



Annex I

Contribution of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS) to Part I of the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations entitled “Oceans and the law of the sea”

I. Information regarding the activities currently undertaken related to marine renewable energies

Reefix

ReefFix, an Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Coral Reef Restoration, Watershed Management and Capacity Building Demonstration Project for the Caribbean, is a project implemented by the OAS and supported by the government of Chile by a grant of US\$105,000 from 2008 to 2010. Designed to improve the understanding and management of the region’s coastal and marine resources through restoration demonstration and capacities building activities, the project consisted of four one-week workshops which were held at each case study site in the region. The goal, through hands-on training and demonstration, was to teach the participants economic valuation methodologies in order to realize the economic benefits derived from coral reefs and make sustainable use of resources which are critical to Caribbean countries.¹

At the Montego Bay Marine Park Trust in Jamaica in 2009, for instance, a study measured the total benefits of Montego Bay reefs to be approximately US\$401 million net present value (NPV), with an additional potential benefit of US\$70 million NPV through pharmaceutical bioprospecting. The study also demonstrated that up to a 20% increase in coral abundance may be achievable through the use of appropriate policy measures with a present value cost of US\$153 million over 25 years. This optimization would also require financing of US\$27 million for expenditures such as the installation of a sediment trap, a waste aeration, the installation of a sewage outfall, the implementation of improved household solid waste collection, and the implementation of economic incentives to improve waste management through the hotel industry.

Through these case studies throughout the region, ReefFix continues to be a tool that improves the ecosystem valuation technical capacity of individual Caribbean countries to collect and manage their protected areas data in a way which meets their specific needs and context.

Geo-Caraïbes Project

The Eastern Caribbean Geothermal Development Project (Geo-Caraïbes Project) is an on-going sustainable energy initiative executed by the OAS, in collaboration with the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the United Nations Environment

¹ For further information on ReefFix: <http://www.oas.org/dsd/IABIN/Component1/ReefFix/ReefFix.htm>



Programme (UNEP), and funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in the amount of US\$700,000 from 2003 to 2007. While the OAS role in the project is completed, the AFD has continued its work.

The two primary development objectives of the project are to: (i) overcome the barriers to the development of geothermal power and (ii) implement a regional strategy that will create the conditions for successful deployment of one or more commercially viable geothermal power plants in the region. In reaching these objectives, the Dominica Geothermal Project, for instance, has provided a promising prospect of an electrical interconnection between Dominica and both Guadeloupe and Martinique. If confirmed feasible, it could be replicated for possible exports of geothermal-based electricity from St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Lucia to other islands. Further to this, with regards to hydrothermal potential, the occurrence of seismicity beneath southern Dominica suggests an active hydrothermal system exists and fracture permeability at depth may enhance geothermal exploitation potential.

International Seabed Authority (ISA)

The Department of Sustainable Development of the Organization of American States (OAS-DSD) participated in a seminar hosted by the ISA and government of Jamaica on 28-30 March 2011 on “Prospecting, Exploration and Exploitation of Deep Seabed Mineral Resources in the Area: Challenges for the Caribbean and Opportunities for Collaboration.” The seminar highlighted the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the 1994 Implementation Agreement, the institutions created under the Convention; the international framework and regulation of deep seabed: the role of the International Seabed Authority and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea; and addressed the current state of development of deep seabed mineral resources, with emphasis on marine mineral resources of the Area - the challenges and collaboration opportunities for the Caribbean.

In this regard, the OAS-DSD presented on initiatives to harness marine resources in the Caribbean, emphasizing that the proper and effective use of these resources is critical to sustainability. Since the exploitation of marine resources in the Caribbean has traditionally been more concentrated within the 200-nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), significant efforts have been placed towards integrated coastal zone management and the sustainable use of coastal ecosystems. However, in the past 15 years following the entering into force of the Agreement regarding Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, or the “Convention”), new interest regarding the use of resources in the international seabed and high seas has arisen. As a result, together with a deeper assessment of potential environmental impacts, a coherent policy and regulatory framework becomes more relevant to sustainably harnessing marine resources in the Caribbean.

In discussing how to build upon this framework, the presentation proposes a series of ideas, including the consolidation of resources into databases such as the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) and ISA; the regulation of access to genetic



resources with permits and contracts; and the importance of adapting and cross-referencing economic valuation methodologies, among others. The presentation furthermore examined the legal-institutional framework and importance of establishing regulatory mechanisms to achieve long-term sustainability in a region where the knowledge of marine biodiversity is very limited and ecosystems are critical to supporting livelihoods.

These ideas have been furthered through the initiative outlined below.

II. Matters which may require further consideration with an emphasis on areas where coordination and cooperation at the inter-government and inter-agency levels could be enhanced

Dialogue Series in the Framework of Rio+20 – Ocean Governance

In preparation for Rio+20, the OAS-DSD is holding a Dialogue Series to put forth recommendations to member states and into the conference process on a variety of sustainable development issues. The fourth dialogue in the series which took place on 15 December 2011 in Washington, D.C. focused on the institutional structures, policies, and procedures to facilitate ocean governance beyond national jurisdiction. High-level experts and participants deliberated² on ways to strengthen these institutions and outlined relevant recommendations, particularly on the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources such as fisheries.

Coordination and cooperation at the inter-government and inter-agency levels can be enhanced through such dialogues. By jointly outlining concrete actions that can be carried out to enhance good ocean governance, governments and agencies can achieve tangible results and strengthen the laws of the sea. Specifically, as discussed at the Dialogue, this can be done by developing databases and providing accurate information; addressing government subsidies; rebuilding fish stocks and marine resources; strengthening regional institutions for coordination and cooperation; enforcing international and national commitments; and bridging gaps between scientific data and policy.

Further considering these actions in a setting which fosters cooperation will be critical to progress. In addition, incorporating technical experts, governments, and communities into one open process will ensure a more effective and efficient implementation of resolutions on ocean and UNCLOS-related initiatives, including Rio+20 and beyond. The OAS would be delighted to work with the UN on these relevant issues.

² Key messages from the Dialogue of reference can be found at the following link:
http://www.oas.org/en/sedi/dsd/rio+20/Dialogue_4.asp