Global sustainable development goals need to be relevant to the Caribbean

Port of Spain, June 19, 2104 – The Caribbean is strongly affected by international policies and actions, but Caribbean positions are often overlooked in global decision-making processes. CARICOM sustainable development experts are emphasising that the new international development framework that will replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) needs to reflect Caribbean priorities in order to be relevant, useful and applicable in countries in the region. These priorities include economic development, poverty reduction, building resilience to climate change and natural disasters, and food, water and energy security.

A group of experts met in May to discuss progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which United Nations (UN) Member States have proposed as the overarching global development framework after 2015. Discussions between countries are now underway, and CARICOM Member States are seeking to identify regional priorities and effectively negotiate their inclusion in the SDGs framework.

The small and informal technical workshop was facilitated by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI). It brought together representatives of Caribbean delegations to the UN, other senior Caribbean negotiators, senior technocrats from government agencies, and representatives of regional inter-governmental technical agencies, and Caribbean academic institutions and civil society.

The range of perspectives contributed to rich discussions on how international policies can catalyse and support regional and national policies and programmes to tackle the critical sustainable development challenges facing the Caribbean. Current positions of CARICOM Member States presented in the UN process were highlighted. A strategy to broaden and deepen engagement of Caribbean stakeholders was discussed, including focusing on preparing for implementation of the global sustainable development agenda based on an assessment of lessons from past policies and initiatives on the ground and establishment by CANARI of a Caribbean Sustainable Development Action Learning Group.

CANARI has also been facilitating a series of technical webinars to look at specific themes within the draft sustainable development agenda: economic development; climate change and disaster risk reduction; oceans and seas; and terrestrial biodiversity and ecosystems. The webinars have drawn together a range of stakeholders to assess what are Caribbean priorities under these themes.

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About CANARI

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute is a regional technical non-profit organisation which has been working in the islands of the Caribbean for more than 20 years. Our mission is to promote equitable
participation and effective collaboration in managing natural resources critical to development. Our programmes focus on research, sharing and dissemination of lessons learned, capacity building and fostering regional partnerships.

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a member of the Independent Research Forum (IRF), a collaboration of research institutes from across the globe that provides an independent source of critical thinking, integrated analysis and awareness-raising on the post-2015 development agenda. For more information about IRF see www.irf2015.org.

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Submitted on June 19 2014