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

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OVERVIEW

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INTRODUCTION

- 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

- 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

- 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)

- 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)

- 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)

- 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

- 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)

- 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)

- 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)

- 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)

- 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)

- 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).