**Implementing and Monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals in the Caribbean: The Role of the Ocean**

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**January 19th 2017**

Supporting national actions through regional collaboration

The SDGs can only be realized with a strong commitment to regional partnership and cooperation toward radical change. While we accept official development assistance from developed countries increased by 66 percent between 2000 and 2015, humanitarian crises brought on particularly by natural hazards continue to demand more financial resources and aid.

Governments, I am certain, recognize these investments as pathways to a more self-reliant frameworks reinforced by an increased capacity to provide for their own people in alignment with an old saying “give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime”

This is where the UN agencies are well placed to facilitate those effective partnerships, in collaboration with the OECS and CARICOM. Our structured **MAPS Framework** approach that focuses on mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support has already produced results for example in Jamaica, where a **Rapid Integration Assessment** allowed the government to identify institutional responsibilities for SDG implementation and alignment of national priorities.

While we recognize the existence of some elements of functional cooperation in the region such as:

* Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility
* 5Cs
* University of the West Indies
* Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism

… I believe I speak, not only for the UN system, but various other stakeholders in here in recognizing that much more needs to be done. Our region today is more interconnected than ever before. Therefore, improving access to technology and knowledge is an important way to share ideas and foster innovation as a vital ingredient in the overall recipe of sustainable growth and development.

We all agree that we need to share more but the questions is how do we share?

The traditional North South approach is still a very useful method of accessing vital resources by way of technology and knowledge transfers. In this approach developing countries are able to utilize skills and resources of counterparts and organizations in developed countries towards the betterment of various sectors that contribute to the SDGs. Although this can provide notable short and medium term gains to recipient states, true sustainability resides in the ability of the recipients to replicate all activities needed to mainstream that transfer permanently and be better placed to expand on that knowledge and capacity. In other words “give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime”

North South Cooperation is not the only mechanism to propel the attainment of SDG targets; in fact one might even argue that South South Cooperation is an even faster way. SSC emphasizes the same transfers of knowledge and technology, not from developed to developing countries but amongst developing countries themselves. At the national level and local levels there is a need to foster an environment where the exchange of technology, experiences and knowledge becomes 2nd nature.

We need not think too deep or travel too far in considering how these types of exchanges can be accomplished since we, here I this forum, are a notable representation of SSC and NSC.

I must at this time pinpoint as an example our field visits 2 days ago to Sans Souchi and to Vaughn’s Serenity dive Shop.

That was not just a field trip, unless we allow it to be; that was actually a perfect example of SSC and NSC where we heard ideas from our fellow participants;

* my colleague Montserrat about his experience in working with regional Fisheries Departments,
* Sade from Barbados about integrating suitable awareness activities,
* Hans about the linkages between SDG 12 and SDG2
* Doug about modernizing / digitizing data collection efforts to advance resource mobilization

and countless others along the trip; all practical advice based on experience and technical knowledge

This is the type of engagement at both the local and national levels that can help propel various activities aligned to the SDGs. The shortfall often occurs after those initial inputs; either that there is no follow-up inputs which are critical to fully exchanging the knowledge or that the recipients do not fully utilize what was shared. It should be noted that a workshop can be an important tool to help us identify synergies, gaps and actions needed to advance regional cooperation, such as in this forum. However it is but a useful precursor to an effective monitoring framework and collaborative platform that we must now reinforce with various components of continuity to keep these exchanges going.

The UNDP works with many funding agencies, governments, NGOs and communities to implement regional projects, which provides an efficient avenue for awareness and the immediate exchange of knowledge, best practices and technology.

In recognizing a few points made over the duration of this workshop, particularly in today’s matchmaking exercise, we see evidence of the ability of prospective Partnerships regional and extra regional, to effectively address the issues highlighted in the SDGs.

The exercises reminded us that regional collaboration is far more than just an exchange at the national level, and that those important institutions at the local level (such as NGOs) have a critical role to play in exchanging knowledge with like-minded organizations outside of their geographic jurisdictions.

What we as an international intergovernmental organization can take away from this workshop is the fact that we all need establish partnerships outside of the business as usual framework.

UNDP and GEOSS

What we need to look at now, is how we test the effectiveness of this workshop, of these partnerships, of these suggestions that will come out. I offer that challenge to all and sundry in here with the view that we need a platform to monitor the outcomes and impacts of the relationships that will be established.

Regional partnerships are not just a proponent of enhancing implementation, it is a necessity.