

# Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

## Introduction

The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is a regional entity that serves as a “traditional think tank [for the region].”<sup>1</sup> In response to the changing dynamics in the region and due to an increasing tendency of Member States opting for South-South cooperation, ECLAC is being asked to play a more active and stronger role in terms of regional coordination, “facilitating the dialogue among regional actors, in particular Member States and regional and subregional organizations.”<sup>2</sup> A second but not less important role, ECLAC is recognized as a vital bridge between the United Nations (UN) system and regional and subregional stakeholders, on the premise of fulfilling the role of an active and accessible interface through which multilateral cooperation is to be coordinated.<sup>3</sup>

## Recent Activities

The Commission last convened from 27-31 August 2012, in San Salvador, El Salvador. Commission sessions are held every two years, and this session is considered as “the most important event of each biennium for ECLAC.”<sup>4</sup> Commission sessions are of fundamental importance in putting topics on the agenda, opening debate among the Member States, and reviewing past and future activities of the Commission within a common and open forum.<sup>5</sup> At this Thirty-fourth Session of the Commission, there were a number of resolutions that were adopted; one of them was the resolution *ECLAC Calendar of Conferences for the Period 2012-2014* (659(XXXIV)), where the thirty-fifth session of ECLAC is planned for the first semester of 2014, with no specific date, to be held in Peru, which awaits for the approval of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, ECLAC’s last Session of the Committee of the Whole, which are sessions held between Commission sessions, was held during 28-29 May 2013 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, United States.<sup>7</sup> At this Twenty-seventh Session of the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC some important topics were addressed, one of the most relevant being “the position of the region today and the implications of the proposed structural change for equality spearheaded by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.”<sup>8</sup> Another of the topics discussed at this forum was the presentation of the Commission’s prioritized strategic focus, which will determine the upcoming 2014-2015 program of work.<sup>9</sup> At this same forum, Alicia Bárcena, Director of ECLAC Subregional Headquarters in the Caribbean, introduced and presented the main conclusions from the document *Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: Follow-up to the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 and to Rio+20*, which was elaborated by ECLAC officials along other United Nations (UN) agencies.<sup>10</sup> As general sentiment of the delegations present at this session, it was expressed the desire to maintain meetings of technical and intergovernmental character within the context of the post-2015 critical process and its development agenda.<sup>11</sup> In this vein, experts have defined the current and upcoming years as the ‘auspicious moment’ of Latin America and the Caribbean, as the region has several contributions to ongoing discussion of the post-2015 development agenda.<sup>12</sup> At this moment, the LAC region has managed to maintain interesting achievements on democratic governance, economic growth, and poverty, among others.<sup>13</sup> In this vein, reports show that Latin American and Caribbean countries have demonstrated an interesting progress since 1900, “poverty and extreme

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, *Joint Inspection Unit, Review of the Management and Administration in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean* (JIU/NOTE/2013/2), 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> UN ECLAC, *The thirty-fourth session of ECLAC*, 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> UN ECLAC, *Resolutions adopted by the member States of the Commission at its thirty-fourth session*, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> UN ECLAC, *Twenty-seventh session of the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC was held in New York*, 2013.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> UN Regional Commissions, *A Regional Perspective on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda*, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

poverty rates have declined from 48.4 per cent and 22.6 per cent respectively in 1990 to 29.4 per cent and 11.5 per cent in 2011, with further reductions forecast for 2012.<sup>14</sup> However, there have been insufficient progress on the implementation of a solid environmental conscience, thus the region has fallen short in terms of stopping environmental degradation, protecting biodiversity and reducing carbon dioxide emissions.<sup>15</sup> Even though the scenario is rather complex, South-South Cooperation appears as an opportunity to demonstrate the international community that the LAC region does have various and comprehensive contributions for a post-2015 sustainable agenda.<sup>16</sup> In this vein the UN General Assembly has deemed as priority and high-level events three areas of work, one of them being “Contributions of South-South, Triangular Cooperation, and ICT for Development to the post-2015 Development Agenda”, which has a high-level event already programmed for June 2014.<sup>17</sup>

### ***Recent Policy Outcomes***

During the last semester of 2013, the First Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean was held from 12-15 August in Montevideo, Uruguay.<sup>18</sup> As a result of this Conference, there were some documents that emerged from the dedicated work of the representatives of the region.<sup>19</sup> First, the *Report on the Activities Conducted by the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC during the Period 2012-2013*, stated that the Division should address the following issues from a gender-based perspective: analysis of demographic trends; socio-demographic inequities; maternal and child mortality; sexual and reproductive health; youth; ageing and older persons; indigenous peoples and the peoples of African descent in Latin America and the Caribbean; international and internal migration; sources of socio-demographic information (population censuses and vital statistics); and human resources training in the fields of demography and population and development.<sup>20</sup>

In order to enhance this strategy and head towards a deeper cooperation with the United Nations system, the Division has received direct support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).<sup>21</sup> Another pivotal document passed in 2013 is the *Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development*, where Member States, in response to the actions identified and defined in the regional agenda on population and development for Latin America and the Caribbean beyond 2014, agreed upon the application of a human rights approach with gender and intercultural perspective.<sup>22</sup> This agreement was settled towards the achievement of sustainable development in every dynamic of social life, thus involving the application of public policies based on sustainable development (prioritizing land planning and efficient management) at national as well as subnational levels.<sup>23</sup> This document also reiterates the compromise of the LAC region countries to respond efficiently to the social demands of the indigenous peoples; respecting their rights and their property claims on ancestral lands, as well as the protection of their traditional knowledge, and their right to be an active member of the civil society and its different decision-making processes.<sup>24</sup>

### ***Implementation of Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean Outcomes***

ECLAC is a regional commission under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which oversees the actions coordinated and delivered by ECLAC on social aspects of economic development.<sup>25</sup> Thus,

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations, General Assembly, *The Post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage, Note to Member States*, 2013.

