

CSD19 IPM
Statement by Australia during the thematic discussion on Small Island
Developing States (28 February 2011)

Thank you Mr Chairman

Australia also welcomes the discussion of issues facing Small Island Developing States in the context of sustainable development. We would also like to thank the Panel for their very useful presentations. These issues are of great importance for our region, especially for our Pacific island neighbours.

Australia is conscious of the significant challenges that these nations face, by virtue of their small size, remoteness, and limited resources. We also recognise that these challenges are exacerbated by climate change, and that SIDS are particularly vulnerable to a range of natural hazards.

As was indicated by the Ambassador Mueller from the Marshall Islands on behalf of AOSIS, in many respects SIDS provide a useful case study on the importance of an integrated approach to sustainable development, addressing environmental, economic and social priorities. Australia encourages continued efforts to improve integration of effort across the three pillars. We were pleased to help with facilitating a resolution in the 2009 ECOSOC session, referred to by Ambassador Aife from Papua New Guinea, which called for a Secretary-General's report on how the UN system can better support the SIDS, and we also look forward to receiving that report this year.

Australia remains strongly committed to supporting Small Island Developing States. In particular, we are continuing to work closely with our neighbours in the Pacific, taking into account the challenges facing particular countries. This includes working to build human capacity, enhance governance structures, and waste management including the removal of hazardous wastes. We also agree with Mr Ramjeawon from Mauritius that more work is needed to improve data collection in SIDS countries.

Australia recognises the importance of the sustainable management of marine resources in supporting food security and economic growth for SIDS, as was outlined by Ambassador Moses from Nauru on behalf of Pacific SIDS. We are supportive of

enhanced efforts, including regional and international coordination, on the management of fish stocks, coral reefs and the marine environment, to ensure sustainability and greater economic self-sufficiency for these countries. We were pleased to work with the Pacific missions in the most recent General Assembly session to draft a resolution on the protection of coral reefs, which received 84 co-sponsors.

Mr Chairman, the challenges facing SIDS are of central importance to efforts to progress sustainable development – including for many countries in our region. We support a continued focus on these issues in the lead up to the Rio +20 conference.

Thank you Mr Chairman.