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**Small Island Developing States and Climate Change:
Effects, Responses and Positions beyond Durban (WP)**

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(1) Summary ²

This working paper begins with an overview of the climate change impacts on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), providing a brief analysis of regional climate scenarios and their expected consequences. Reference is also made to sea-level-rise predictions in various islands, to highlight specific details about their vulnerability. The analysis moves on to reviewing policies implemented by SIDS in response to climate threats. The paper mainly uses the framework of the Bali Roadmap (mitigation, adaptation, technology, financing) and considers areas of priority identified in the Barbados Programme of Action. The role that Spain has played in support of these measures is also underscored. The paper concludes with an assessment of the negotiating position of SIDS in the aftermath of the Durban climate conference.³ It considers the implications of various country groupings within and outside the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), as they influence the stance of different SIDS in a post-2012 climate regime.

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¹ The author alone is responsible for the content of this publication. The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations, including UNDP, or their Member States. The designation of geographical entities and the presentation of the material do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNDP concerning the legal status of any country, territory or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

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³ Seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-17) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Seventh session of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties (CMP-7) to the Kyoto Protocol held in Durban (South Africa).

(2) The Effects of Climate Change on Small Island Developing States

The challenge posed by climate change on development is well documented (UNDP, 2008). The disproportionate impact on developing countries, as the least contributors to the phenomenon, is often contrasted with their comparatively limited capacity to respond to the climatic challenge. Adding to the existing capacity constraint on their human and material resources, in their ongoing efforts to fight their way out of poverty, the current onus is on pursuing low-carbon development paths to guarantee the sustainability of these efforts.

Yet the challenge for SIDS remains becoming climate resilient when their physical existence is threatened. There are 52 territories categorised as SIDS, across the Atlantic (both in Africa and the Caribbean Sea), Indian and Pacific oceans (see Box 1).

Box 1. List of SIDS

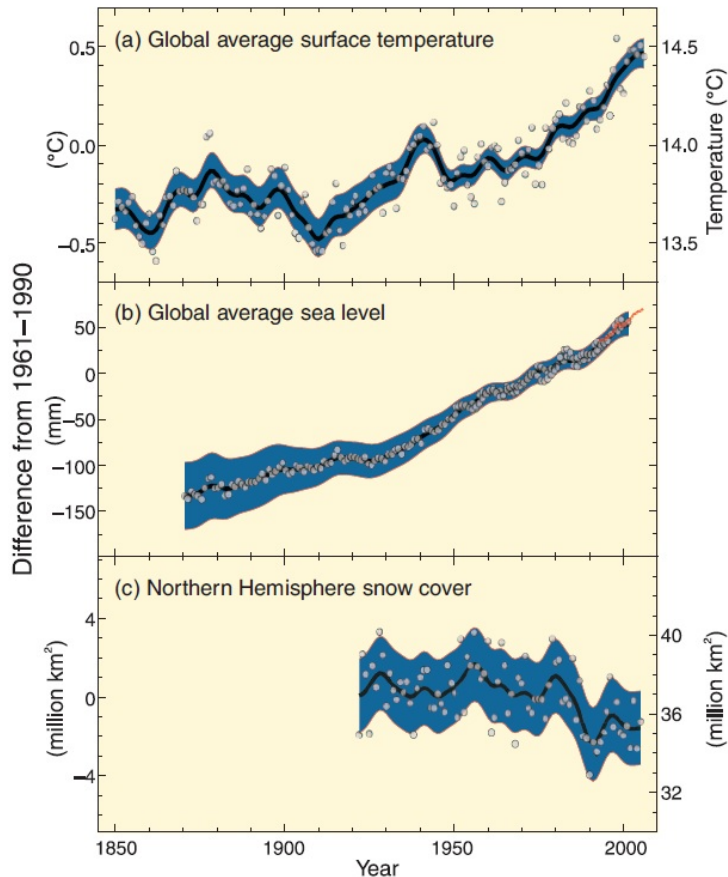
- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caribbean Sea (23 members): <i>Anguilla</i>, Antigua and Barbuda, <i>Aruba</i>, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, <i>British Virgin Islands</i>, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, <i>Montserrat</i>, <i>Netherlands Antilles</i>, <i>Puerto Rico</i>, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, <i>US Virgin Islands</i>. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pacific Ocean (20 members): <i>American Samoa</i>, <i>Cook Islands</i>, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, <i>French Polynesia</i>, <i>Guam</i>, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, <i>New Caledonia</i>, <i>Niue</i>, <i>Northern Mariana Islands</i>, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Africa and the Indian Ocean (nine members): Bahrain, Cape Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Maldives, Mauritius, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, Singapore. |

Note: the 14 non-UN members/associate members of the regional commissions are shown in *italics*.

Source: UN-OHRLLS, <http://www.un.org/special-rep/ohrls/sid/list.htm>.