<sup>18</sup> UN ECLAC, *First Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2013.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> UN ECLAC, *Report on the Activities Conducted by the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC during the Period 2012-2013*, 2013.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> UN ECLAC, *Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development*, 2013.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> United Nations, *Joint Inspection Unit, Review of the Management and Administration in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (JIU/NOTE/2013/2)*, 2013.

according to its competence ECLAC is fully empowered to elaborate and present recommendations directly to the governments of Member States as well as Associate Member States.<sup>26</sup> Within this context the Commission's major role is to "bring key issues to the attention of Member States, to facilitate the decision making process, implement decisions and provide efficient secretariat services to the Commission [itself] and relevant subsidiary bodies."<sup>27</sup> ECLAC utilizes a number of subsidiary bodies to shape policy and deliver outcomes, including ECLAC Committee of the Whole, the Statistical Conference of the Americas, the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) and the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. During its last Commission session, the establishment of a further subsidiary, Conference on Science, Innovation and Information and Communications Technologies, which entered in full service in 2013.<sup>28</sup> An ad hoc Committee on South-South Cooperation was also established, in response to an increasing tendency towards this model of cooperation within the region.<sup>29</sup>

During the last three years, under the premise of supporting regional integration and further the existing cooperation, ECLAC has provided technical and substantive assistance to several high-level meetings: Union of South American Nations (UNASUR for its acronym in Spanish) in Georgetown, Guyana 2010 and Asunción, Bolivia 2011; the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) in Caracas, Venezuela 2011; the Economic Leader's Meeting and Ministerial Meeting of Latin American Pacific Basin Initiative (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and also preparatory meetings for world conference such as the Millennium Development Goals and Rio+20, among others.<sup>30</sup>

Besides providing technical and substantive assistance to its subsidiary bodies and to the coordination of high-level meetings, ECLAC does cooperate with other regional entities; one example of this type of initiatives is the relaunching of the Tripartite Cooperation Committee in May 2010, which it is composed by ECLAC, the Organization of American States (OAS), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).<sup>31</sup> This Committee plays a vital role in the regional context, as it gets together three of the main entities in the region by putting together the expertise of each one at the service of the region's population interests and demands, and by this "enhancing the impact and effectiveness of their [join] work."<sup>32</sup>

One of the major roles of ECLAC is to conduct research and elaborate studies in order to nurture the debate and decision-making processes within the region.<sup>33</sup> In this vein in 2010 ECLAC signed an agreement with CELAC, a regional organization, in order to improve the quality of reports and studies on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region, as well as resolving a joint organization and coordination of seminars and conferences considered of common interest.<sup>34</sup> Within this agreed framework of action, in the 2012 Caracas Action Plan, CELAC "expressly requested the cooperation of ECLAC in dealing with the impact of the world crisis and the new financial architecture."<sup>35</sup>

## ***Conclusion***

ECLAC holds an active and pivotal role within the dynamics of the LAC region, especially in the current era of globalization, "regional integration has an important role to play."<sup>36</sup> Thus, the Commission integrates the national and global context, within which Member States are able to share experiences and individual outcomes in order to advise fellow governments regarding substantial matters. In addition, regional integration allows countries to work

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p. 19.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

towards the implementation of coordinated responses to global crisis “that cannot be effectively addressed in isolation such as the current economic crisis, climate change and migration flows.”<sup>37</sup>

***The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean at NMUN•NY 2014***

ECLAC was founded with: “the purpose of contributing to the economic development of Latin America, coordinating actions directed towards this end, and reinforcing economic ties among countries with other nations of the world. The promotion of the region’s social development was later included among its primary objectives.”<sup>38</sup>

**Format:** ECLAC is a resolution writing committee.

**Voting:** Each Member State present may vote once on procedural and substantive matters. Matters are decided by a majority vote.

**Membership:** ECLAC is comprised of 44 Member States, but for the purposes of NMUN 2014, the commission will only be comprised of 33 Member States in the geographical realm of Latin America and the Caribbean. Membership is as follows:

Bahamas	Barbados	Belize	Bolivia
Brazil	Chile	Colombia	Costa Rica
Cuba	Dominica	Dominican Republic	Ecuador
El Salvador	Grenada	Guatemala	Guyana
Haiti	Honduras	Jamaica	Mexico
Nicaragua	Panama	Paraguay	Peru
Saint Kitts and Nevis	Saint Lucia	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Suriname
Trinidad and Tobago	Uruguay	Venezuela	Argentina
Antigua and Barbuda			

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> ECLAC, *About ECLAC* [Website], 2013

## Annotated Bibliography

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2012, August). *Resolutions adopted by the member States of the Commission at its thirty-fourth session* [Report]. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from: <http://www.cepal.org/pses34/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/2/47912/RESOLUTIONS-ING-final-31AUG-kh.pdf>

*This presents a compilation of the resolutions adopted by the Member States of the Commission at its Thirty-Fourth Session held in San Salvador in August 2012. One of the key documents adopted within the framework of this session is the ECLAC Calendar of Intergovernmental Conferences for the Period of 2012-2014, which addresses the ECLAC agenda for the current year, based on the objectives agreed in previous years. Also, delegates will be able to find resolutions on the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the hosting country of the Thirty-Fifth Session of the Members States of the Commission.*

United Nations, Joint Inspection Unit. (2013). *Review of the Management and Administration in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (JIU/NOTE/2013/2)* [Review]. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from: [https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU\\_NOTE\\_2013\\_2\\_English.pdf](https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU_NOTE_2013_2_English.pdf)

*The current document introduces a comprehensive and detailed analysis on the constitution and further achievements of ECLAC, starting from its governance mechanisms and scope of action to the study of ECLAC's executive management and budget. In this sense, it presents a review and an actual evaluation on the Regional Commission's functions and execution in terms of its scope of action and prioritized areas of work. It also talks about the relation not only between ECLAC and its subsidiary bodies but also its linkages to other regional commissions.*

