

Group of Experts Meeting on
Science and Technology Policy in the Caribbean
11 May 2005
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

LIMITED
LC/CAR/L.81
29 December 2005
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**REPORT OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS MEETING
ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY
IN THE CARIBBEAN**

This document has been reproduced without formal editing.

REPORT OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS MEETING ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY IN THE CARIBBEAN

Opening

The Expert Group Meeting on Science and Technology Policy in the Caribbean was held on 11 May 2005, on the eve of the Monitoring Committee Meeting of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC). It was chaired by the Secretary of the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST), Mrs. Maureen Manchouk. In her brief opening remarks, Mrs. Manchouk stated that the meeting was very significant and she hoped that it signaled the renewal of the relationship between the CCST and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC.)

Mr. Neil Pierre, Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean opened the proceedings and welcomed all participants. He said that it was his first official meeting as Director of the Caribbean Subregional Headquarters and was pleased with the opportunity to meet with as many persons as possible in one situation. He said in the short time that he has been at ECLAC, he noted that there were many initiatives in the Caribbean in Science and Technology (S&T) and that this was an opportune time for members of the fraternity to formulate a common regional position on science and technology policy. He thanked all for their participation and wished very successful meeting.

The representative of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean in the area of science and technology thanked all the persons present for their participation and outlined the format of the meeting. There were presentations from four renowned persons in the field of science and technology, each of whom spoke on S&T in the Caribbean from a historical, economical, educational and policy perspective. The Secretariat then reported on the findings of the study on Science and Technology Infrastructure and Policy in selected member and associate Member countries of the CDCC. Following the presentations and the findings of the study, there were recommendations for specific areas of development in S&T in the subregion.

Recommendations

Recommendations addressed issues of human resource development; research and development; institutional collaboration and coordination; and public information.

New approaches to human resource management and education were envisioned. It was proposed that training in science, technology and innovation be reoriented at all levels, including at the primary level, where learning by observation instead of by memorization should be encouraged. The meeting also emphasized the need to foster a supportive culture that would attract science, technology and innovation specialists from within as well as beyond the subregion, thereby creating a critical mass of educated persons that would encourage foreign direct investment. In these ways the Caribbean could more fully exploit the potential of

Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) as a means of overcoming endemic development constraints and for the management and exploitation of the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The meeting also called for ongoing development of the science, technology and innovation infrastructure in agriculture and such specialized areas as biotechnology; and to exploit the subregion's SIDS biodiversity and the biological resources of the tropical rainforests.

Science, technology and innovation research and development should be directed towards exploiting countries' competitive advantage. In addition, research and development programmes should be demand driven, and collaboration between research and development institutions and the private sector encouraged. Collaboration at the subregional and regional levels should also be advanced through the establishment of institutional networks and the use of ICTs (such as teleconferencing to bridge physical distances among territories). Examples included the Caribbean Knowledge Learning Network (CKLN), which could support not only training but also commerce, trade and science and technology.

In advocating closer institutional collaboration, the meeting recommended that the CDCC re-establish a working relationship with the CCST. The Committee should formally recognise the CCST's regional science, technology and innovation policy framework as a component of subregional science, technology and innovation policy development. In addition, the CCST should be engaged to identify the key science, technology and innovation components of the Millennium Development Goals and to collaborate with other Caribbean science, technology and innovation focal points in supporting implementation of these and related programmes.

It was further recommended that strategies be developed to raise public awareness of the critical role of science, technology and innovation in development.

The meeting suggested that the most significant action required was to take science, technology and innovation forward as reorientation of human resources in the region.

The representative of Aruba stated that science and technology should be the vehicle for growth, development and dissemination of information. However the Caribbean was investing a lot of resources in training but was losing human resources through the brain drain.

A draft report of this expert group meeting would be tabled at the twelfth Meeting of the Monitoring Committee on the following day.

