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Mainstreaming Sustainable Development into National and Subnational Development Planning in Latin America and Caribbean

Summary of the SDplanNet-LAC Regional Workshop, Panama February 19–21, 2014

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ATPSN	Africa Technology Policy Studies Network
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CoP	Community of Practice
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GN-NCSDS	Global Network of National Councils for Sustainable Development and Similar Bodies
IGES	Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MDG	Millenium Development Goal
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations

What is SDplanNet?

SDplanNet is a sustainable development planning network created to help government professionals at the national and subnational levels share best practices and build capacity in the preparation and implementation of strategies for sustainable development and inclusive, fair green economies.

SDplanNet is a system of regional networks operating in Asia & Pacific and Latin America & Caribbean since 2008, with a new network having started in Africa in 2013. Regional advisory groups guide the work of the networks and consist of regional United Nations agencies, economic development organizations, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions, among others, with common mandates for advancing the practice of strategy making for and implementation of sustainable development and a green economy.

SDplanNet is administered by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) and the Africa Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPSN), and is sponsored in its current phase by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

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1.0   Introduction

There is a shared understanding among countries of the urgency to address the many acute and co-mingled economic, social and environmental issues that stand in the way of sustainable development; the greening of economies; and improvements in human well-being, quality of life and happiness.

During the first four months of 2014 and with the support of GIZ on behalf of BMZ, SDplanNet and its operating institutions IISD, IGES and ATPSN, together with its regional and global collaborating partners, Global Network of National Councils for Sustainable Development and Similar Bodies (GN-NCSDS), Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future and the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development, convened a series of three regional workshops in Asia & Pacific, Latin America & Caribbean and Africa. These workshops were designed to explore the future of governance and practice for mainstreaming sustainable development principles and green economy approaches at the national and subnational levels and scaling up implementation. The champions in government who are responsible for creating and implementing their national development plans or their national sustainable development or green economy strategies were invited to participate in an intensive three-day working session in their respective regions.

The desired outcome of the 2014 Regional Sustainable Development Transition Series is to advance a Community of Practice (CoP) among government planners and policy-makers to create a knowledge base and capacity-building agenda for innovative practices in strategy-making, planning and implementation that is commensurate with the demands of transformation that the Post-2015 Development Agenda and sustainable development goals now being discussed on the international stage will pose to all regions of the world.

This paper is a synopsis of discussions held at the SDplanNet-LAC regional workshop that took place in Panama City on February 19–21, 2014. Eighteen practitioners from across the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region participated, including government planning offices and environment departments at the national level, as well as regional organizations and networks that have mandates for sustainable development and planning at the subnational level.

The Panama workshop was conducted as a *rapid foresight exercise*. Participants first explored the future of governance and practice in the region in the context of a fictitious new country in the LAC region that, by the year 2030, had achieved all of its sustainable development goals (SDGs). This exploration focused on four key areas for mainstreaming sustainable development principles and green economy approaches into development planning:

- Multistakeholder processes and institutions
- Integrated planning for vertical and horizontal collaboration
- Scaling up implementation through crosscutting policies
- Monitoring, reporting and accountability

Following the rapid foresight exercise, workshop participants discussed the current state of governance and practice in relation to the above four areas and reflected on the gap between these current practices vis-à-vis the idealized notion of the future. This provided the basis for clarifying key capacity-building and knowledge-sharing needs over the next few years for governments at the national and subnational levels to hit the ground running, as the Post-2015 Development Agenda implementation period begins in late 2015. The workshop also discussed the important role that

CoP networks play in helping governments advance innovative practices in the four focal areas and provided broad recommendations for how to strengthen and coordinate these networks.

This paper is structured along the format described above, based upon insights gleaned from the Panama workshop discussions. It is prefaced by an overview of sustainable development issues currently being discussed in the region, drawing on the recent United Nations (2013) publication entitled *Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: Follow-Up to the United Nations Development Agenda Beyond 2015 and to Rio+20.*

2.0 Overview of Sustainable Development Goal Issue Areas Being Discussed in the Region

The geographic, economic, environmental and demographic variabilities of the 21 island and 21 mainland states that constitute the LAC region complicate a comparison of individual achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, with less than two years to go, "it is reasonable to conclude that as a region, there has been good progress in reducing extreme poverty, hunger and undernourishment and child mortality, and increasing access by the population to safe drinking water. Progress has been made in education and access to health care. Whereas fiscal and monetary policies have enabled steady growth in public spending, with an upward trend in spending on social programmes, the financial crisis of 2008 has seen reversals in some of these indicators" (UN Non-Governmental Liaison Services, n.d.).