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2013). *Report on the Activities Conducted by the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC during the Period 2012-2013* [Report]. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from:

[http://www.eclac.cl/celade/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/1/50611/CRPD\\_LCL3643\\_eng.pdf](http://www.eclac.cl/celade/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/1/50611/CRPD_LCL3643_eng.pdf)

*This Report was elaborated jointly by the CELADE and the ECLAC Population Division, which develops an important study on several variables that will help delegates contextualize the LAC region in terms of: socio-demographic information, inequality and population dynamics, and other phenomena such as migration, urbanization and ageing. In addition, this review also tackles the different needs and social dynamics presented by indigenous peoples and African descendent populations.*

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (23 September, 2013) *Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development* [Report]. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from:

[http://www.eclac.cl/celade/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/9/50709/2013-596-montevideo\\_consensus\\_pyd.pdf](http://www.eclac.cl/celade/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/9/50709/2013-596-montevideo_consensus_pyd.pdf)

*The pertaining document provides a clear view on the intersection of topics within the LAC region, as it examines the objective of integrating the population dynamics into sustainable development, which responds to an intensive and highly integrative process that takes into account: gender equality, territorial inequality, protection of human rights, among others, having as a transversal topic the cultural diversity in the region and the objective of reaching a true interculturalism among its inhabitants.*

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United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2013) *Twenty-seventh session of the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC* [Website]. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from: <http://www.cepal.org/cgi-bin/getprod.asp?xml=/noticias/noticias/7/49967/P49967.xml&xsl=/tpl-i/p1f.xsl&base=/tpl-i/top-bottom.xsl>

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2013). *Twenty-seventh Session of the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC Was Held in New York* [Website]. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from: <http://www.cepal.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/prensa/noticias/comunicados/1/50051/P50051.xml&xsl=/prensa/tpl-i/p6f.xsl&base=/tpl-i/top-bottom.xslt>

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2013). *First Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean* [Website]. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from: <http://www.eclac.cl/cgi-bin/getprod.asp?xml=/celade/noticias/paginas/1/50191/P50191.xml&xsl=/celade/tpl/p18fst.xsl&base=/tpl-i/top-bottom.xsl>

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2013). *Report on the Activities Conducted by the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC during the Period 2012-2013* [Report]. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from: [http://www.eclac.cl/celade/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/1/50611/CRPD\\_LCL3643\\_eng.pdf](http://www.eclac.cl/celade/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/1/50611/CRPD_LCL3643_eng.pdf)

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (23 September, 2013) *Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development* [Report]. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from: [http://www.eclac.cl/celade/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/9/50709/2013-596-montevideo\\_consensus\\_pyd.pdf](http://www.eclac.cl/celade/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/9/50709/2013-596-montevideo_consensus_pyd.pdf)

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United Nations, General Assembly. (2013). *The Post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage, Note to Member States*. Retrieved 3 February 2014 from: [https://www.un.org/en/ga/president/68/pdf/letters/12052013Post-2015\\_Development\\_Agenda.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/ga/president/68/pdf/letters/12052013Post-2015_Development_Agenda.pdf)

United Nations, Regional Commissions. (2011). *A Regional Perspective on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda* [Report]. Retrieved 3 February 2014 from: <http://www.regionalcommissions.org/post2015regionalreport.pdf>

United Nations, Joint Inspection Unit. (2013). *Review of the Management and Administration in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (JIU/NOTE/2013/2)* [Review]. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from: [https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU\\_NOTE\\_2013\\_2\\_English.pdf](https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU_NOTE_2013_2_English.pdf)



## I. Development of New Capacities in the Region Through a More Responsive Higher Education System

### *Introduction*

For Latin America and the Caribbean several paramount solutions for capacity building have been identified and agreed upon.<sup>39</sup> First, States must build on existing capacities.<sup>40</sup> Information on the current situation must be compiled, including an overview of existing programming to understand how country-level data relates to broader regional and global trends.<sup>41</sup> This reflects the region's renewed vigor on the topic of education for capacity building and the focus on monitoring the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) and other global initiatives as one of the three primary goals.<sup>42</sup> The education goals of Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) are identified based upon the internationally adopted MDG's, the human rights framework documents including the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR), and the outcomes of key education conferences including the *Dakar Framework for Action in 2000*. This foundation is continuously strengthened by ongoing regional and international initiatives such as the Global Education First Initiative (GEFI), and the Statistical Conference of the Americas (SCA).<sup>43</sup> The next step is building upon and enhancing existing capacities.<sup>44</sup>

### *Recent Developments*

The United Nations (UN) Secretary-General started the Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) in September 2012.<sup>45</sup> In September 2013, the program celebrated its first anniversary in the ECOSOC chamber.<sup>46</sup> This two-part event focused on "the need for renewed leadership and partnership to achieve quality, relevant and transformative education" and "specific actions for better coordination among governments, multilateral and bilateral assistance, and private sector to accelerate delivery of basic education."<sup>47</sup>

In November 2013, ECLAC held the seventh meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas (SCA) in Santiago Chile.<sup>48</sup> Alicia Bárcena, the Executive Secretary of ECLAC, stated, "ECLAC is thinking of building political and social covenants for equality and these will urgently require clear information, access to information and a broad and participatory discussion among various actors."<sup>49</sup> Statistics are a key component to monitoring the progress of a region.<sup>50</sup> Challenges to aggregating data include lapses in communication and standardization between states, technical issues, and funding.<sup>51</sup> One area where improvements can still be made is in collecting data on education to enable policy makers to make more informed decisions.<sup>52</sup> As the head of ECLAC poignantly said, "statistics establish the factual boundaries for policy expectations."<sup>53</sup> At the end of 2013 ECLAC published the *Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2013*.<sup>54</sup> The first of four chapters provides a demographic overview of social topics such as employment, gender and education.<sup>55</sup> Developing an accurate baseline and

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<sup>39</sup> International Institute for Educational Planning, *Without Capacity There is No Development*, 2009.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> ECLAC, *Proposed Regional Agenda on Population and Development for Latin America and the Caribbean beyond 2014*, 2013.