Despite their inherent diversity, most SIDS have in common a small size with growing population density, remoteness and susceptibility to natural disasters and significant international trade dependence, amongst other development challenges. Sea-level rise (SLR) is their key climate-change-related threat. This is directly linked to observed temperature increases and widespread melting of snow and ice (see the global changes depicted in Graph 1).

Graph 1. Changes in Temperature, Sea Level and Snow Cover



Source: IPCC, http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/syr/ar4_syr.pdf.

However, the major findings of the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change are now considered optimistic (IPCC, 2007). Recent indications point to higher average SLR estimates than those previously reported. Other threats identified include changes in precipitation and sea-surface temperatures, which coupled with the climatic characteristics of SIDS (eg, El Niño, the monsoons, tropical cyclones and hurricanes) expose them to life-threatening circumstances. The impacts of these threats vary across regions.

For instance, damage to coastal zones is a common denominator, with the consequent impact on the main economic infrastructure of SIDS (such as tourism) due to rising sea levels. The IPCC reported global average sea-level rises of 1.3-2.3 mm per year over 1961 to 2003 and of 2.4-3.8 mm/yr from 1993 to 2003. However, regional considerations are critical when it comes to SIDS.

For example, trends in the Maldives point to 4 mm/yr sea-level rises. Meanwhile, local variations can be found in the same island of Trinidad –indications in the north point to 1 mm/yr rises, in contrast to an estimated 4 mm/yr in the south (UN-OHRLLS, 2009)–.

Overall, these impacts have significant economic implications. Table 1 summarises projections for Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries in mid-range (1m) and high-range (2m) SLR scenarios:

Table 1. Costs of Sea Level Rise (SLR) in CARICOM Countries

	2050		2080	
	Annual Costs (US \$ billion)	Capital Costs (US \$ billion)	Annual Costs (US \$ billion)	Capital Costs (US \$ billion)
Mid-Range SLR Scenario	3.9	26	13.5	68.2
High SLR Scenario	6.1	60.7	19.4	187

Source: Simpson *et al.* (2010).

Other climate-change impacts include the destruction of infrastructure and development gains due to stronger tropical cyclones, such as those in 2004 (Grenada, Haiti and Niue), 2005 (the Cook Islands) and 2008 (Cuba, Fiji and Haiti). For instance, Hurricane Ivan damaged 90% of the housing stock of the island of Grenada, with an estimated impact of US\$527 million –or 38% of the country’s GDP (OECS, 2004)–.

Finally, adverse impacts on drinking water and agricultural production are expected due to saline intrusion on coastal aquifers, and the destruction of coral reefs and fishery habitats due to temperature rises and increased ocean acidification. Therefore, the diversity of impacts across SIDS needs to be considered. Several initiatives with specific measures for SIDS have been put forward to address their common challenges.

(3) Policies, Strategies and Response Measures Undertaken by SIDS

The responses of SIDS to climate-change threats are directly influenced by their specific national priorities. However, using the framework of the Bali Roadmap, there are common areas of intervention identified in their actions for mitigation, adaptation, technology and financing. These four pillars of the Bali Roadmap emerged from the Thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-13) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)/Third session of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties (CMP-3) to the Kyoto Protocol, which was held in December 2007 in Bali (Indonesia).

Most measures are also consistent with the priority objectives identified in the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island States (BPoA). The BPoA was adopted in 1994 in Bridgetown (Barbados) and was reinforced 10 years later with the Mauritius Strategy for its Further Implementation (BPoA+10, or MSI).

Mitigation

Like most of the developing world, SIDS view their very low greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, estimated at less than 0.05% compared with global emissions (AOSIS, 2011a), as the main reason for not undertaking climate change mitigation measures. However, their heavy reliance on costly transport has become a driver for the transformation of inefficient fossil-fuel dependent industries into low-carbon economic sectors.

It is estimated that SIDS annually consume more than 220 million barrels of petroleum fuel to meet their energy needs. With the exception of oil nations such as Trinidad and Tobago, Belize, Barbados, Suriname and Papua New Guinea, 90% of the commercial and industrial demand of SIDS is dependent on fossil-fuel imports. In some cases, electricity costs are reportedly 500% higher than in the US (AOSIS, 2011a). Therefore, there is greater realisation amongst SIDS that a cleaner energy-supply mix, with increased renewable resource input, would result in significant savings on fuel imports.

This concern is consistent with the need highlighted by the original BPoA that SIDS should use energy resources efficiently. Global initiatives such as the SIDS DOCK partnership (see Box 2 for further details) have been designed to promote mitigation measures in small low-lying States.