The LAC region has not been able to halt environmental degradation and is not likely to meet targets for several areas, including access to primary education, gender parity, sanitation, reproductive health and inequality. More progress is also required in regulation, taxation, funding and natural resource governance in ways that integrate private sector interests with sustainable development goals. Housing, including drinking water, sanitation, and environmental health has not kept pace with population growth and the region's increasing urbanization exacerbates inequalities and places growing demands for social services and safety nets. The shortfall in anticipated funding levels to meet the MDGs from both local and grant sources is a contributing factor to the non-achievement of some of the agreed targets. (United Nations, 2013)

Against this background, the Post-2015 Development Agenda presents a new opportunity for the LAC region, as indeed for all nations to redefine a global sustainable development agenda informed by the lessons of the MDG implementation and the priority sustainable development challenges of the twenty-first century. The comprehensive 2013 report by the United Nations, entitled *Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: Follow Up to the United Nations Development Agenda Beyond 2015 and to Rio+20*, notes that the emerging priority for this agenda as well as *The Future We Want* (United Nations commission on Sustainable Development, 2012) points to a path underpinned by equality and inclusion as the guiding principle, and directed towards integrated development planning to exploit synergies between economic expansion, social protection, human security, risk reduction and environmental protection. It further notes that promoting gender equality and empowering women, redressing the gaps affecting certain ethnic groups, territorial differences and other factors of exclusion, coordination and participatory processes are also integral to the collective emerging priorities. The report also considered the challenges in achieving the MDGs and in contemplating how to address these with the Post-2015 Development Agendas, recommending that:

> The goals should address and incorporate in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development and their interlinkages, should be action-oriented, concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, aspirational, global in nature and universally applicable to all countries, while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. (United Nations, 2012)

According to the United Nations, the framework for moving forward should be "grounded in structural change as the path, public policy as the instrument and equality and sustainability as the core values steering the course of change" (United Nations, 2013, p. 92). This will require, among other things, adjustments to governance structures with vertical and horizontal collaboration and access to information and resources to encourage meaningful citizen participation in the development planning, implementation and monitoring processes. In this context, there are useful lessons from

the MDG implementation process to continue into or inform the post-2015 implementation discourse. These lessons include inter-institutional cooperation for reducing vulnerabilities and contributing to national and rural development in Guatemala and Ecuador; addressing gender inequalities in Uruguay; mainstreaming environmental sustainability in the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica; the Low Carbon Development Strategy of Guyana; promoting coherence in social and macro-economic policies in Nicaragua; the green economy approach to national strategic planning in Barbados; localizing the MDGs and their processes in Argentina; and community-based monitoring in Belize, to name a few.

In moving from MDG implementation to the Post-2015 Development Agenda in the LAC region, the conversation centres on ongoing themes and development challenges, underscoring the notion that this will be a transition based on emerging challenges and improved governance. Discussions at the SDplanNet-LAC workshop in Panama City (February 19–21, 2014) present strong evidence that, in contemplating the way forward, countries are mindful of the shortfalls in achieving the MDGs. Emerging developmental priorities identified at the SDplanNet workshop include poverty reduction, food security, malnutrition, inequality (including gender and ethnic inequality), biodiversity, bio safety, conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, transportation, sustainable cities, land-use planning, disaster risk reduction, water, sanitation and oceans governance. Whereas this list is not exhaustive, it points to lingering challenges from the MDG implementation that are likely to be superimposed onto the framework and priority objectives of the Post-2015 Development Agenda when national strategies and priorities are developed.

