models were and are not sufficient to face the current challenges.
- **Have a planning, monitoring and evaluation structure for the different sustainable development dimensions:** To achieve this, the adaptation of the existing monitoring structures to fulfill the new data requirements and include community monitoring to produce quality information for decision making is required. The role of ministries and national planning departments is definitive to elaborate the appropriate framework in the National Development Plan of each country, with the support of high-level Inter-Sectoral Councils and Commissions that foster the integrated approach and interinstitutional and inter-sectoral coordination.

Panel 3.2: Science - Policy Dialogue: Using science and information to report SDG implementation, monitoring and review, nationally and regionally

Moderator: Mr. Juan Bello. Division of Early Warning and Assessment Regional Coordinator – UN Environment ROLAC.

Panelists:

- Mr. Víctor Romero – SIUBEN Department of Socio-Economic Analysis, Dominican Republic. *The environmental vulnerability index applied to social policy.*
- Mr. Adolfo Ayuso-Audry – Deputy General Director of the National SDG Committee, Office of the President, México. Mexico's monitoring of the implementation of the SDGs.

This panel discussed the importance of better informed decision making and sustainable development monitoring. This is fundamental as one in four of the analyzed experiences developed and applied a new tool for the measurement and evaluation of different purposes. The panel discussed two concrete initiatives:

- The specific Environmental Vulnerability Index toolkit implemented by the Dominican Republic, applied to their social policy to prevent and mitigate the risks that affect the most vulnerable population. The information gathered through the use of this index permits targeting public investment for social purposes including special attention to the most exposed families, prioritizing of actions, i.e. relocation.
- At the national level, the Mexican system for generation and analysis of information was presented, as well as the Technical Committee that monitors the SDGs and coordinates the national generation of 200 to 230 SDG indicators.

This requires quality information to make adequate decisions on sustainable development (e.g. with respect to climate vulnerability). Nevertheless, participants mentioned the significant lack of information in LAC for the different development dimensions (social, environmental and economic). A large part of the existing information is inconsistent, not comparable, or has technical or time gaps arising from erratic information systems and lack of continuity over time. Without reliable evidence decision making becomes impossible.

Another challenge presented in the panel refers to how information is communicated, and specifically on the need to translate the scientific data into a language close to the one used by decision makers, policy makers and citizens. In this sense, there is an explicit need for robust monitoring programs that generate comprehensible evidence to support the identification of clear change in the environment. This requires more compact, direct information, connected to the realities of the countries, and the concerns of the people. Connections to our environment require an enormous transition in information management. To do this, we need more involvement and empowerment from citizens, leaders of opinions, artists, communicators and persons with knowledge. SDG monitoring indicators, therefore, must be easy to understand and communicate while ensuring the political will to maintain and modernize information systems.

In this scenario, the open science concept may work to move towards collaborative schemes which enhance information production and knowledge as a central pillar.

Session 4: South – South and Triangular Cooperation for the 2030 Agenda

The objective of this session was to evaluate challenges and identify opportunities and toolkits to promote horizontal, vertical and intersectoral partnerships among countries. In addition, to identify needs and proposals to support the consolidation of an integrated approach in the region through South – South and Triangular cooperation schemes, to share innovative, cost effective and adaptable solutions for the different development challenges. There were two thematic panels and an interactive plenary session within this session, as presented below.

Panel 4.1: Fostering opportunities for partnerships

Moderator: Ambassador. María Jacqueline Mendoza – General Secretary of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization.

Panelists:

- Mr. Brian Francis. Director of Economic Affairs and Regional Integration of the OECS. *The role of sub regional cooperation mechanisms.*
- Mr. Andrés F. Zuluaga – Sustainable Cattle Ranching Project Director, Colombia. *The private sector as a catalyst of sustainability.*
- Mr. Ignacio Fígoli – Renewable Energies Advisor for the National Energy Direction, Uruguay. *Partnerships for sustainable transformation: The Energy Transition in Uruguay.*

During this segment, panelists debated on the opportunities SDGs are bringing and will enhance regarding set up and consolidation of partnerships between stakeholders. Of the experiences analyzed, 25% have been replicated by other stakeholders, which shows that the Latin American and Caribbean region is immersed in a regional cooperation process to adapt and escalate successful experiences. Three different viewpoints regarding partnerships were discussed in this Panel:

Brian Francis presented the OECS initiative as an example of how important it is for multiple actors to address development complexities. This mechanism tackles problems raised by the countries in this sub region, such as high vulnerability and variability and climate change, poverty and lack of food safety. As a strategy to face these challenges, the territory has moved forward with sub-regional mechanisms and coordinated actions between national levels and second level organizations, such as the Central Bank of the Caribbean.