Box 2. The SIDS DOCK Initiative

SIDS DOCK is an innovative sustainable energy initiative developed by the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in cooperation with the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). SIDS DOCK is designed as a 'docking' station for clean-energy projects, set to provide a foundation for low-carbon development in small-island economies. This one-stop fund is targeting action that supports the transformation of their energy sectors with the assistance of a joint partnership between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank (WB).

It was formulated in the aftermath of Copenhagen (COP-15) in 2009 and announced in Cancún (COP-16) in 2010 with a US\$14.5 million pledge from Denmark (UNDP, 2010a). SIDS DOCK was formally launched at the UN Headquarters in August 2011 (AOSIS, 2011b). Japan confirmed a US\$15-million top-up grant in Durban (COP-17) and the expectation is that additional funding may be provided by other donors. The initial country membership is detailed below, with projects under development in four sectoral areas so far (renewable electricity generation, energy conservation, energy efficiency and biofuels production):

- Caribbean Sea (11 members): Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago (additional membership being confirmed by Saint Kitts & Nevis).
- The Pacific Ocean (nine members): Cook Islands, FS Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu (additional membership being confirmed by Fiji and Nauru).
- Africa and the Indian Ocean (five members): Cape Verde, Maldives, Mauritius, São Tomé & Príncipe and Seychelles.

Note: the first stage of the programme is planned to run for 18 months (July 2011 to December 2012) and will go beyond 2013 depending on the resources mobilised. The country membership list is not exhaustive and may be subject to change.

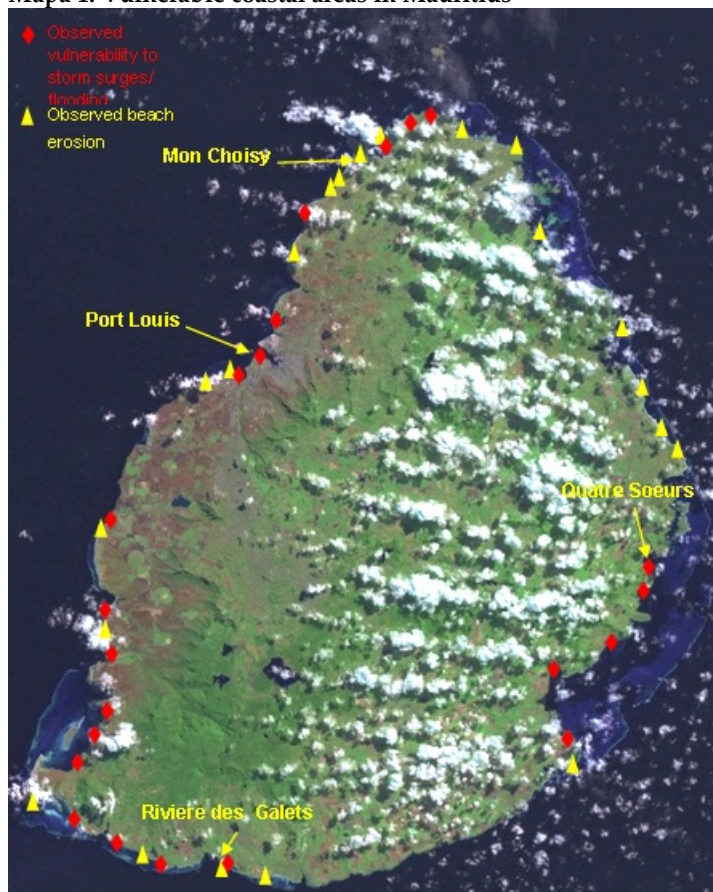
Source: AOSIS, <http://aosis.info/sids-dock/>.



Adaptation

Addressing increased vulnerability and responding to climate threats is at the centre of the SIDS policies. Most policy objectives and challenges are consistent with the BPoA and MSI, which identified various priority areas for specific action (eg, climate change and sea-level rise, natural and environmental disasters and the management of coastal and marine resources, amongst others). The Republic of Mauritius itself is an example of the type of steps SIDS are taking to address their climate challenges, such as 1°C increase in temperatures, more frequent intense rainfall episodes in the last 50 years, and about 35 cm of sea-level rise (MMS, 2008). With funding from the Adaptation Fund, the government is implementing a programme in the country's coastal areas (see Figure 2).

Mapa 1. Vulnerable coastal areas in Mauritius



Areas vulnerable to storm surges and flooding are in red and to beach erosion in yellow.

Source: Adaptation Fund (2011).

The project aims to increase the adaptive capacity of natural resource-based sectors, for instance by applying adaptation measures for coastal protection, considering the importance of the tourism sector (eg, site assessments, technical design and construction of coastal protection measures, and the development of monitoring systems). The exposure to climate-related hazards and threats is to be reduced through the establishment of early-warning systems. Institutional capacity strengthening for climate-

risk management is expected in the process, through regular training on coastal adaptation (targeting government, civil society and the private sector), coastal engineering and cost-benefit analysis of adaptation measures. Meanwhile, resilience measures are to be promoted with public awareness campaigns, an improved policy and regulatory framework, and ranking coastal sites by vulnerability to guide private investments.

