

Engaging with Latin America & the Caribbean *on Climate Change*

- European Climate Diplomacy and Cooperation -

Brussels, 16 – 17 October 2013

CONCEPT NOTE

Introduction

Climate change is a decisive global challenge which, if not urgently controlled, will put at risk not only the environment but also economic prosperity and development. Climate change underlines the **interdependence** between the European Union and its international partners, making it by nature a strong subject for EU diplomacy and international cooperation. Managing climate change is a crucial and urgent shared challenge for both the European Union (EU) and Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries.

The 2010 UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) in Cancun set the scene for negotiations of a more inclusive international climate regime and codified mitigation pledges by developed countries and by a number of developing countries.

The Durban COP in 2011 and the Doha COP in 2012 made good progress towards a new legally binding climate regime applicable to all Parties, which will be the focus of the UNFCCC negotiations up to 2015. **The 2013 COP in Warsaw and the 2014 COP in Latin America will be very important milestones on the way to the 2015 agreement.** Climate diplomacy will play a central role in the way towards the new agreement and the EU-LAC round table will be an opportunity to further engage with LAC on the way forward in the international negotiations.

Equally important, the UNFCCC will work towards **more ambitious climate action before 2020**, with the objective to fully implement existing mitigation pledges and to encourage more ambitious pledges by the Parties. In this context, in-depth policy dialogue and EU cooperation play an important role in supporting partner countries in the design and implementation of ambitious climate policies.

In short, climate change is a high priority for LAC countries and for the EU and therefore one of the key themes of the EU-LAC relations. Climate change and sustainable development have been included in the EU-LAC Declarations following the Summits in 2008 and 2010. The EU-CELAC Summit held in Santiago in January 2013 reiterated the importance of climate change for both regions and welcomed the contributions of the EUROCLIMA regional programme.

The proposed informal round table with Latin America and the Caribbean will advance climate change policy dialogue among the regions, identify concrete ways of integrating climate change into economic development strategies and promote the sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystems services which are of particular relevance to the Latin American and Caribbean region.

Objectives

The objectives of the proposed roundtable are

- to further explore the positions and expectations of Latin America & the Caribbean and the EU in the global climate debate and to identify where LAC and the EU can promote joint objectives in the international climate negotiations;
- to share hands-on experience on domestic climate policies and on integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation policies and measures into national development plans (reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change);
- to identify priority areas and explore options for further cooperation between the EU and LAC on climate change.

The roundtable will allow EU and LAC stakeholders – diplomats and domestic policy practitioners – to engage in informal discussions on joint challenges and approaches by looking at key themes in the international climate arena. The deliberations will provide a useful opportunity to explore common ground and ways for effectively advancing the climate cooperation between the EU and LAC.

Key Themes

The roundtable will be organized in four sessions. **The first session will focus on the way ahead in the international agenda to address climate change, in particular the negotiations under the UNFCCC.** The presenters and panellists will be invited to reflect on the latest development in the international climate change negotiations and dialogues and on a follow-up to the commitments taken at the EU-LAC Summit in Santiago de Chile in January 2013 in order to identify areas for intensified cooperation between the regions.

The second and third session will look at domestic climate policies in the EU and LAC and on ways to integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation into national development plans. Discussions will focus on the development of the energy and industry sectors, on urban development, and at the sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystems services.

The **fourth session will explore options for enhanced cooperation on climate change** between the two regions.

The slides presented at the event and a summary report on the event will be posted on the internet.

Participants

The event will bring together senior officials and experts working on climate policies and EU-LAC cooperation in the EU and Latin America & the Caribbean.