<sup>42</sup> ECLAC, *ECLAC action lines on MDGs* [Website], 2013.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> ECLAC *Proposed Regional Agenda on Population and Development for Latin America and the Caribbean beyond 2014* [Report], 2013.

<sup>45</sup> United Nations, *Global Education First Initiative*, [Website], 2013.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> ECLAC Press Centre, *ECLAC Calls for Improving Quality of Statistics In Order to Progress towards Equality*, [Press Release], 2013.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> McMeekin, R.W, ECLAC, *Technical Study*, [Report], 1998.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> ECLAC Press Centre, *ECLAC Calls for Improving Quality of Statistics In Order to Progress towards Equality*, 2013.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> ECLAC Press Centre, *ECLAC's Statistical Yearbook Presents Social, Economic and Environmental Overview of Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2013.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

informed perception of the current state of education throughout the region is a key component of monitoring progress toward achieving education goals, but also the MGDs.<sup>56</sup>

In this same spirit, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has launched its first regional statistics survey focused on adult education and literacy programs to determine how effectively these programs are helping States meet regional educational goals.<sup>57</sup> Recently, UNESCO released some enlightening statistics reporting that millions of adults in Latin America and the Caribbean are returning to school to complete their studies.<sup>58</sup> Over half of the adults in region have not completed secondary school, while a total of 36 million adults in the region are illiterate.<sup>59</sup> Around 10 million adults are participating in primary and secondary education programs and over 2 million are enrolled in literacy programs.<sup>60</sup> This information provides insights as to the efficacy of the current education programs.<sup>61</sup> It also reminds the international community of the magnitude of the deficit in education that still remains and will continue to be an obstacle for capacity building.<sup>62</sup>

Gender is a key area of consideration for the topic of capacity building. Women are more likely to be illiterate than men.<sup>63</sup> While nearly three-fourths of those enrolled in literacy programs in the region are women, less than half of all participants complete the program.<sup>64</sup>

The UN Secretary-General's Global Initiative on Education, or Global Education First Initiative, will be holding an event in Davos, Switzerland on January 23<sup>rd</sup> entitled, investing in Girls' Empowerment for MDG Acceleration.<sup>65</sup> The focus on women supports the global efforts toward inclusive development and supports the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which states, "everyone has the right to education."<sup>66</sup>

### **Conclusion**

ECLAC, in cooperation with other international institutions continues to emphasize the important impact education, especially higher education, has on capacity building.<sup>67</sup> This is not a new endeavor and the region recognizes that further progress is still possible through strategic partnerships in the area of higher education. As is evident in the work of the body's leadership in recent months, monitoring progress through the collection of statistical data is an imperative support function, which Latin America and the Caribbean continue to promote regionally and in cooperation with other international bodies.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> ECLAC Press Centre, *ECLAC Calls for Improving Quality of Statistics In Order to Progress towards Equality*, 2013.

<sup>57</sup> UNESCO, *Adult Education in Latin America and the Caribbean*, [Website], 2013.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> United Nations, *Global Education First Initiative*, [Website], 2013.

<sup>66</sup> UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (A/RES/217 A (III)), 1948, Article 26.

<sup>67</sup> ECLAC, *ECLAC action lines on MDGs*, 2013.

<sup>68</sup> ECLAC Press Centre, *ECLAC Calls for Improving Quality of Statistics In Order to Progress towards Equality*, 2013.



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<http://www.eclac.org/publicaciones/xml/7/50547/CRPDProposedregionalagenda.pdf>

*This report identifies the priority issues and means of approaching them for the population and development agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean. The proposals within the report are based upon reviews of the current situation in the region and outlooks regarding economic, social and demographic dynamics in the region. This report will be useful to delegates in their preparations as it highlights useful background information as well as clearly laying out future priorities and proposals in later chapters. This will ground delegates in the foundation of the topic first, then give them ideas for what they can do at the conference that may be similar or different from real-world proposals.*

De Grauwe, A. International Institute for Educational Planning. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2009). *Without Capacity There is No Development* [Report]. Retrieved 12 January 2014 from:

[http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Cap\\_Dev\\_Rethinking/pdf/CapDev\\_Synthesis.pdf](http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Cap_Dev_Rethinking/pdf/CapDev_Synthesis.pdf)

*This report is very useful to delegates in terms of learning about and understanding the importance of capacity building for development. This report outlines new process for capacity development, analyses the capacity development process and outlines strategies for the future. While this is focusing mainly on only one part of the topic, it will provide a good base for delegates to then add information and knowledge of higher education onto this capacity building for development knowledge.*

Long, C. (2013). New Left Policies and Latin America: Research Review and Reading List. *Journalist's Resource: Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy* [Website]. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from:

<http://journalistsresource.org/studies/international/development/research-round-up-leftist-policies-work-latin-america>

*This website is a useful resource and gateway to research for delegates. While information was used from this specific section of this page for the update, there are many other sources this site gives one access to that will be helpful to researching this, and all the topics on ECLAC's agenda. This particular section of the site discusses the New Left in Latin America as well as various inequalities that face the region.*

United Nations. (2013). *Global Education First Initiative* [Website]. Retrieved 5 January 2014 from:

<http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/gefianniversary.html>

*As one of the newest developments at the UN on this topic – this website provides delegates with information on the Global Education First Initiative through their most recent event in September. This website is home to a live webcast of the event and breakdown of information gathered and distributed at the event. Delegates can also go to [globaleducationfirst.org](http://globaleducationfirst.org) for more big picture information on the initiative.*

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Adult Education in Latin America and the Caribbean*, [Website], 2013. Retrieved 10 January 2014 from: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/regional-data-collection-adult-ed-lac.aspx>

