



United States Department of State

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UN Commission on Sustainable Development 16-17  
Thematic Discussion: Small Islands Developing States  
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Check Against Delivery

Intervention given by: **Susan Ware Harris**, Executive Director, International Affairs Council, Office of International Affairs, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce

Thank you, Madame Chair. I would also like to thank the panel members for their interesting presentations. We value the opportunity provided through the CSD to focus again on the unique situation of Small Island Developing States particularly as applied to the CSD 16-17 thematic issues.

The Barbados and Mauritius strategies remain valuable road-maps for us in tackling these issues. This morning's plenary session and the report of the SG provide important updates and insights into the state of their implementation. Last year, the United States submitted a comprehensive report to the Secretariat detailing its many activities in support of the Barbados Program of Action. We hope that you find it useful description of our comprehensive support to SIDS.

My delegation finds these SIDS-days interesting opportunities for us to focus and consider how we can learn from the SIDS experiences and often, to bring those lessons to bear at home.

It is especially helpful to hear about approaches that work, and solutions that satisfy the special challenges facing island governments and communities with regard to these issues. It is also helpful to hear where there are opportunities for further effort or gaps that need to be filled.

Our discussion is timely. By way of example, I am aware that just recently we have sent a team to assist the Federated States of Micronesia with their food and water-related issues related to the current La Nina event.

The United States is committed to addressing these issues, embracing a full spectrum of efforts – from responding to crisis situations, to improving forecasts, practices and awareness so that crises can be avoided, to conducting the basic monitoring and observations that serve as that basis of our improved understanding of the Earth systems that support us.

We are supporting projects and exchange of expertise with SIDS and with US islands on a range of issues discussed today - eradicating invasive and nuisance species, erosion and sedimentation, improving livestock management, markets, flood and drought forecasting, water scarcity and sanitation, severe weather events, storm surges, coral reefs, sea level rise, tsunami warnings, disaster preparedness, and ecosystem-based management, and natural resource protection.

The Barbados and Mauritius strategies have at their heart the recognition that responsibility for sustainable development begins at home, and requires collaboration and engagement, exchange of information and expertise, and support from the broader community. Today's remarks confirm the validity of this approach. In this, SIDS are a commendable role model.

Thank you.