In addition to the development priorities, governance-related challenges persist in defining goals, setting targets and measuring progress, largely due to inadequacies in how development is planned, pursued and measured. Central to this challenge is the predominantly sector-based approach to development, which weakens planning, limits efficiency, promotes policy conflicts and denies opportunities for synergies in pursuing common or overlapping goals. Additionally, stakeholder participation is not as robust as it should have been, thereby denying opportunities for improved governance, inclusion and accountability. These challenges are further complicated by the predominance of short-term political considerations in resource allocation decisions in the face of the long-term perspective of sustainable development pursuits. These governance and practice challenges are the focus of this paper and the 2014 SDplanNet regional workshop in Panama.

Some countries are actively exploring options and opportunities to link ongoing development planning to the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including exploring integrating subnational planning into national processes through the strengthening or creation, as the case may be, of vertical and horizontal engagements. The Government of Mexico, for example, has decided that civil society inputs will inform its Post-2015 Development Agenda negotiations and has taken steps to achieve this. Participants at the SDplanNet 2014 workshop in Panama noted a number of ongoing initiatives in this regard, including: the inclusion of local and city-level development issues; the re-engineering of government for improved planning and accountability; improved transparency and information flows; education; capacity development; concensus-building; inclusive planning; cross-departmental collaboration; and regional and international cooperation, as tools being used to engender improved stakeholder involvement in the planning and development processes. It was clear from the discussions that improved stakeholder involvement at all levels needs to be strengthened in the post-2015 era.

Regardless of the care taken at the national level, the global economy is interconnected in multiple ways making it almost impossible to achieve national-level sustainable development if it is not established in, and supported by, an enabling global economic model:

> In order to move towards sustainability on a global scale, steps must be taken to address global ills under the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and to fortify essential global public goods such as fair trade, a stable international financial system and the accessibility of technologies that are critical for health and environmental sustainability. To this end, global covenants should be developed for sharing tools, standards and policies. (United Nations, 2013, p. 90)

Most countries in the region have produced and are at various stages of implementing national sustainable development strategies that were developed during the MDG implementation phase. Therefore, planning for the Post-2015 Development Agenda will not be taking place in a vacuum. The SDplanNet-LAC workshop in Panama clearly noted this point and recommended that greater emphasis should be placed on stakeholder engagement and monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER) in the transition. The related issues and recommendations are reported later in this paper.

3.0 Narrative on Future of Governance and Practice in Latin America and Caribbean to 2030

This section reflects on four key questions in an effort to explore the future of governance and practice in the year 2030 for mainstreaming sustainable development principles and green economy approaches into national planning. At the SDplanNet regional LAC workshop, these questions were addressed in the context of a fictitious future country in the LAC region that by 2030 has achieved its Post-2015 Development Agenda and sustainable development goals:

1. What are the multistakeholder processes and institutions that enabled the new LAC country to set and implement its strategy?

2. What does integrated development planning look like in the new LAC country with respect to vertical and horizontal collaboration?

3. What are the types of policies and programs that were able to achieve co-benefits for water, energy and food security?

4. What monitoring, reporting and accountability processes and institutions enabled the country to continually improve and adapt over time?

3.1 Multistakeholder Processes and Institutions

Preface: *Multistakeholder bodies and institutions provide the means for bringing multiple perspectives to the increasingly complex sustainable development planning process, thus providing a platform for the creation of multiple innovative policies and projects for their implementation. The form and function of these institutions and processes will vary from one context to the next. But only through effective, efficient and formal engagement with a range of stakeholders will the right mix of sustainable development solutions be identified and implemented over time.*

Like the MDGs, the emerging Post-2015 Development Agenda has people at its centre and therefore should engage people in all stages of efforts to meet its goals. There is growing acceptance of this philosophy, as was clear in the discussions at the SDplanNet-LAC workshop.

In 2030 there is a shared understanding of the importance of multistakeholder engagement within and across sectors at all levels to ensure meaningful vertical and horizontal cooperation and coordination in the planning, implementation and MER stages of the development process. Meaningful stakeholder engagement is believed to be a governance issue and commitment to such an approach is supported by significant political will. It is also commonly understood that multistakeholder processes and institutions that are in place for development planning in this new LAC country in 2030 build trust, improve governance and enrich the development process.