Annex

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

A. Member States

CUBA

Representative:

Mr. Ramiro Leon Torras, Main Adviser, International Economics Organization, Division of the Ministry of Foreign Investment and Economic Collaboration of Cuba, Ave. Primera No. 1803 Esq, 18 Miramar, La Habana. Tel: (537) 202-4218; Fax: (537) 204-3183; E-mail: ramiro.leon@minvec.cu

GRENADA

Representative:

Mr. James S. De Vere Pitt, Director, Science and Technology Council, Tanteen, St. Georges. Tel: (473) 440-3118; Fax: (473) 440-9292; E-mail: jpitt@caribsurf.com; nstc@caribsurf.com

GUYANA

Representative:

Mr. Navin Chandarpal, Presidential Advisor, Office of the President, New Gordon Street, Georgetown. Tel: (592) 223-5233; Fax: (592) 223-5186; E-mail: navinc51@yahoo.com

JAMAICA

Representative:

Mr. Hopeton Peterson, Manager, Sustainable Development Division, Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), 10-16 Grenada Crescent, Kingston 5. Tel: (876) 906-4463/4; Fax: (876) 906-4651; E-mail: h.peterson_2001@yahoo.ca

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Representative:

Mr. Berisford George, Economist, Central Planning Division, Ministry of Finance and Planning and Development, Administration Complex, Kingstown. Tel: (784) 457-1746; Fax: (784) 456-2430; E-mail: cenplan@caribsurf.com, berisg@yahoo.com

Delegate:

Ms. Simone Joseph, Web Designer, Ministry of Telecommunications, Science, Technology and Industry, Egmont Street, Kingstown. Tel: (784) 456-1223; Fax: (784) 457-2880; E-mail: sjoseph.telecom@mail.gov.vc

SURINAME

Representative:

Mr. Terry H. Shameem, Government Official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lim A Po Straat 25, Paramaribo. Tel: (011-597) 410093/420063; Fax: (011-597) 4100093/420063; E-mail: terryshameem303@hotmail.com

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Representative:

Ms. Susan N. Gordon, Director, Multilateral Relations Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Knowsley” Building, #1 Queen’s Park West, Port of Spain. Tel: (868) 623-8056; Fax: (868) 627-0571; E-mail: gordons@foreign.gov.tt

Delegation members:

Ms. Roanna Gopaul, Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Knowsley” Building, #1 Queen’s Park West, Port of Spain. Tel: (868) 623-6894; Fax: (868) 627-0571; E-mail: Roanna.Gopaul@foreign.gov.tt

Mr. Earl Nesbitt, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment, Sacred Heart Building, 16-18 Sackville Street, Port of Spain. Tel: (868) 625-6083; Fax: (868) 685-7003; E-mail: nesbitt@tsstt.net.tt

Dr. David Persaud, Ecologist, Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment, Sacred Heart Building, 16-18 Sackville Street, Port of Spain. Tel: (868) 624-6024; Fax: (868) 625-7003; E-mail: environment@tsstt.net.tt

B. Associate members

ARUBA

Representative:

Mr. Merrill E. Robles, Foreign Economic Relations, Department of Economic Affairs, Commerce & Industry, Relations, LG Smith Boulevard 160. Tel: (297) 582-1181; Fax: (297) 583-4494; E-mail: deaci@setarnet.aw

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Representative:

Mrs. Marva Titley-Smith, Assistant Secretary for External Affairs, Chief Minister’s Office, Central Administration Complex, Road Town, Tortola. Tel: ((284) 494-3701 ext 2152; Fax: (284) 494-6413; E-mail: cmo@surfbvi.com, mtitley-smith@gov.vg

MONTSERRAT

Representative:

Mrs. Sarita Francis, Permanent Secretary, Office of the Chief Minister, Government Headquarters, Brades. Tel: (664) 491-3378; Fax: (664) 491-6780; E-mail: ocm@candw.ms

Delegation member:

Mr. Dwight Greer, Telecommunications Advisor, Ministry of Communications and Works, P.O. Box 344, Woodlands. Tel : (664) 491-2521; Fax: (664) 491-6659; E-mail: greerd@gov.ms

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

Representative:

Mr. Xavier C. Prens, Representative of the Netherlands Antilles at the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Port of Spain, 69-71 Edward Street, Port of Spain. Tel: (868) 625-1210; Fax: (868) 625-1704; E-mail: Xavier.Prens@gov.an

