



Statement at the first Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, we would like to congratulate the member States, especially the Small Island Developing States, supporting United Nations agencies and regional and international organisations for the preparatory work carried out to date for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States.

One of the objectives of the Samoa Conference is to assess the progress made to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. Reports submitted to national, regional and inter-regional preparatory meetings last year indicate the level of achievements and gaps in the implementation. Any further information will facilitate member States' evaluation of the level of achievements and identify the gaps in implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and Mauritius Strategy. It is suggested that the member States discuss ways to establish national monitoring programmes to track how much SIDS have achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action. This could be linked with the sustainable development information and data management system as called for in Paragraph 146 of the outcome of the Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting in Barbados in August last year.

Such an information and data management system would incorporate all elements of sustainable development in SIDS. It would provide the information that enables member states to track their efforts to leave no one behind, and to decouple prosperity and growth from environmental degradation and social inequality. These efforts should include the investments needed to generate more natural, social, and economic capital, and thus to move to a pathway of long-term sustainable development. UNEP firmly believes that these principles should guide the efforts, in SIDS and elsewhere, to achieve sustainable development.

Sufficient data and information that are timely, and of good quality, enable the formulation and correct implementation of appropriate, technically sound, and country-specific science-based policies for sustainable development. This will make possible an approach to implementation of the universally applicable Post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda where each country's pathway is determined, *inter alia*, by its starting point, and by its access to the required means of implementation, including institutional and human capacities.

In this context, UNEP has been requested to provide support in producing a Global Environment Outlook for SIDS within the context of future Global Environment Outlook Reports. We are pleased to inform the Preparatory Committee that it has started developing a SIDS platform to connect sustainable development data and information bases, allowing us to regularly issue environmental outlooks for SIDS. In addition, UNEP will make available relevant data flows and knowledge related to key

SIDS issues on its new web-based knowledge management platform – UNEP-Live, by September 2014 at the Third International Conference on SIDS.

One of the important types of information to be shared among the SIDS are SIDS-specific actions, good practices and solutions. SIDS have implemented many actions and practices that helped to reduce the obstacles to development that are associated with SIDS specific needs and vulnerabilities. Information on what has worked well should be shared among the SIDS. UNEP has been compiling information on UNEP-implemented activities for SIDS.

We firmly support efforts by SIDS to elaborate their own sustainable development models. The Barbados Outcome document mentions Green Economy as one instrument that is available to SIDS to enhance policy-making in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. UNEP published a book entitled “SIDS-based Green Economy - Analysis of Challenges and Opportunities” together with UN-DESA and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), reviewing Green Economy approaches in the Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture, Tourism, Water, Energy and Waste sectors. In assisting SIDS develop their own Green Economy approaches, UNEP, as the secretariat of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10 YFP), has begun to develop a SIDS Platform under the 10 YFP, as called for in paragraph 128 of the Barbados Outcome Document. UNEP has also started developing a guidance manual on ecosystem service valuation and natural capital accounting to be used and applied by SIDS. We hope these two initiatives will make a useful contribution to defining SIDS-specific models for sustainable development.

SIDS are faced with mounting challenges, but at the same time, many new opportunities have emerged in recent years. UNEP and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), conducted a SIDS Foresight process that identified some key emerging sustainable development issues and the associated challenges and opportunities for SIDS. The preliminary report on SIDS Foresight Process was submitted to three regional preparatory meetings in July 2013.

Effective partnerships are required to respond to the specific needs of SIDS and ensure the successful implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and Mauritius Strategy. Cost-effective and efficient partnerships should draw on existing global and regional multistakeholder partnerships, where appropriate. UNEP has developed and maintained a number of regional and global partnerships that are of particular relevance to SIDS, including the Global Adaptation Network, the Climate Technology Centre and Network, the Regional Seas Programme, the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism, the Global Partnership on Waste Management, Global Partnership on Marine Litter, the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management, the Global Wastewater Initiative and UNEP-Live. These and other partnerships should be adapted to the specific needs of the SIDS. However, it may also be necessary to formulate new partnerships to ensure that the gaps in coverage identified by the SIDS themselves are addressed. We urge all partners of the SIDS to approach this challenge in a constructive and balanced manner.

We look forward to further interaction with the member States during the Preparatory Committee processes.