In 2030 the importance of appropriate structure to facilitate stakeholder engagement is acknowledged and is considered at four levels:

a) The multiple levels of government and governance structures: The decentralized nature of local governance, represented by towns and village councils, city governments, regional governments, municipalities, district local authorities, constituency councils, etc., represent a significant proportion of the population of this new LAC country and are integrated into a meaningful stakeholder engagement process for development planning and implementation.

b) Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (i.e., academia, farmers, trade unions, etc.) in this new LAC country in 2030 represent a range of key perspectives and special interests in the political, economic, social and environmental landscapes. These perspectives are brought into the development planning and implementation process and are instrumental in achieving the Post-2015 Development Agenda and its sustainable development goals in 2030.

c) Formal groups representing private sector or industry interests, such as chambers of commerce, business associations, agriculturist associations, cooperatives, service clubs, and trade unions etc. have also played a significant developmental role in the social and economic life of the new LAC country and contributed immensely to the success of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

d) Public sector entities, be they ministries or statutory organizations, are the final of the four levels for stakeholder participation. Included in this category are political interests as represented by both incumbent and opposition political parties and public servants.

Stakeholder coordination is an important aspect of engagement in 2030. So that this was not left to chance, a national sustainable development council or similar body was charged with this coordination task. Its membership reflects the key stakeholders of society and its work is supported by a secretariat within the planning department that is appropriately staffed to carry out its mandate. The creation and modus operandi of these bodies is legislated and their place in the decision-making continuum is clearly defined, taking into consideration regulatory or constitutional roles and responsibilities that govern the functioning of this government in 2030. Leadership and relationships are important ingredients in the composition and functioning of these bodies and affect their effectiveness. These were carefully thought out in designing the multistakeholder body and developing its mandate.

In 2030 multistakeholder processes and institutions for development planning at the national level require subnational-level government inputs. Stakeholder clusters based on sector interests, geography, demography, cultures, etc., are engaged at all stages of the development process (policy formulation, implementation and MER) and opportunities and resources, including information to guide decision-making, are made available to enable meaningful participation. The capacity of these interest groups is assessed continually and capacity development is undertaken as necessary to facilitate effective participation in these processes. Additionally, it is important to note that in 2030, stakeholder engagement comprises two-way communication channels, whether horizontal or vertical, allowing for inputs, feedback and assessments.

3.2   Integrated Planning Through Vertical and Horizontal Collaboration

Preface: *Achieving a Post-2015 Development Agenda and a suite of global sustainable development goals around a 2030 time frame is difficult to imagine without a significant improvement in vertical collaboration in all countries and across all regions of the world. In view of a growing body of good practice examples at the subnational level around the world, a new wave of innovation in planning and implementation for sustainable development is being envisaged, characterized as a convergence of bottom-up and top-down governance that simultaneously pursues sustainability, accountability and adaptability. Vertical and horizontal coordination are ageing and persistent governance and practice issues, this much is clear. What is not clear as we approach the Post-2015 Development Agenda and a potential new set of global goals for sustainable development are the specific types of innovative governance arrangements and practices for mainstreaming sustainable development into national planning and scaling up implementation that countries in each region of the world should be advancing to hit the ground running when a new global agenda emerges.*

At the Panama workshop, participants envisaged a LAC country in the year 2030 in which successful development planning at the national level started with the new country deciding on a vision for national development incorporating the principles and goals of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, but firmly grounded in current and projected national and subnational circumstances. Figure 1 provides a notional and stylized illustration of the envisaged integrated development planning governance and process arrangements.

The national vision represents the centre of gravity and was crafted in a process led by the national multistakeholder council that engaged stakeholders, including other levels of government at national and subnational levels. The second key component that emerged from the engagement process was the multi-decadal national development strategy, which identified the development themes along with the specific goals and targets to be pursued to achieve the vision. The vision and strategy were clearly stated and widely, if not universally, accepted with the long-term horizon. It was then communicated to all levels of government, private sector and civil society and made the focal point for investments in national development.

