

**INTER-REGIONAL REVIEW MEETING
FOR THE 5-YEAR HIGH LEVEL REVIEW OF THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY FOR THE
FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BARBADOS PROGRAMME OF ACTION
FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND STATES (SIDS)
NEW YORK, SATURDAY 8 MAY 2010**

**Overview and Outcome of
AIMS Regional Review Meeting
(8-9 March 2010, Maldives)**

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OVERVIEW

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- NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ENBALING ENVIRONMENT
- PROGRESS ACHIEVED
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INTRODUCTION

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- Unique circumstances of AIMS region (wide geographical coverage; socio-economic diversity; absence of single regional body representing all AIMS SIDS; the absence of an AIMS region-devoted UN body)
- Participating Countries (Comoros, Guinea Bissau, Maldives, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Singapore)
- Observer institutions (Commonwealth Secretariat, UNDESA/SIDS Unit, UNEP, UNDP, Indian Ocean Commission)

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

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- National sustainable development strategies (NSDS) or equivalent (integrated, participatory, dynamic, responsive)
- Various approaches in individual countries
- Need for AIMS intra-regional mechanism for SD

PROGRESS ACHIEVED

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- Progress towards some MDGs
- Enhanced political commitment and public awareness on SD issues
- Resilience building (through economic reforms, improved natural resource management, early warning systems, pollution control, land planning, pursuit of CC adaptation and lower-carbon economies)
- Institutional and legal reforms
- Increased multistakeholder involvement in SD decision-making processes

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED – (1)

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- ❑ Multilaterally recognised economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities exacerbated by climate change, pandemics and the financial/fuel/food crises
- ❑ No SIDS dedicated and effective response measures (No SIDS-dedicated financing)
- ❑ Increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters such as cyclones, floods, tsunamis or droughts, some aggravated by CC and

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED – (2)

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- ❑ Limited financial resources, commercial viability and IPR issues hinder shift towards renewable energy
- ❑ Capacity constraints to engage in energy conservation measures and sustainable buildings
- ❑ Environmentally sound management of solid and hazardous wastes
- ❑ Water quality and/or availability

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED – (3)

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- ❑ Sea level rise, coastal erosion and development pressure on coastal zone
- ❑ Marine resources management, including constraints for surveillance of large EEZ and piracy
- ❑ Increased risk of marginalisation resulting from limited and costly air access, maritime and inland transport and telecommunications including ICT
- ❑ Sea-lockedness, small size and remoteness

LESSONS LEARNED

- ❑ Need for enhanced advocacy role of SIDS in international scenes
- ❑ Need for systematic data collection and SD indicators to inform decision-making
- ❑ Potential represented by economic and export diversification, including services
- ❑ To optimize scarce financial resources through programme-based or result-oriented budgeting
- ❑ Food security could be addressed through agricultural biodiversity.

RECENT TRENDS AND EMERGING ISSUES

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- ❑ Accelerated impacts of climate change that have resulted in sea level rise, coral bleaching, extreme weather events
- ❑ Food security problems
- ❑ Piracy
- ❑ Increased drug trafficking
- ❑ Maritime surveillance
- ❑ New pandemics such as the swine flu H1N1, as well as vector-borne diseases like chikungunya.

WAY FORWARD - (1)

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- Need for the international community to conduct a thorough assessment of support provided towards implementation of the *Mauritius Strategy* and agree on what needs to be done to further address the vulnerabilities of SIDS (in accordance with GA resolution 64/199).
- Need to link MSI+5 review to other SD processes, e.g. CSD, MDGs & Rio+20
- Special SIDS group to be recognised in ECOSOC to enable dedicated financing to SIDS

WAY FORWARD - (2)

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- Development of country vulnerability-resilience profiles to support case for SIDS to access concessionary financing irrespective of GP/GNI per capita level.
- Review of UN system support to SIDS, accompanied by the integration of SIDS issues by all UN agencies into their respective work programmes
- UNDESA Technical Cooperation Facility to increase support to AIMS SIDS to develop sustainable development project proposals

WAY FORWARD - (3)

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- SIDS Unit to provide further support to AIMS SIDS to identify and secure funding for implementation of the MSI
- AIMS SIDS to play more prominent role in CC negotiations
- Establishment of an AIMS Regional Centre of Excellence for Climate Change and Development

WAY FORWARD - (4)

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- Need for urgent operationalisation of the Aid for Trade initiative, without awaiting the conclusion of the Doha Development Round
- To address the special challenge for the absence of a devoted AIMS region-based UN or non-UN organization, need to establish regional support mechanisms for intra-regional cooperation, partnerships and exchange
- Capitalise on SIDS-SIDS support (Singapore has trained more than 6,200 SIDS officials through SIDSTEC)

WAY FORWARD - (5)

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- Initiative of Indian Ocean Commission and UNDESA to work out a monitoring and evaluation mechanism, to assess MSI implementation in the region and subsequently in other regions
- Revitalization of SIDSNet and the University Consortium of the Small Island States
- Appeal for international community to fulfil its commitments under different international SD instruments (e.g. Monterrey Consensus, the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness + New, additional and predictable financing under the UNFCCC for climate change adaptation)