PUERTO RICO

Representative:

Dr. Efraín Vázquez-Vera, Asesor de Relaciones Exteriores de Puerto Rico, Apartado Postal 9023271, San Juan, 00902-3271. Tel: (787) 721-1751; Fax: (787) 723-3304; E-mail: boriken@coqui.net

UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

Representative:

Dr. Carlyle Corbin, Minister of State for External Affairs, Government House, St. Thomas 00802. Tel: (340) 693-4356; Fax: (340) 774-6917; E-mail: ccorbinmon@att.net

C. United Nations

United Nations

Mr. Robert Orr, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Strategic Planning in the Office of the United Nations Secretary-General, 1 UN House, New York, U.S.A Tel: (917) 367-4045; Fax: (212) 963-8050; E-mail: OrrR@un.org

International Telecommunications Union (ITU)

Representative:

Mr. Philip Cross, ITU Caribbean Representative, UN House, Marine Gardens, Hastings, Christ Church, Barbados. Tel: (246) 431-0343/4; Fax: (246) 437-7403; E-mail: philip.cross@itu.int

D. Intergovernmental organizations

Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM)

Representative:

Ms. Glenda Itiaba, Special Assistant to the Secretary-General, Office of the Secretary-General, 3rd Floor, Bank of Guyana Building, 1 Avenue of the Republic, Georgetown. Tel: (592) 226-8355/9281-9; Fax: (592) 226 4493; E-mail: osg1@caricom.org; glendai@caricom.org

Delegate:

Ms. Jennifer Britton, Senior Project Officer, Integrated Information System, Office of the Secretary-General, 3rd Floor, Bank of Guyana Building, 1 Avenue of the Republic, Georgetown. Tel: (592) 226-8355/9281-9; Fax: (592) 226 -4493; E-mail: osg1@caricom.org; jbritton@caricom.org

E. Secretariat

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

ECLAC Headquarters

Ms. Alicia Barcena, Deputy Executive Secretary, ECLAC Av. Dag Hammarskjold, Vitacura, Santiago, Chile. Tel: (56-2) 210-2000; Fax: (56-2) 210-2472; E-mail: alicia.barcena@eclac.cl

Mr. Raul Garcia-Buchaca, Division of Programme, Planning and Operations. E-mail: rgarciab@eclac.cl

Mr. Hernan Moreno, Expert for Technical Cooperation in Information Society Development, Division of Production, Productivity and Management. Tel: (56-2) 210-2631; Fax: (56-2) 210-2590; E-mail: hernan.moreno@cepal.org

Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

1 Chancery Lane, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. Tel: (868) 623-5595; Fax: (868) 623-8485

Mr. Neil Pierre, Director; E-mail: neil.pierre@eclac.org

Mr. Rudolf Buitelaar, Deputy Director. E-mail: rudolf.buitelaar@eclac.org

Mr. Erik Blommestein, Economic Affairs Officer. E-mail: erik.blommestein@eclac.org

Mr. Hollis Charles, Economic Affairs Officer (S&T). E-mail: hollis.charles@eclac.org

Mr. Radcliffe Dookie, Associate Programme Officer. E-mail: radcliffe.dookie@eclac.org.

Mr. Arthur Gray, Regional Economic Adviser. E-mail: arthur.gray@eclac.org.

Mr. Michael Hendrickson, Associate Economic Affairs Officer,
E-mail: michael.hendrickson@eclac.org

Ms. Sandra John, Chief, Documentation Centre. E-mail: sandra.john@eclac.org.

Ms. Asha Kambon, Social Affairs Officer. E-mail: asha.kambon@eclac.org.

Ms. Helen Mc Bain, Economic Affairs Officer. E-mail: Helen.mcbain@eclac.org

Ms. Gaietry Pargass, Social Affairs Officer. E-mail: gaietry.pargass@eclac.org

Mr. Esteban Perez, Economic Affairs Officer. E-mail: esteban.perez@eclac.org

Ms. Karoline Schmid, Population Affairs Officer. E-mail: karoline.schmid@eclac.org