Through additional multistakeholder input, the national strategy was then implemented through a series of five-year rolling medium-term development plans to provide guidance at the sector level. As will be described later in this section, the vision and strategy were reviewed every three years to ensure they were still salient in the midst of emerging development issues and unanticipated crises.
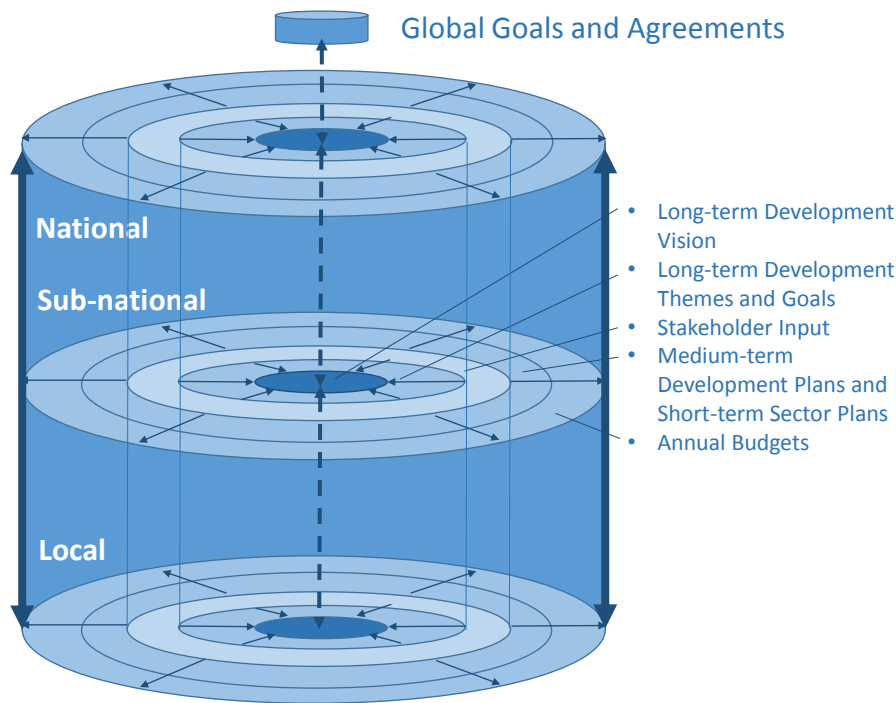
These five-year development plans inform the sector plans, which are developed and implemented using a three-year rolling planning and reporting cycle and financed through annual budget allocations. Investment decisions are, for the most part, made at the political level, which must be informed of emerging priorities, and allowed to influence both the process and outcomes, hopefully in ways that are consistent with the vision for the country.

These nested planning processes also take place at the subnational government level and also at the local level by major cities where visions, strategies and plans are created within unique contexts, yet collaboratively with the other levels of government. Stakeholder processes at these levels were just as robust as at the national level, penetrating the full spectrum of stakeholders needed to inform development planning at each level.

In this fictitious LAC country of the future, annual budget allocations to sectors and programs are screened to ensure congruence with the vision and related strategy and goals. Budget proposals originate from ministries as well as from subnational, statutory and non-governmental organizations that are assigned various levels of responsibility for the delivery of results rather than for levels of expenditure.

Figure 1 presents a three-dimensional view of the planning and implementation processes employed by the fictitious LAC country. The vertical axis maps engagement in the planning, implementation and MER processes employed to achieve equitable and inclusive stakeholder engagement at all levels of the process. In Figure 1, the local, subnational and national levels are indicative only, as circumstances and stakeholder mapping will dictate how the various levels of consultations are defined. These levels then define the horizantal planning, implementation and MER processes across sectors, and with horizontal collaboration. In this model, planning radiates outwards from the vision to the annual budget level, while implementation is directed inwards from the annual budget level towards the agreed vision for nationl development.

In applying this model, the development themes were defined in sector-neutral terms to promote cross-sectoral collaboration at this level. This approach assured vertical and horizontal dialogue and the development of policies and programs that achieve benefits across multiple sectors.