Technology

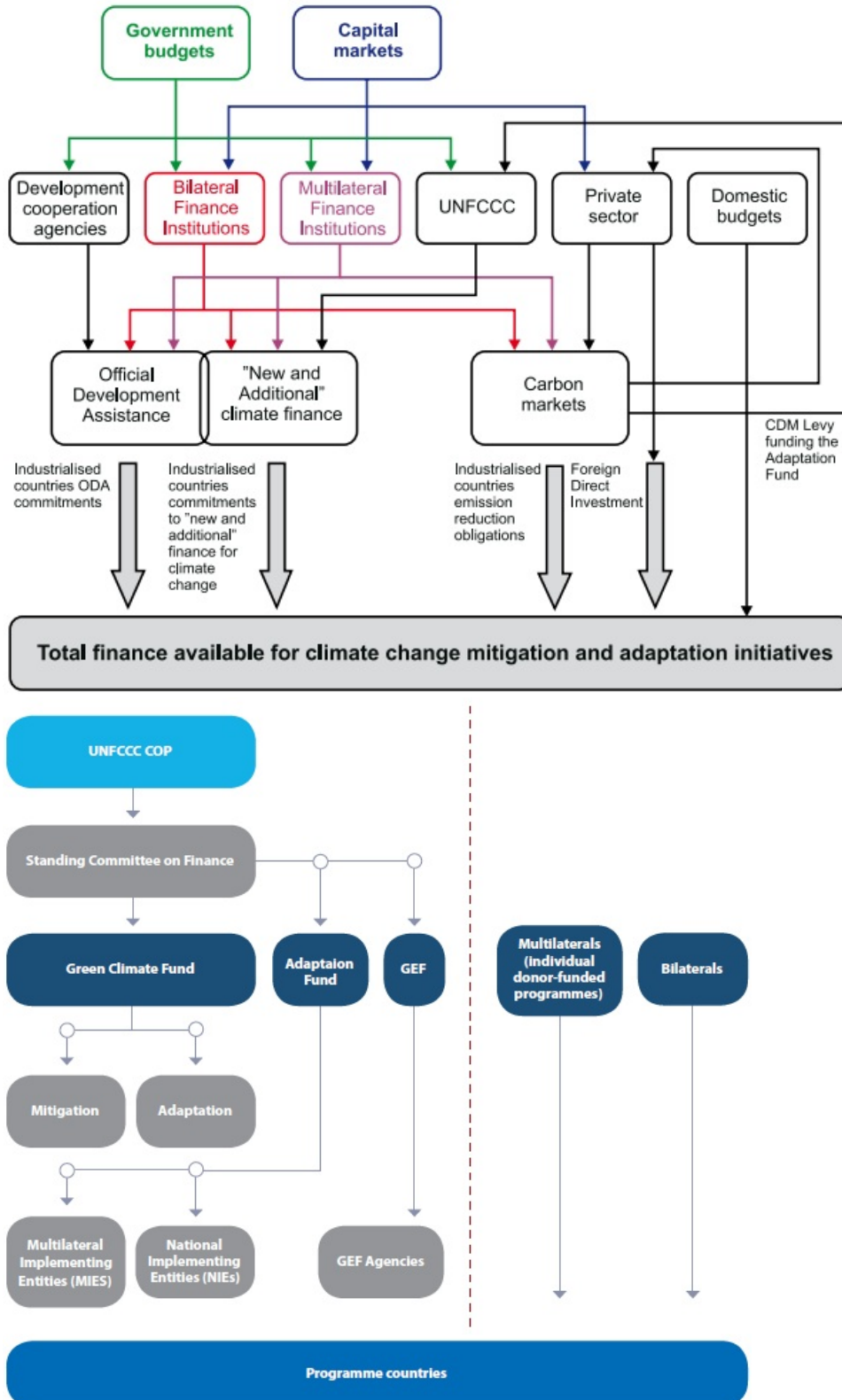
The MSI reinforced the need to undertake actions towards the development, transfer and dissemination of technologies appropriate for SIDS. Most countries have undertaken technology-needs assessments as part of their obligations to the UNFCCC. These help SIDS build their capacity to identify, acquire and absorb them for both adaptation and mitigation purposes. For instance, 10 SIDS in the Pacific (Samoa, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Tonga and Micronesia) have assessed the applicability and relevance of technologies in electricity generation, building and residential use, agriculture, forestry and coastal management, the institutional, policy and human resource needs to implement them, and their sustainability and cost-benefit implications of their transfer. This was done in the context of the Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Programme, supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through UNDP. Other SIDS are taking similar steps, through the UNFCCC or other multilateral partners and institutions.