*This website has a plethora of information on adult education in Latin America. The website provides infographics and video information as well as additional resources. This is a great place to start ones research on the topic and find further resources to assist in becoming knowledgeable about this and other ECLAC topics.*

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## II. Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development: the Role of Culture towards the Preservation of Biodiversity

### *Introduction*

Inclusiveness and participation of all populations have dominated the discourse on this topic in recent months. Ban Ki-Moon led the celebration of Human Solidarity Day focusing on addressing gaps in the efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).<sup>69</sup> The Secretary-General called the global community, in all its diverse forms, to “practice mutual respect and accept shared responsibility.”<sup>70</sup> This shared responsibility provides the context for addressing indigenous peoples and sustainable development as a unit.<sup>71</sup> One cannot be considered without the other, indigenous people are allied with their lands and policy makers must ally with and learn from indigenous populations to achieve sustainable development goals.<sup>72</sup>

### *Recent Developments*

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) specifically supports equality based on the “entitlement of rights” in combination with universal social protection and is taking strides to embed equality in every sustainable development initiative.<sup>73</sup> Alicia Bárcena, the Executive Secretary of ECLAC, participated in a meeting in Rio de Janeiro sponsored by the Clinton Global Initiative that focused on the to address inequality in Latin America.<sup>74</sup> In Rio, Bárcena called for the “closing of structural gaps such as low productivity, poor income distribution, insufficient inversion, fiscal problems, and skimpy social safety nets to reduce inequality and achieve inclusive and sustainable development.”<sup>75</sup> The attendees with both public and private institutions included former U.S. President Bill Clinton, the President of General Motors Argentina, Isela Constantini, the President of Itau BBA, Candido Botelho, and the Director of the Institute for Liberty and Democracy, Hernando de Soto.<sup>76</sup> Often indigenous populations are marginalized and under-represented in policy making.<sup>77</sup> Addressing inequality in a regional forum such as this is one way to work toward increased engagement and not only sustainable, but also inclusive, development. In this way economic and environmental goals can be actively pursued without further infringement of the rights or culture of indigenous populations.<sup>78</sup>

In addition to regional efforts, bilateral cooperation is also taking place to encourage civil spheres with increased participation and, consequently, the essential and intrinsic role of indigenous populations is considered.<sup>79</sup> In November Bárcena, visited Germany where she and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) signed a protocol advocating for structural change based on equality and sustainability.<sup>80</sup> This is the most recent of a three-decade partnership between Latin America and Germany.<sup>81</sup> In her speech following the signing of the protocol, Bárcena emphasized that ECLAC supports a two-side approach of “growth for equality and equality for growth” where economic growth, environmental sustainability and equality are pursued in parallel.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> ECLAC Press Centre, *Human Solidarity Day*, [Press Release], 2013.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Sobrevila, C., *The World Bank, The Role of Indigenous Peoples in the Conservation of Biodiversity: The Natural but often Forgotten Partners*, [Report], 2008.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> ECLAC Press Centre, *Alicia Bárcena Calls for Closing Structural Gaps to Reduce Inequality and Achieve Inclusive and Sustainable Development*, 2013.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> UNEP, *Cultural Diversity and Biodiversity for Sustainable Development* [Report], 2013.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> ECLAC Press Centre, *Germany and ECLAC Sign a Protocol for Structural Change Based on Equality and Sustainability* [Website], 2013.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

In addition to the bilateral efforts of ECLAC, the body also coordinated a multilateral agreement on the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and development in Latin America and the Caribbean.<sup>83</sup> Principle 10 states, “*environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level.*”<sup>84</sup> In Lima, ECLAC and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the Peruvian Society for Environmental Law (SPDA) and The Access Initiative-World Resources Institute (WRI-TAI) first educated participants on Principle 10 and then two working groups were formed.<sup>85</sup> The group, made up of 17 countries from Latin America and the Caribbean, agreed on seven tenants of the vision for Principle 10 including equality, inclusion, transparency, proactivity, collaboration, progressivity and non-regression.<sup>86</sup> Equality, inclusion, and collaboration are the three areas in which the political space has been created for the indigenous populations in the region. By recognizing the difference of these cultures, understanding the implications of those differences, and then identifying opportunities for synergy with sustainable development, leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean are making progress toward fulfilling Principle 10.

### **Conclusion**

Stakeholders, key decision makers, leaders, governments all impact development policy, however, now more than ever, the participation of the indigenous populations is crucial to achieving sustainable development goals.<sup>87</sup> While ECLAC recognizes that traditional knowledge of the environment embedded in cultural practices has the potential to facilitate sustainable development goals, the challenge of recognition of rights to land, and in some cases civil liberties, remains.<sup>88</sup> In recent months, the work of the body in the area of equality and inclusion has demonstrated a concerted and sincere effort to bridge the gap between the cultural wealth and knowledge of its indigenous populations and its sustainable development goals.

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<sup>83</sup> UNEP, *Implementation: UNEPs work on Principle 10* [Website], 2013.

<sup>84</sup> UNEP, *Implementation: UNEPs work on Principle 10* [Website], 2013.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Sobrevila, *The Role of Indigenous Peoples in the Conservation of Biodiversity: The Natural but often Forgotten Partners* [Report], 2008.

<sup>88</sup> ECLAC, *Knowledge Management for Development: Towards a Practical Approach for the Caribbean*, 2010.