From the private sector's view, Andrés F. Zuluaga presented the Sustainable Livestock experience, indicating how the private sector representing livestock breeders acted as a catalyst for sustainability, leading a change process that is decreasing the negative impacts from livestock activities and improving the income of farmers.

Ignacio Fígoli, a government representative, presented the transformation process of the energy matrix in Uruguay which has included the transition to cleaner energy. This initiative demonstrates, that after a crisis, a change of such magnitude is only possible with the participation of all stakeholders: leadership and decision making from the national Government, supported by laws and a strategic plan; the generators and private stakeholders for the

development of an efficient market and user citizens committed to energy savings and efficient use.

Panel 4.2: Views on financial and technical assistance for the 2030 Agenda implementation.

Representatives from international organisms with presence in the region participated in the last Panel of the Symposium:

Moderator: Mrs. Ligia Castro – Director of the Andean Development Corporation (CAF).
The role of financial institutions in SDG implementation.

Panelists:

- Ambassador AudMarit Wiig – Norwegian Ambassador to Brazil.
- Minister Andrea Watson, Deputy Director of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC)
- Mrs. Priscilla Miranda – Director of International Cooperation of the Mexican International Cooperation Agency for Development (AMEXCID).

Ambassador AudMarit Wiig called for not decreasing international cooperation aid and for an understanding of how global commitments are supplementary (Paris Agreement, Biodiversity Convention, Action Agenda for Financing Development and the 2030 Agenda). She also stressed on the need to identify how SDG efforts also advance the compliance of the Paris Agreement (2015 Climate Change Conference) and Aichi goals (2010 Biodiversity Agreement). She too mentioned on the progress regarding the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda with respect to financing for development, as a point for moving the 2030 Agenda forward.

The importance of private organizations supporting financing and SDG achievements in a combined public and private resource mobilization strategy was also mentioned. However, panelists underscored that outcomes and monitoring indicators are required, along with clear reports to verify and generate trust in all stakeholders.

Andrea Watson presented the fields of action and priorities of the Brazil Cooperation strategy. As explained, South – South Cooperation is focused on training government officials, as well as providing technical assistance. She also indicated that Brazil's position on SDGs has set the eradication of poverty as a priority, as well as the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Finally, Priscilla Miranda indicated that there is a lack of communication and disclosure on SDGs in the region and that urgent consideration should be given to the establishment of mechanisms that assess projects, programs and strategies from the viewpoint of their contribution to the 2030 Agenda. She identified the following working points:

- Disclose the work undertaken between international cooperation agencies and the United Nations System.
- Strengthen capacities for South – South cooperation and the exchange of experiences regarding the 2030 Agenda.
- Train local and multilateral Latin American banking and financial schemes.

- Move towards an increased integration of the private sector.
- Create synergies between sub regional mechanisms.

Interactive Plenary Session Needs and Opportunities for Regional Cooperation that promote an Integrated Approach to SDG implementation.

This working session focused on the pre-identification of opportunities and on outlining regional cooperation proposals that support the replication of good experiences of the integrated approach to sustainable development and the achievement of SDGs. Accordingly, five proposals arose:

1. Community Learning and green social entrepreneurships

This proposal focuses on fostering green social entrepreneurships, with incentives for micro-companies to become integrated into the tax system. This means that a purely macroeconomic vision would be supplemented by a deliberate search for improved human development.

Micro-company integration and growth can be achieved through guilds and corporate sectors (e.g. rural tourism, artisans, traditional medicine, etc.); promoting information management by communities through the use of technologies and through fostering of national laws that recognize the role of communities as primary stakeholders of the economy and social development. One clear experience that has already generated toolkits in this regard is the case of ACTUAR in Costa Rica, that can be transferred to the English-Speaking Caribbean region, and specifically to rural community sustainable tourism entrepreneurs.

2. Generate Alternative Sustainable Implementation Models that Link Productive and Environmental Areas.

This group defined a proposal to promote agro-forestation with bioenergy goals in the region. There are several SDGs that involve agrosilvopastoral systems. This was evident during the Symposium from the experiences presented (Quesungual and Sustainable Livestock Breeding), which linked to SDG goals/targets such as: ending poverty, food safety, access to water, non-polluting energy, decent jobs and economic growth, responsible consumption, climate change tackling actions and partnerships to achieve objectives. In addition, the Paris Agreement opens new opportunities for financing projects that seek to mitigate and adapt to climate change, with a synergetic approach.