Finance

SIDS face the challenge of accessing and managing climate funds in order to meet their adaptation and mitigation costs. These funds represent an alternative source of finance to shield their development efforts from the recurring impact of disasters, scarce national budgets and dwindling development aid, amid an international financial crisis. But the funds can also give rise to a two-fold dilemma. On the one hand, the financing available in the multilateral climate context (see Figure) is not equally accessible to all countries. On the other, climate funds such as those available through the UNFCCC mechanisms –such as GEF and the Adaptation Fund (AF)– are insufficient to foot their entire climate bills. Therefore, they need to be combined and sequenced so they can catalyse the access to alternative sources of financing (Glemarec, 2011) and effectively managed to deliver their intended impacts (Flynn, 2011).



Graph 2. Climate Finance Architecture



Sources: Atteridge *et al.* (2009), Glemarec (2011).

However, several SIDS have been successful in accessing AF and GEF financing. For instance, the Solomon Islands obtained US\$5.5 million of AF resources in 2011 to enhance the resilience of its communities to the adverse effects of climate change on agriculture and food. This country also mobilised through PIGGAREP (Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project) US\$5.2 million from the GEF Trust Fund, with US\$28 million in co-financing from other sources.

Though access has not been universal, due to limited funds and specific application requirements, SIDS elsewhere have also accessed other GEF funding windows, such as the Strategic Priority on Adaptation fund (for ecosystems-based adaptation), the Least Developed Countries Fund (to develop national adaptation plans of actions for LDCs) and the Special Climate Change Fund (for sector-specific interventions).

Spain's Role

Despite not having a specific aid, trade or cooperation focus on SIDS, Spain has recently been providing support to several island states. Beyond its traditional development assistance and investment in Latin America, Spain has actively promoted climate policy mainstreaming and carbon finance access in the Caribbean (in Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti). Haiti and the Dominican Republic are priority countries under the 2009-2012 *Plan Director* of the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID).

In addition to disaster-reduction assistance, following the 2010 earthquake (over US\$37 million), AECID has assisted Haitian efforts to address vulnerability and adaptation in rural areas linked to water –around €70 million towards sanitation, food security and sustainable land management (MAEC, 2009)–. Meanwhile, assistance to the Dominican Republic has been similar, in contrast to AECID's support to Cuba, which has been limited to targeted interventions.

Nevertheless, following the establishment of the Spanish Office of Climate Change, both countries also receive support for their climate-change decision-making processes and are being considered for other sources of climate financing. For instance, through the regional UNDP Climate Policy 2012 project, the Dominican Republic held a national inter-ministerial dialogue in 2009. This multi-stakeholder platform selected a few key sectors in the economy to undertake investment and financial flow (I&FF) assessments for climate-change adaptation (in the water and tourism sector) and mitigation (energy sector) actions.⁴

⁴ A brief note on the application of UNDP's I&FF methodology in Africa can be found in a previous ARI (Alfaro-Pelico, 2010) and the summary of the resulting assessment in UNDP (2011). Details on Latin America's Carbon and Policy 2012 projects can be found in Perdomo (2011) and the resulting guidebook for climate negotiators in PNUD (2010).

Spain contributed around US\$3.6 million to the global UNDP I&FF project, which extended the support already provided to 19 participating countries (totalling US\$7.7 million) to nine additional Latin American countries (UNDP, 2010b). Meanwhile, with support from the regional UNDP Carbon 2012 project, Cuba has taken several steps to access carbon finance through the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the UNFCCC, including assistance to prepare CDM project documentation, sectoral feasibility studies and institutional capacity development.

(4) Alliances, Demands and Negotiating Positions of SIDS for a Post-2012 Regime

The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) is the intergovernmental organisation of low-lying coastal and small island countries, established in 1990 to consolidate the voices of most SIDS in addressing global warming. AOSIS is an active entity in climate-change negotiations, being attributed the first draft text in the Kyoto Protocol negotiations. Though it is the largest country grouping of SIDS, the voices of its members are also heard through other groups (see Box 3).

Box 3. SIDS Regional Alliances

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS): with 38 members, including 19 in the Atlantic Ocean (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cape Verde, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, São Tomé and Príncipe, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago), 15 in the Pacific (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu) and four in the Indian ocean (Comoros, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group of 77 (G-77): incorporating 32 SIDS, ie, all SIDS in AOSIS excluding six members (Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau and Tuvalu). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Least Developed Countries (LDCs): currently incorporating 11 SIDS (Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kiribati, Maldives, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu and Vanuatu). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coalition for Rainforest Nations (CfRN): incorporating seven SIDS (Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Guyana, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Suriname). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Group, with six SIDS (Cape Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritius, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Seychelles). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas): incorporating four SIDS joining the Venezuela-launched alliance (Antigua and Barbuda, Cuba, Dominica, and Saint Vincent & the Grenadines). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICA (Central American Integration System): incorporating two SIDS (Belize, Dominican Republic). |