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*This ECLAC report proposes a framework for collecting, sharing and applying information from both within and outside of the sub-region for developmental purposes in the Caribbean sub-region. There is an emphasis throughout the report on the importance of protecting and drawing upon cultural heritage and traditional knowledge in order to support further development. This will be a useful source for delegates to see how the committee is thinking about indigenous and traditional values and how to utilize them for development – which could be useful in guiding delegates own ideas when drafting resolutions.*

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). (2013). *Report of the First Session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Retrieved 5 January 2014 from: [http://www.eclac.org/celade/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/7/50557/CRPD\\_DDR5\\_eng.pdf](http://www.eclac.org/celade/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/7/50557/CRPD_DDR5_eng.pdf)

*This report includes outcome document from the First Session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The background report served as a basis for ECLAC's work in the First Session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean earlier this year which reviewed the implementation of ECLAC's Programme of Action on this subject. This report is helpful to delegates as it will provide them with the same information ECLAC was provided with before drafting their resolution on the topic. It also includes the resolution passed from the conference which can be used as an example to delegates as they begin drafting their own resolutions.*

Sobrevila, C. The World Bank. (2008). *The Role of Indigenous Peoples in the Conservation of Biodiversity: The Natural but often Forgotten Partners* [Report]. Retrieved 9 January 2014 from: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTBIODIVERSITY/Resources/RoleofIndigenousPeoplesinBiodiversityConservation.pdf>

*The purpose of this report was for the World Bank to gain a better understanding of how to engage Indigenous Peoples more effectively in biodiversity conservation programs and projects. The report sites several findings that will be useful information for delegates to incorporate into their draft resolutions or use as a spring board for their own new ideas. The report indicates that Indigenous Peoples have not been fully engaged in past projects despite the large number of peoples who inhabit areas rich in biodiversity and forestry and outlines ways to change this.*

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). (2013). *Cultural Diversity and Biodiversity for Sustainable Development* [Report]. Retrieved 8 January 2014 from: [http://www.unep.org/civil-society/Portals/24105/documents/publications/Cultural\\_Diversity\\_and\\_Biodiversity\\_part%201.pdf](http://www.unep.org/civil-society/Portals/24105/documents/publications/Cultural_Diversity_and_Biodiversity_part%201.pdf)

*This report is a compilation of documents providing background information as well as speeches and statements during the high-level roundtable on “Cultural Diversity and Biodiversity for Sustainable Development.” This is a great document to gain a foundational understanding of this issue as well as obtain definitions and key documents / terminology for discussing the topic. The background documents compiled within the report are not just from UNEP but also from other agencies, which will provide delegates with a well-rounded view of the topic at hand.*

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*This UNESCO report considers the ethical implications of traditional medical practices. This report provides delegates with definitions, a background on traditional knowledge and a breakdown of traditional medical practices by region. The report also will be helpful to delegates as it considers the ethical and political challenges as well as weighs the benefits and advantages*

of traditional medical systems. Finally, the report outlines guidelines for actions which could serve as delegates' basis for new ideas for their own draft resolutions.

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### III. Incentives for Maximizing the Contribution of Natural Resources to Regional Development

*Development provides the capacity to sustain nature's life support systems, but can also threaten them, in turn setting back development.*<sup>89</sup>

#### **Introduction**

Development remains a key issue in the Latin American and Caribbean region, where a significant percentage of its populations are still highly dependent on natural resources.<sup>90</sup> Within the United Nations (UN) system a clear reaffirmation of the key importance of sustainable development, and the pressing need to transform individual concerns into agreed and coordinated actions, has occurred.<sup>91</sup> Previous steps towards the construction of a regional and international consensus on down-to-earth and pragmatic action plans have formed the foundation of a shared vision. Regional entities were highly proactive during the last quarter of 2013, specifically organizing and coordinating spaces at a regional level to foster open and enriching debate on critical topics related with development and environmental matters. Accordingly, several reports were released on key topics, including poverty reduction, regional growth, management and use of natural resources, among others.<sup>92</sup>

Over the last several months, consideration of this topic has been taken under several United Nations (UN) entities. First, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) issued the *Report on the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (E/2013/29)*.<sup>93</sup> Regarding the work of United Nations regional and functional commissions, the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) held its twentieth and final session, as designated by the United Nations General Assembly in A/RES/67/203, 21 December 2012, which stated that the CSD will host its last session prior to the inaugural session of the High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development.<sup>94</sup> The CSD-20, as the final session of CSD was named, was held on 20 September 2013, and as an outcome of this session ECOSOC presented a report to the United Nations General Assembly, *Report on the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (E/2013/29)*, which addresses several topics including a chapter dedicated solely dedicated to “Lessons learned from the Commission on Sustainable Development, and the way forward.”<sup>95</sup>

The key documents which continue to underpin this topic include *Agenda 21*, United Nations General Assembly report *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, the United Nations Economic and Social Council report *Mainstreaming of the three dimensions on sustainable development throughout the United Nations system: Report of the Secretary-General*, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) *Millennium Development Goals Report 2013*, and the Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) *Declaration on the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

#### **Recent Developments**

##### *Development, Natural Resource Management and Poverty Reduction*

It is of key importance to understand the upcoming scenario placed by the “deadline” that supposes year 2015, the one that in contrary is looked upon an opportunity to incentive and actually concentrate greater engagement from global leaders and the international community in general, by this making each inhabitant of the world a single stakeholder within the so called Post-2015 Development Agenda.<sup>96</sup> In this context, the strategies to be pursued

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<sup>89</sup> UN Division for Sustainable Development, *Global Sustainable Development Report: Executive Summary*, 2013.

<sup>90</sup> UN ECLAC, *Alicia Bárcena Calls for Closing Structural Gaps to Reduce Inequality and Achieve Inclusive and Sustainable Development*, 2013.

<sup>91</sup> UN Division for Sustainable Development, *Global Sustainable Development Report: Executive Summary*, 2013.

<sup>92</sup> UN ECLAC, *Latin America Economic Outlook 2014*, 2013.

<sup>93</sup> UN ECOSOC, *Report on the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (E/2013/29)*, 2013.

<sup>94</sup> UN CSD, *20th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development*, 2013.

<sup>95</sup> UN ECOSOC, *Report on the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (E/2013/29)*, 2013.