Global Goals and Agreements

National

Sub-national

Local

- Long-term Development Vision
- Long-term Development Themes and Goals
- Stakeholder Input
- Medium-term Development Plans and Short-term Sector Plans
- Annual Budgets

FIGURE 1: ENVISAGED INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLANNING GOVERNANCE AND PRACTICE ELEMENTS TO ACHIEVE VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL COLLABORATION

## 3.3　Scaling Up Implementation Through Crosscutting Policies for Achieving Water, Energy and Food Security

Preface: *There is a very real prospect that scaling up implementation to address multiple sustainable development issues under the Post-2015 Development Agenda will take place against the backdrop of frequent economic shocks and the constant financial strain of necessary climate change adaptation. This will necessitate doing more with less. It will also demand implementation of policies and programs that can address multiple issues simultaneously. For example, policies that can deliver on water, energy and food security will be critical for the Post-2015 Development Agenda.*

The green economy approach has helped clarify the notion of achieving co-benefits in policy design and implementation. Achieving co-benefits is at the very heart of the green economy approach where economic prosperity is advanced through initiatives that can protect and even increase natural capital and deliver social benefits in an equitable manner. Much progress was made on this front in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, in terms of both concept and implementation. This should certainly be celebrated, but the urgency and importance of achieving co-benefits with public money is waning as our memory of the pain of the financial crisis becomes distant.

Reflecting on the success of the new LAC country in 2030 in achieving the Post-2015 Development Agenda, a major factor was due to the shared understanding achieved decades earlier that the silo model for informing resource allocation decisions significantly limited opportunities to derive co-benefits across sectors. The new LAC country wanted to avoid the result that accompanied the silo approach, which was generally viewed as an inefficient use of resources and a slower rate of achievement of the development goals than may otherwise have been possible. The integrated development planning approach articulated in the previous section provided the new LAC country with a solution that ultimately led to its success in achieving its Post-2015 Development Agenda.

In this model, the development themes derived from the vision for national development were, to the extent possible, intended to be sector neutral. Issues such as poverty reduction, employment, governance, inclusion, gender, safety and environmental sustainability are outputted from this stage of the analysis. This approach allows—even forces—sector, subnational and non-governmental interests to think about their inputs into the development agenda in cross-sectoral terms. For example, in rolling out policies and programs to address poverty reduction, this approach required all stakeholders who can have an impact on the issues that contribute to poverty—such as education, employment generation, access to services, food security, access to information, utilities, sanitation services, housing, etc.—to craft an agreed path to achieve the agreed outcome. In this way, all actors were contributing to the shared development goals and fostering the integration of efforts. Housing, utilities and sanitation services, for example, were able to coordinate policies and interventions across their sectors to achieve synergies and reduce costs. This policy-conceptualizing process for achieving crosscutting benefits in water, energy and food security is illustrated in Figure 2.

The process for screening policies, programs and projects for budgetary allocations was another tool that was used to achieve synergies across sectors by 2030. The screening tool was designed to award higher ranking to policies and projects that yield benefits across development themes, thereby both encouraging this type of planning and directing investments towards achieving synergies.
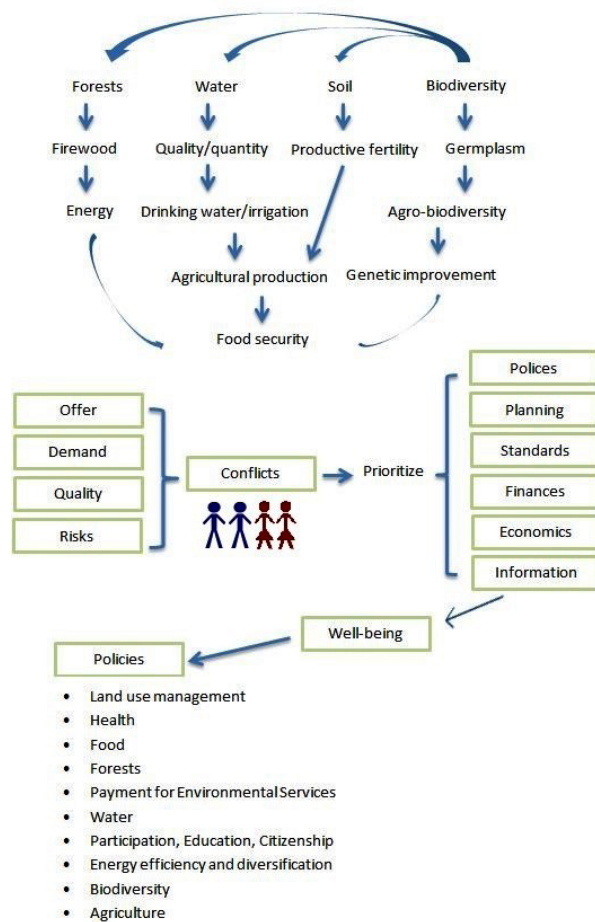
FIGURE 2: CONCEPTUALIZING POLICIES HAVING CROSSCUTTING BENEFITS FOR ACHIEVING WATER, ENERGY AND FOOD SECURITY