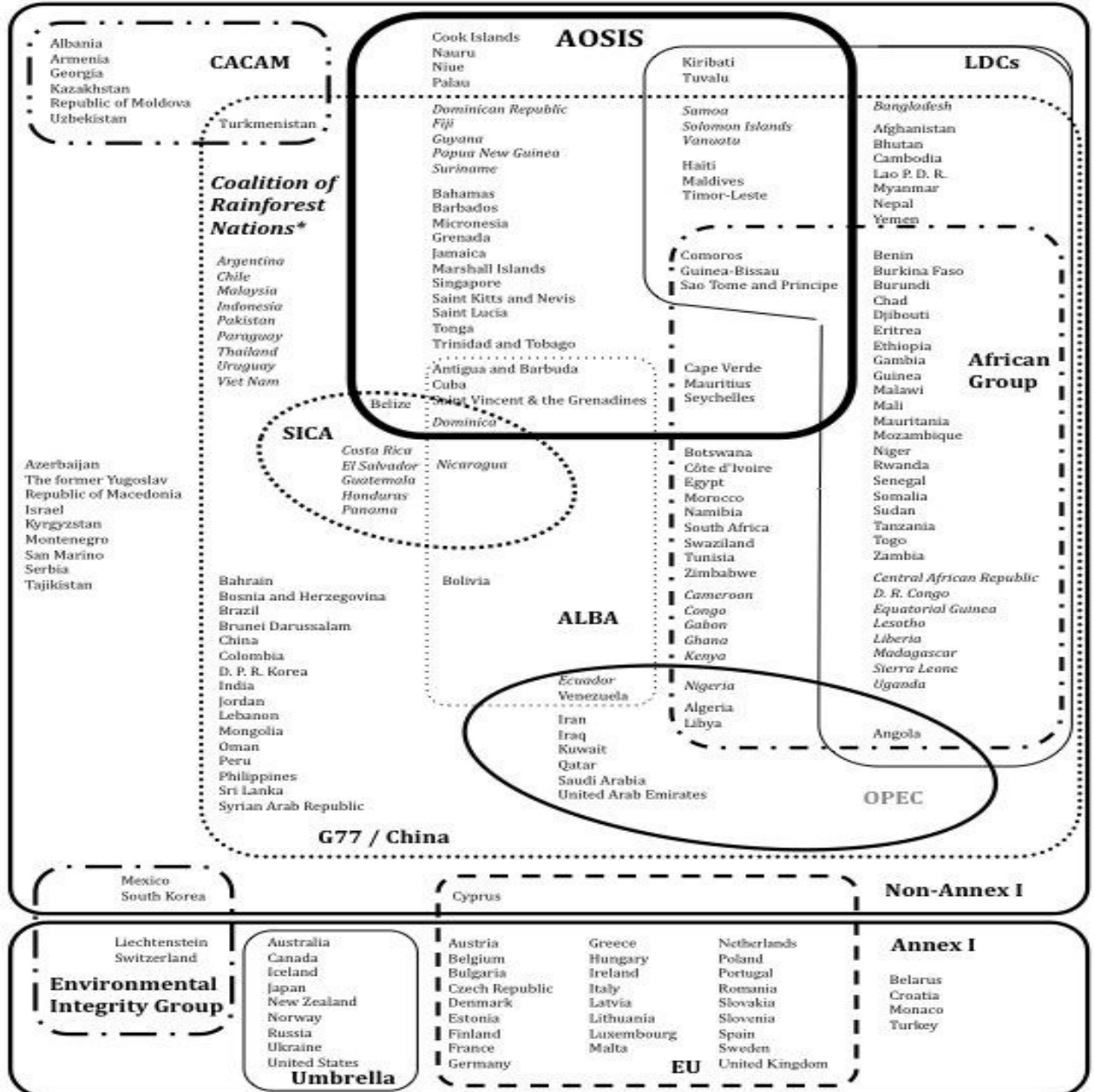
Note: this is based on party groupings regularly represented at UNFCCC sessions, without prejudice to any other existing negotiating or political structures. Reflections on dynamics within these structures can be found in Castro *et al.* (2011). While SIDS and AOSIS are acronyms often used interchangeably, not all SIDS are UN members and/or members of AOSIS.