<sup>96</sup> UN General Assembly, *The Post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage*, 2013.

confront bigger and more complex challenges in order to address issues that have been affecting the world's well-being over decades; however, the Post-2015 Agenda has identified two major objectives: overcoming poverty and insecurity and ensuring sustainable development.<sup>97</sup> Therefore, the proposal raised by the United Nations General Assembly is not to start from scratch but rather “promote dialogue and increase engagement on the principles of the Millennium Declaration of 2000, with the purpose of reaffirming and re-energizing our commitments through 2015 and beyond.”<sup>98</sup> In consequence, the UN General Assembly has established three main areas of work: contributions of women, the young and civil society to the post-2015 development agenda; human rights and the rule of law in the post-2015 development agenda; and the contributions of South-South, triangular cooperation, and ICT for development to the post-2015 development agenda.<sup>99</sup> These areas have been categorized as ‘high level events’, which would set the tone for future international and regional forums on development. In the case of the LAC region, it is fundamental to notice the importance of South-South cooperation, the one that has been recognized as an alternative mechanism of development, by acknowledging that the South could also contribute to the development of others, and furthermore the South is able to elaborate development strategies that may be more suitable for the region's context.<sup>100</sup> In summary, 2014 is a pivotal year for the international and regional leaders and their respective population, as it will prepare the basis in order to respond to the impending challenges of the Post-2015 development agenda; therefore, all the recent and future actions will be directed towards the development of the Post-2015 agenda and action plan, where ECLAC will have a vital role in order to propose strategies that are suitable and realistic for the LAC context.

In terms of recent events, during the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) first session, the first edition of the *Global Sustainable Development Report* was launched.<sup>101</sup> The *Global Sustainable Development Report*, the major goal of which is “to assess ways for strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development and how the HLPF could be designed and structured to put it in the best possible position to serve as a center-piece of global governance on sustainable development.”<sup>102</sup> In terms of the sustainable management of natural resources, this report underlines the existing linkages between natural resources, the eradication of poverty and sustainable means of production and consumption, by this remembering the holistic character of the problem at hand.<sup>103</sup> In order to address these interdependent challenges the report acknowledges the need of a “system-wide coordination across international institutions and between international institutions and national sustainable development strategies.”<sup>104</sup> The *Global Sustainable Development Report* underlines the importance and persistent relevance of peace, freedom, development, and environment as universal aspirations of the international society, by stating “development provides the capacity to sustain nature's life support systems, but can also threaten them, in turn setting back development.”<sup>105</sup>

Another important event took place in Lima, Peru, 30-31 October 2013, at the *Third Meeting of Designated Focal Points by the Governments of the signatory countries of the Declaration on the implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).<sup>106</sup> It is important to notice that since Rio+20, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago have signed the *Declaration on the implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*. At this meeting the 17 Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) signatory countries to the Declaration, passed the *Lima Vision for a Regional Instrument on*

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<sup>97</sup> UN General Assembly, *The Post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage*, 2013.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> UNECLAC, *Activities of the ECLAC System to Promote and Support South-South Cooperation During the 2010-2011 Biennium*, 2012.

<sup>101</sup> UN CSD, *Expert Group meeting for the Global Sustainable Development Report - Future directions and formalization of network of scientific contributors*, 2013.

<sup>102</sup> Bernstein, *The Role and Place of the High-Level Political Forum in Strengthening the Global Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development*, 2013.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, p. 6.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, p. 6.

<sup>105</sup> UN Division for Sustainable Development, *Global Sustainable Development Report: Executive Summary*, 2013.

<sup>106</sup> UN CSD, *Third Meeting of the Signatory Countries of the Declaration on the application of Principle 10 and Realizing the Future We Want in Latin America and the Caribbean: Towards a Development Agenda Post-2015*, 2013.

*Access Rights Relating to the Environment*.<sup>107</sup> This document states the “rights of access to information, participation and justice in environmental matters as essential to promoting sustainable development, democracy and a healthy environment.”<sup>108</sup> In this vein, information is highly valued in promoting the active participation of civil society in the sustainable development decision-making process, as well as further inclusion and collaboration with and among stakeholders, progressive work toward the progressive implementation of *Principle 10*, and the principle of non-regression.<sup>109</sup> As a prelude to this meeting, ECLAC, alongside the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the Peruvian Society for Environmental Law (SDPA) and the World Resources Institute’s Access Initiative (WRI-TAI), held a training workshop on the implementation of *Principle 10* in the LAC region.<sup>110</sup>

During the last trimester of 2013, ECLAC issued several reports on the Latin American region. In October 2013, ECLAC alongside the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF for its acronym in Spanish), introduced the *Latin American Economic Outlook 2014*, during the *XXIII Ibero-American Summit* in Panama City.<sup>111</sup> This document is meant to underline the slower pace that Latin American growth is currently experiencing; it is primarily focused on the global context affecting the region.<sup>112</sup> In this vein, “endogenous capacity building” is set to determine a qualitative change in order to reduce social and economic gaps, thus research and innovation undoubtedly play a pivotal role in terms of implementing a new development strategy.<sup>113</sup> Therefore, the *Outlook* suggests that the “development agenda must prioritize long-term policies geared towards more knowledge-intensive and innovation-intensive production structures in which social and environmental sustainability are priority objectives.”<sup>114</sup> In addition, it is important to note that the LAC “contribution to global GDP growth has remained virtually unchanged (i.e., between 7% and 9%) since the early-1990s, while that of emerging Asia has more than doubled in the same period.”<sup>115</sup> However, regional economies are still largely based on natural resources, as LAC countries have been encouraged “to use their natural wealth as a foundation for transitioning to production processes that use technology and knowledge.”<sup>116</sup>