3.4   Monitoring, Reporting and Accountability

Preface: *Innovative planning and scaled-up implementation with ill-equipped monitoring and review processes is simply not rational. Nor is the prospect of scaling up implementation without a new wave of innovation in accountability, not only relating to the importance of consequences for giving up on commitments, but providing positive incentives for achieving commitments.*

It was agreed early on in the creation of the new LAC country that MER has a central and strategic role to play in informing policy-making processes and investment decisions. It contributes to evidence-based policy-making, management and accountability. Policy-making, especially at the budget decision-making level, focuses on government priorities among competing demands from citizens and groups in society. The information provided by MER systems supports these deliberations at all levels by providing evidence about what is and is not working, and about the most cost-effective types of policy options. The processes that were put in place formed the basis for reflection on past efforts and a beacon to guide future actions, and this was a key ingredient through which the new LAC country succeeded in achieving its Post-2015 Development Agenda and sustainability goals.

But it was not an easy road to 2030. For these MER systems to deliver on their potential, several elements came together through years of learning-by-doing, including:

- **Indicators** – to provide the benchmarks or outcomes against which monitoring will take place
- **Baselines** – to provide the points of reference for the MER assessments
- **Data sets** – to make it possible to draw comparisons, assess progress and provide evidence-based reports and recommendations
- **Capacity** – to collect and analyze data and generate evidence-based evaluations to inform policy formulation and review, and investment decisions
- **Participation** – by stakeholders at all levels to facilitate the MER processes and contribute to evidence-based policy formulation and investment decisions
- **Accountability** – to ensure results-oriented investments and to give meaning to the MER process.

In thinking about governance and practice for mainstreaming sustainable development and scaling up implementation in the future LAC country, all entities responsible for policy formulation, program design and implementation, and investment decisions were subject to the MER process. These entities include central government ministries; statutory corporations; city, town and village councils; regional governments; and non-state actors involved in program delivery. Past habits and tendencies to focus only on expenditure reporting without adequate reference to the achievement of goals had to be overcome. Accountability for achieving agreed developmental goals, also a common shortfall of traditional development planning, was looked at with an innovative lens, leading to a successful transition to a more robust monitoring, reporting and accountability system and a paradigm shift in how goals are set, resources allocated, performance assessed and accountability enforced. Designing the system to deliver these outcomes was not standardized, as it was acknowledged early on in the new LAC country development that these must reflect the extent to which the necessary organizations, policies, capabilities and practices exist or could be brought into existence, as well as on the political will needed to make the transition to evidence-based policy and program development, resource allocation decisions and accountability. Such a system ultimately required that the elements listed above and its design needed to be based on principles of transparency, accountability and good governance.

The foundation for an effective monitoring, reporting and accountability system was the development plan with outcomes that were clearly stated, universally accepted and measurable. The inherent weaknesses of traditional self-monitoring and reporting systems supported the need for an authoritative, independent body supported by an appropriately resourced team to manage the process. All stakeholders responsible for achieving outcomes were legally required to report on their programs and projects in an agreed format and at agreed time intervals. Reports were monitored in reference to agreed baselines, questions of accountability, generated knowledge to inform policy review, program adjustments and resource allocation decisions. These reports were released to agencies responsible for the pursuit of development goals, to the public and to decision-makers.

Achieving the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and indeed the related national development agenda in the new LAC country, required governments to make difficult choices for investing public resources among competing demands. Regardless of how carefully plans were developed and implemented, it was through careful monitoring, reporting and accountability measures that investment decisions were slowly improved and progress measured. This aspect of the development agenda, which has generally been left out of traditional development planning, played an increasingly important role in the success of the new LAC country by 2030, in what turned out to be a resource-constrained environment.