As pictured in Graph 3, the diversity of alliances can also result in SIDS giving more importance to specific negotiation issues, relevant to their own climatic circumstances. For instance, the representations made by AOSIS on the need to ensure climate financing mechanisms include provisions for dedicated funding windows for SIDS and LDCs would be accompanied by: (a) an additional emphasis placed by SICA members on the

vulnerability of the Central American region, exacerbated by seismic activity and a wave of disasters; (b) a stress by CfRN members on financing mechanisms for REDD (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation); or (3) a limited acceptance of linkages with market mechanisms from SIDS in ALBA. It is important to consider how these dimensions shape key SIDS demands, in the aftermath of the Durban conference, for a post-2012 climate regime (after Kyoto's first commitment period). Demands have evolved since Bali, with the four-pillar roadmap having taken us beyond the intended final destination: Copenhagen. While the path still looks uncertain (though we know that the next stop is Doha, Qatar hosting COP-18/CMP-8 this year), Cancún and Durban have strengthened the multilateral system. Part of the credit may be given to SIDS, in alliance with LDCs and the EU, for their active promotion of an increased level of ambition by all parties. The establishment of the Durban Platform in COP-17/CMP-7 means that other major emitters (developed and emerging economies) need to avoid dead-ends leading to isolation. The next major milestone is the adoption of a legally-binding instrument by 2015, to be ratified by all 195 parties to the UNFCCC, and in effect by 2020. SIDS will push on all fronts.



Graph 3. UNFCCC Country Groups



* countries in italics form part of the Coalition of Rainforest Nations.

Source: Betzold *et al.* (2011), as adapted from Castro *et al.* (2011).

Mitigation

AOSIS has long demanded a second commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol. The tortuous road to Cancun –see the analysis of the emission pledge path in Lázaro (2011)– had, nonetheless, good intentions since Copenhagen (eg, the recognition of IPCC’s reduction target to limit temperature increases to 2°C) but limited expectations for Durban.

These good intentions were somewhat exceeded after COP-17. The EU led the way in the Annex I group (industrialised countries) by agreeing on an extension of the protocol (KP2) for the 2013-20 period. KP2 is scheduled for adoption with new emission reduction targets in Doha. However, the Durban outcome is far from meeting the demands of SIDS and the developing world. For instance, AOSIS will keep on demanding a reconsideration of the 2°C target.

Since Copenhagen, SIDS have argued that if average global temperatures increased by more than 1.5°C there would be a destruction of livelihoods and the disappearance of lives and entire islands. Through the launch of the 1.5 To Stay Alive campaign, SIDS pointed to the level of atmospheric concentrations of GHG (in excess of 387 parts per million) as leading to temperature increases above that target (AOSIS, 2009). The Durban Platform also means waiting for the completion of the Fifth Assessment Report by the IPCC (scheduled for 2014) to further clarify the scientific support underpinning the 1.5°C target.

In the meantime, Durban made progress on requirements for Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRVs) of emissions, such as agreed guidelines on the International Consultation and Analysis (ICA) of developing country mitigation actions and of International Assessment and Review (IAR) for such efforts by developed countries. AOSIS will continue stressing that no nationally-appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs) be required from SIDS.

However, SIDS in the rainforest coalition (CfRN) are also demanding clarity on the rules for land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) accounting, and the role of REDD in complementing developed country domestic mitigation efforts, while supporting developing country efforts in sustainable forest management (IISD, 2011b). The critical role of forest exploitation in the development of several SIDS (eg, sustainability of livelihoods, poverty reduction and governance) means that addressing any loopholes on LULUCF-related mitigation actions will, for instance, increase the chances for Papua New Guinea to access carbon finance.

Adaptation

The design of the Adaptation Committee and overall progress on the Cancún Adaptation Framework has centred discussions on enhanced action in this area since COP-16. The composition of the committee was a sensitive matter finally addressed in Durban, with an agreed 16-member advisory body to include at least one SIDS party. Yet AOSIS will continue its efforts to ensure that answers are also provided to adaptation questions relevant to SIDS, particularly on actions related to loss and damage (L&D) associated to climate-change impacts. AOSIS included the issue of loss and damage in the Cancun text for COP consideration (IISDa, 2011).

Specifically, SIDS will keep pointing to the need to ensure risk identification and analysis of, for instance, the expected impacts of sea level rise, quantification of the associated costs and consideration of elements for a compensatory scheme in any enhanced action on adaptation (eg, disaster risk reduction, rehabilitation and insurance). This demand is directly linked to the mitigation concern over temperature increases above 1.5°C and the related financing question on adequate provisions for L&D in the 'new and additional' sources of funds.

Technology

The Technology Mechanism is another institution agreed in Cancun and being established since Durban. The unresolved governance arrangements of this mechanism, made up of a Technology Executive Committee (TEC) and the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), means AOSIS will also contend for adequate SIDS representation in its membership. SIDS will also be concerned with the effectiveness of linkages with other institutions, such as the Adaptation Committee. In this regard, AOSIS members have demanded adequate capacity development support, with developed countries being demanded to share the burden of the transfer and development of technology applications, for both adaptation and mitigation purposes.