On poverty reduction, ECLAC has reported that 164 million people still live in poverty, of which 11.5 percent live in extreme poverty.<sup>117</sup> Based on the studies contained in the recently published *Social Panorama of Latin America 2013*, the decrease of poverty in the region has reached a low pace compared to previous years; the percentage of people living in extreme poverty has actually climbed from 66 million in 2012 to 68 million at the end of 2013, correlating with rising food costs and generalized inflation.<sup>118</sup> Earlier on December 2013, Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of ECLAC, attended the *First meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative Latin America*, organized by the Clinton Global Foundation (CGI) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The United Nations officials stated the pressing need for leaders of the world to work together in order to close structural gaps such as productivity, poor income distribution and inversion, and inclusive sustainable development, among others.<sup>119</sup> The main topic discussed recalled one of ECLAC’s major goals, to diversify production in response to the criteria of inclusiveness and environmental sustainability.<sup>120</sup>

To discuss crucial environmental matters, the *Third Meeting of the focal points designated by the governments of signatory countries of the Declaration on the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and*

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<sup>107</sup> IISD, *17 Countries Adopt Lima Vision for LAC Instrument on Access Rights*, 2013.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>117</sup> UN ECLAC, *Reduction of Poverty and Extreme Poverty Slows Down in Latin America*, 2013.

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

*Development in Latin America and the Caribbean* was held in Lima, Peru past 30 – 31 October 2013. Within the framework of this regional meeting 17 LAC countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay, agreed on the urgent need to work towards “a shared vision of the values that should inspire future regional agreement or instrument on the subject.”<sup>121</sup> In this vein, signatory countries reached a consensus upon seven common values to guide the region’s strategic planning on environment and development: equality, inclusion, transparency, proactivity, collaboration, progressivity and non-regression.<sup>122</sup> As a result of this meeting, LAC countries elaborated the *Lima Vision for a Regional Instrument on Access Rights Relating to the Environment*, which expresses that “the exercise of access rights contributes to improved environmental protection and, as a result, improved protection for human rights.” The *Lima Vision Instrument* also states civil society participation as a fundamental component towards a proper management of natural resources; therefore, the document states that “public should be reinforced at all levels through freedom of access to environmental information, major involvement in environmental decision-making and access to justice in relation to environmental issues.” Finally, at the beginning of 2014, ECLAC released the *Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean 2013*, which contains regional indicators on socioeconomic and environmental development in the region.<sup>123</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Natural resources play a central role among the development strategies of the Latin American and the Caribbean region. Therefore, several international entities and UN bodies have deemed it necessary to address this issue in depth, in order to discuss on new strategies to maximize the contribution of natural resources to development through sustainable strategies to be proposed by the region’s leader. For this purpose, one common denominator has been identifying civil society as a key actor on the definition of new and alternative strategies of development. Therefore, “natural resource governance is viewed [...] as playing a central role within the lines of work and as referring to the set of sovereign policies over ownership and allotment of natural resources and the distribution of productivity gains arising from their exploitation.” In consequence, the major challenge of the LAC countries is to agree and work on strategies towards a more inclusive development that sets environmental and human rights matters at the center of the debate.

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<sup>121</sup> UNECLAC, *Alicia Bárcena Calls for Closing Structural Gaps to Reduce Inequality and Achieve Inclusive and Sustainable Development*, 2013.

<sup>122</sup> UNECLAC, *The Region’s Countries Agreed on a Shared Vision for Making Progress with Access Rights in terms of Environmental Matters*, 2013.

<sup>123</sup> UNECLAC, *ECLAC’s Statistical Yearbook Presents Social, Economic and Environmental Overview of Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2014.

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<http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2331Bernstein%20study%20on%20HLPF.pdf>

*This document presents an overview of the changes made on the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) towards the High Level Political Forum (HLPF). In this context, the author discusses topics related with environmental matters, making a brief summary on various international events on environment and development. In addition, it explains the new expected or desired functions of the HLPF and how this new international space would be expected to serve the interests of the international community.*

United Nations, Division for Sustainable Development. (2013). *Global Sustainable Development Report: Executive Summary* [Report]. Retrieved 9 January 2014 from:

<http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/975GSDR%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

*This document presents a comprehensive view on the issue of sustainable development, thus first introducing the initial conceptual approaches on sustainability and citing some of the most pivotal conferences and summits on environment held in the past 20 years. Subsequently, the report analyzes the intrinsic linkages between scientific research and the elaboration and further implementation of public policy environment. In addition, this document contains a detailed assessment on sustainable development trends and policies within the period of 1950-2013.*

United Nations, General Assembly. (2013). *The Post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage, Note to Member States*. Retrieved 3 February 2014 from: [https://www.un.org/en/ga/president/68/pdf/letters/12052013Post-2015\\_Development\\_Agenda.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/ga/president/68/pdf/letters/12052013Post-2015_Development_Agenda.pdf)

*Through this Note to Member States, the President of the General Assembly, John W. Ashe, communicates world leaders the recent events that have taken place on environment and sustainable development. In this vein, the desire of the President of the General Assembly is to further inform Member States on the proposal to arrange six meetings on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Three of these upcoming meetings have been categorized as 'high level events' as they deal with the three major areas of work on post-2015 development strategies: The role of women, the young and civil society to the post-2015 development agenda; Contributions of South-South Cooperation, Triangular Cooperation, and ICT for Development to the post-2015 Development Agenda.*

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*This report contains the most important information on the progress or setbacks in poverty reduction issues. Throughout its four chapters on: public policy issues, productivity, and diversification of production, among others. One of these chapters deals with the changing wealth of the region, the one as long as it focuses on monoculture it would be doomed to an eventual shortage on its natural resources. In addition, it is reported that the poverty rate has remained the same between 2012 and 2013, except that the percentage of extreme poverty has increased in relative terms, due to the decreasing development pace within the region.*

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*This publication presents a comprehensive analysis of LAC region statistics on poverty and its dimensions, by this conducting a detailed analysis on the impact of violence, and also introducing combined analysis on poverty and minorities in the region. Another important area of research is the study of Latin America and the Caribbean social spending and its pragmatic effects in the well-being of the population, by addressing commonly overlooked aspects of well-being such as: environment, urban planning, coexistence, among others.*



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