



United Nations Press Release

Ahead of UN conference, countries seek to boost partnerships with small island developing states

New York, 21 March—Countries today identified critical areas where new global partnerships are needed to strengthen sustainable development in small island developing States, at a meeting to prepare for the UN Conference on Small Island Developing States, which will be held in Apia, Samoa in September.

The countries agreed to focus on developing and strengthening partnerships in six areas including climate change and disaster risk management, oceans and seas biodiversity, water and sanitation, food security and waste management, sustainable economic development, sustainable energy and social development, and health and non-communicable diseases, youth and women.

The six action areas aim to support the Conference's theme "sustainable development of small island states through genuine and durable partnerships." Countries have been discussing new ways to support and collaborate with this group of countries, which face unique vulnerabilities due to their remote location.

"Partnerships really are at the heart of the conference so it is imperative that countries back their words with actions that strengthen existing partnerships or create new ones," said the Conference Secretary-General Wu Hongbo.

"We are pleased that countries are actively engaging and thinking of ways to collaborate well ahead of the Conference."

Some of the voluntary commitments made ahead of the Conference include the creation of a Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency that will be fully operational by 2018 and will tackle the current challenges of access to affordable energy services, energy security and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Another partnership put forward by six countries and various civil society organizations called the Coral Triangle Initiative seeks to protect the Coral Triangle region which is home to the highest coral diversity in the world as well as the highest reef fish diversity. The six countries are Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands and Timor Leste.

"The Conference will seek to build on these commitments to ensure that durable and genuine partnerships on the issues affecting small island developing States are addressed," Mr. Wu said.

Civil society organizations as well as the private sector will also be welcome to pledge their commitments to support small island developing states at the Conference. The general public is also invited to provide ideas of partnerships they would like to see materialized through the Conference website. At the meeting, countries also agreed on procedures for the accreditation of civil society organizations and other major groups.

For more information on the Conference and the preparatory committee see: <http://sids2014.org>

For information on the International Year of Small Island Developing States and ways to get involved visit: <http://www.un.org/islands2014>

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