The proposal considers the fostering of activities for energy purposes in a harmoniously integration with agriculture and livestock activities through agrosilvopastoral systems that generate a beneficial productive impact (better use of soil, benefits to livestock), a reduced environmental impact (reduction in GHG, sustainability in the use of natural resources) and an increased economic impact providing a new source of income for producers. There is an interest in the Southern Cone to promote experiences carried out in other countries in the agrosilvopastoral area, but incorporating the bioenergy component as well.

3. Spaces for Regional Exchange and Learning on the Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development.

This proposal includes designing spaces for regional exchanges, such as workshops, field visits, forums, etc., particularly on; institutional arrangements for implementation of public

sustainable development policies, integration of agriculture, livestock breeding and forest activities with bioenergy production and environmental, economic and social indicators.

In addition, the creation of a “Regional Multisector Roundtable with an Integrated Approach” was proposed, to be led by UN Environment, along with an information platform. Continuation of systematization of experiences in the region was proposed to enhance the documentation of a wealth of practices that can be replicated for SDG implementation.

4. Begin a Sub Regional Cooperation Process in Central America.

This initiative seeks to articulate the rural banking model and Payment for Environmental Services developed in Colombia with BanCO2, with the experience in Quesungual, Honduras and ACTUAR in Costa Rica, together with other relevant initiatives in Central America, including the Central American Dry Corridor, the Meso American Biological Corridor and others related to green financing, microfinancing for ecosystem-based adaptation, sustainable productive projects and integrated ecosystem management.

The proposal is designed to facilitate the exchange of experiences to expedite implementation of schemes to pay for environmental services for rural communities in Central America based on 1) making the BanCO2 model known to rural community leaders, governments, representatives from the financial sector, offsetting companies and potential sponsors in Central America; 2) identifying pilot projects to implement the scheme and 3) providing recommendations and proposing a road map for the implementation of the model in the region.

5. Financing projects with an integrated approach towards sustainable development

A proposal was made to create a Regional Sustainable Development Fund and a green investment platform in partnership with the private sector.

Session 5: Official Closure

- Mrs. Denise Hamu - Director of the UN Environment Country Office in Brazil.
- Ambassador Fernando Coimbra – Head of Office for International Affairs - Ministry of the Environment, Brazil.
- Rubia Auxiliadora Constancio Quintão - General Coordinator at National Secretary of Social Coordination – Presidency of the Republic of Brazil

This group is for change and we must change the world. Today we are accompanied by a large idealistic group that wants to make things happen. We are demonstrating that it is possible to change the world.”
Denise Hamu - Director of the UN Environment Office in Brazil.

Ambassador Fernando Coimbra stressed how the UN Environment Integrated Approach Project with the support of the Brazilian Government, has begun a South – South cooperation process with the development of this Symposium. He underscored that this exchange offers possibilities for working together and sharing lessons learned. Finally, he stated: *“The environmental view is present in so many issues and experiences, which demonstrates that the region is very clearly observing the opportunities that are arising. Brazil will continue to work to encourage cooperation and working together with such an important partner as UN Environment.*

As a final message, Denise Hamu, after expressing her appreciation to all participants and organizations at the Symposium, made the following commitments to continue the process:

1. Produce a list of political recommendations on the conclusions of the Symposium and the in-depth analysis of the experiences for the First Regional Sustainable Development Forum (Mexico, April 2016)
2. Compile concrete toolkits to position environmental considerations within the 2030 Agenda and SDG strategies and implementation.
3. Develop regional cooperation actions, specifically formulate particular actions for South – South and triangular cooperation to promote cooperation between countries regarding the adoption of an integrated approach to sustainable development.
4. Use publications to visualize and share experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean and with other regions as part of the practical contributions that regional stakeholders are doing for the 2030 Agenda.
5. Strengthen partnerships with the Brazilian government and other governments in the region, as well as with stakeholders, to advance in the implementation of an integrated approach that will turn towards more sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

“Alone we achieve nothing. We will take each other's hands and walk towards the implementation of 2030 Agenda”

Ambassador Fernando Coimbra, Head of the International Affairs Advisory Office of the Ministry of the Environment, Brazil