Finance

One of the main challenges in Durban was reaching consensus on the operationalisation of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). As one of the key promises of the Copenhagen Accord, maintained in the Cancun Agreement, the pledges made needed to be put to work (US\$30 billion of fast-start finance for 2010-12 and US\$100 billion of long-term finance annually by 2020). Durban confirmed a joint UNFCCC-GEF interim arrangement for two years to get it underway, funding windows for both adaptation and mitigation, and a 24-member board represented by an equal number of developed and developing countries. Its purpose to channel scaled-up long-term climate finance remains unchanged, with added emphasis on direct access and support for integration with national climate funds. Meanwhile, the role of the Standing Committee on finance was clarified (improving coordination and the delivery of climate financing).

AOSIS will continue pushing for an allocation mechanism of disbursements that ensures minimum levels of funding for the most vulnerable countries. Their aim is to ensure that the post-2012 climate finance regime includes specific provisions for SIDS, and a regular fund replenishment process. Along these lines, members of the rainforest-coalition (CfRN) are requesting a dedicated funding window for REDD+ efforts (ie, REDD plus the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks), with a market mechanism. However, ALBA members are unlikely to support the introduction of market mechanisms, insisting on their preference for GCF funds to come from public sources rather than depending on private sector initiatives.

There is convergence amongst SIDS on the need for a democratic access to resources, better guaranteed if the GCF possesses international legal personality, under the COP, with segregation between fiduciary and executive trustee duties, and developed-country contributions of 1.5% of their gross domestic product (IISD, 2011c).

The Red Lines

Further to the review of some of their key demands, the paper concludes with a consideration of the red lines SIDS are not prepared to cross to agree on a legally-binding climate deal. The Durban Platform is set to consolidate progress on the Bali roadmap areas covered above. But several areas of critical importance remain to be addressed. As noted previously, the level of ambition shown by major emitters (excluding the EU) is insufficient to bridge the gap between pledges, and the emission cuts necessary to keep temperature increases below the 2°C target.

Before the extension to KP2 was agreed, an ‘emissions gap’ of 5 to 9 GtCO₂e was identified between emission levels consistent with the 2°C limit, and those resulting from the pledges in the Copenhagen Accord (UNEP, 2010). With the 2013-20 protocol period only signed by the EU and a few other developed countries (altogether representing only 15% of global emissions), the notable exclusions of the US, Japan, Russia and Canada, means that beyond 2020 the cost of emission cuts can be four times higher, and a global temperature rise above 3.5°C may be expected. These scenarios are intolerable for the very own existence of many SIDS. AOSIS will certainly not support a new legal instrument which sidesteps the principle of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities’, in contrast to what the proposed Durban Platform is supposed to lead to –that is, an agreement under the convention that will not differentiate between the need to undertake mitigation actions between developed and developing countries–.

With regards to mitigation commitments for developing countries, SIDS (along with LDCs) are currently exempt from undertaking any NAMAs not supported internationally. This exemption sets them aside from the pressure imposed by industrialised nations on emerging economies (particularly, the BASIC group of Brazil, South Africa, India and China). Any attempt to put back on the negotiation table compulsory mitigation requirements for SIDS would put in jeopardy the few areas where there seems to be some degree of agreement (eg, MRVs, ICA and IAR). If developed countries cannot find incentives to drastically cut emissions in the next years, CfrN members including SIDS such as Guyana and Suriname may find little encouragement to protect their share of the Amazon rainforest from lucrative exploitation. This is the kind of short-termist reactions the world would not be able to afford.

Meanwhile, on adaptation, AOSIS has clearly stated its key demands in other areas it would not be in a position to negotiate. The recognised status of SIDS among the most vulnerable should give them priority access not only to the Adaptation Fund, but also the Green Climate Fund, both currently administered by the GEF. Failure to uphold this status in any further financing mechanism will be a dead-end for SIDS and the ongoing international climate change negotiation process.

(5) Conclusion

Calling on the Ubuntu philosophy (which speaks of the interconnectedness of the world), SIDS have long reminded us that forgetting their cause could amount to 'atmospheric apartheid'. Durban will be remembered for its countless *Indabas* (a Zulu term for important discussions), leading to continued faith in the multilateral system to come up with a climate deal. The relevance of the outcomes may not be known until 2020, by which time some islands would need to deal with the prospect of their disappearance. SIDS face an unparalleled challenge given their inherent vulnerability –territories regularly impacted by the severity of hurricanes or earthquakes–, exacerbated by climate change. With sea-level rise slowly manifesting itself, some are progressively taking steps to access cleaner sources of energy in an effort to use the long-term savings from reduced reliance on fuel imports to shore up coastal protection measures. But the large amounts of finance required (and insurance premiums) cannot be underestimated, and might quadruple if the increased temperature target is not kept below 2°C. Doha may not just be the next stop in the negotiating process, but the last chance for the world to give SIDS the post-Kyoto regime they need.

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