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CONCEPT NOTE

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
INTER-AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT (CIDI)

MARCH 22, 2022

**Theme: Climate Change and the Hydrological Cycle: Integrating Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation into Water Resources Management**

1. **Background and Justification**

The variability of the hydrological cycle is increasing due to climate change, leading to extreme weather events that challenge people's ability to cope with disasters such as droughts or floods, reducing the predictability of water resources availability, decreasing water quality, and threatening sustainable development, biodiversity, and the enjoyment of human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation worldwide.

Increasing global demand for water has contributed to the degradation of key water-dependent carbon sinks such as peatlands, which cover only about 3% of the Earth's land surface, but store at least twice as much carbon as all the Earth's forests. In addition, some climate change mitigation measures, such as promoting the use of biofuels, may further exacerbate water scarcity. Increasing demand for water for energy, agriculture, industry, and human consumption makes it increasingly difficult to make compromises on this precious and limited resource, especially in those areas of the world already facing water stress. Water is therefore both an enabler and a constraint on humanity's ability to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Managing climate and water resources in a more integrated and sustainable manner has important co-benefits. An integrated approach to climate change and water resources management needs to be adopted in climate policymaking and planning at national and regional levels . It is estimated that transboundary basins hold 60% of the Earth's freshwater, are home to more than 40% of the world's population, and that 90% of the pollutants generated in countries are transported to the sea via rivers. Therefore, transboundary cooperation on mitigation and adaptation issues is essential to avoid the potential negative consequences of unilateral measures. Increasing water stress and meeting future demand will require sound decision-making on the allocation of water resources among different potential water uses, including climate change mitigation and adaptation activities.

1. **Meeting Objective**

This meeting will provide an opportunity to address integrated approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation through water resources management. Expert panelists will share their knowledge and experiences, seeking to foster horizontal and triangular technical cooperation capable of highlighting the importance of collaboration in water resources management for economic and social development.

Member states will have the opportunity to share best practices, identify the influence of water resources management on the fulfillment of their NDCs, and explore the feasibility of a range of solutions and offers of cooperation from other member states.

The Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) will collect inputs to explore ways to enhance its role in facilitating horizontal and triangular cooperation, supporting the implementation of multi-national schemes and mechanisms for sharing technological and nature-based solutions for effective climate change adaptation and mitigation in the region.

1. **Relevance to CIDI and the work of SEDI**

 Strengthening the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in accordance with the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development (PIDS).

 Enhancing member states’ capacities in the PIDS strategic area number 1 and 3, Disaster Risk Management and Integrated Water Resources Management, respectively, by promoting dialogue, technical cooperation, exchange of information, experiences, and best practices among member states for the development of public policies on integrated water resources management to increase resilience to multi-hazard disasters.

1. **Meeting Structure**

**PART ONE:** Remarks by high-level government officials responsible for Climate Change and Water Resources, with presentations limited to a maximum of five minutes.

* Silvana Alcoz, Director of Basins and Aquifers, National Water Directorate, Ministry of Environment of Uruguay
* Patricia Campos Mesén, Director, Climate Change Division, Ministry of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica

Guiding questions for the high authorities’ remarks:

1. What has changed in terms of policy, strategies and programs for Integrated Water Resources Management, in the context and trends in Climate Change that affects the availability of water, temporal and spatial excesses and deficits?
2. How do the NDCs can contribute to a more efficient use of financial resources to address the wáter crisis in the most affected areas in your country, while they contribute to reduce net emission of GHG?

**PART TWO:** Technical panel session in which participants will initially have a maximum of five minutes to present their main ideas and then two minutes to answer focus questions formulated by the moderator.

**MODERATOR: Officer in Charge, Department of Sustainable Development, Mr. Pablo Gonzalez.**

**Guest panelists on** Water, Climate and Integral Development:

* Catherine Gamper, Climate Change Adaptation, Directorate for Environment, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
* Raúl Muñoz, Water Resources Specialist, Water and Sanitation Division , Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

Guiding questions for remarks:

1. What would be your recommendation to governments and their efforts to use their national budgets and international cooperation in a more efficient manner so that they can contribute to the targets for reducing GHG emmissions, and at the same time they can secure the water resources, land and natural resources they need for their sustainable development?
2. In consideration of the multiple international agreements around the various agendas, including the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement and COP process, the Agenda 2030 and the SDG, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sendai Framework for DRR, among others, how the international cooperation and particularly international assistance for development can help recipient countries to build their capacity in a coordinated fashion among all these agreements and still advance towards sustainable development?

After the question-and-answer session with the guest speakers, the Chair will invite delegations to share best practices, needs, potential challenges and opportunities, and/or specific demands for hemispheric cooperation in this area.

1. **Result of the Meeting**

 It is expected that the meeting will contribute to:

1. Providing information on the influence and opportunities for integrated water resources management in climate change adaptation and mitigation, and data-driven approaches to address the development imperatives of the member states of the Organization of American States;
2. Encouraging coordination among programs and actions for the achievement of international commitments and agreements through an inter-sectoral, inter-institutional, multi-jurisdictional and multilateral approach; and
3. Inputs for the revision of the PIDS as mandated by the General Assembly at its last regular session held in 2021, and the convening of the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development.

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