The new LAC country understood early on in its formative years that an effective MER framework must be constructed on a platform of political commitment to inclusiveness, good governance and transparency. Another foundational requirement that was commonly understood at the time was the importance of clearly defined goals and robust data sets to establish baselines and measure progress. With these in place, the stage was set to construct MER structures and protocols to improve policy formulation and guide investment decisions. In the context of achieving the goals of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and indeed national sustainable development goals, some of the key requirements articulated for a robust MER framework included:

a) An agreed development plan with specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-related (SMART) goals.

b) Robust data sets with data-gathering and analysis capabilities to support evidence-based policy formulation, goal setting and MER.

c) Systems to facilitate policy and goal reviews based on MER outcomes.

d) Multi-level application of the MER protocol to allow for balanced assessments and easy access to the outcomes.

e) Capacity development to enable meaningful participation by all stakeholders in the process.

The MER framework and processes were mandatory for all development partners with appropriate accountability responsibilities. They were aimed at goal achievement as the primary, but not the only, consideration, and the reporting was designed to inform future policy and investment decisions.

4.0 Overview of Existing Governance and Practice – 2013

Following the rapid foresight exercise, workshop participants moved into the backcasting exercise by reflecting on the same four key questions asked in the ideal LAC country, but this time in relation to the current state of governance and practice for mainstreaming sustainable development principles and green economy approaches into national planning. The results are discussed below.

4.1 Multistakeholder Processes and Institutions

Any level of engagement of subnational stakeholders in national-level development planning requires, at a minimum, political support for this planning model. Meaningful stakeholder engagement is fundamental to democracy, inclusiveness and transparency, and a demonstration of political openness and maturity. LAC workshop participants reported variations of stakeholder participation in development planning in the LAC region, which are perhaps reflective of the varying levels to which member states have progressed towards these ideals. It is also a product of the diverse priorities and planning models that drive the process in the region.

Currently, the predominant development-planning model is the sector-based approach, where each sector (i.e., energy, water, agriculture, etc.) develops its own visions and goals. Under this model, national development plans tend to be a collection of sectorally agreed long-term objectives developed through expert, public and private sectors, and stakeholder visions and priorities that are subject to periodic reviews based on time-bound planning horizons, changing circumstances or both. Using the sector-based approach, for example, Costa Rica's planning department, MIDPLAN created its national strategic plan through a highly participative multistakeholder process that included not only civil society but also researchers, scientists and technical experts. The country also created a "country vision" for the long term (2030). Part of its success was the effort made to empower people to participate in the process. In a variation of the sector-based model, in St. Lucia, an attempt is being made to create an integrated development plan, but despite the requirement for stakeholder consultations, the approach has tended to perpetuate siloed thinking.

There are also bottom-up approaches being employed in the region under which provincial or local governments, and/or national councils comprising civil society stakeholder bodies meet with their constituents to agree on development priorities for consideration at the national level. These processes include negotiations on local-level development priorities and implementation processes. In Guatemala, for example, bodies such as the national council for urban and rural development, community groups and others were all involved in creating the national development plan from the bottom up. Over 100 dialogue sessions were held with a wide range of stakeholder groups to discuss the development of the plan, which was then presented to the president.

Currently in LAC, state-created bodies configured to pursue special interests provide another mechanism for stakeholder engagement. Bodies such as economic councils, environmental commissions, committees to deal with the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, waste management authorities, utilities commissions, and advisory commissions related to specific sectors such as tourism, agriculture or trade are integral to the development planning framework in the region. These may be ad-hoc or permanent bodies, that they represent formally, often statutorily, created interest groups to address specific national development issues. As such, their involvement deepens and broadens the planning process. In the Dominican Republic, for example, provincial environment councils (which include civil society representatives) engage stakeholders in workshops to identify key challenges/issues, and also draw upon scientific research and data to provide a more comprehensive picture of environmental situations. Task forces are then pulled together to address specific environmental issues (e.g., water, energy, noise, agriculture). From

these groups, an environmental agenda emerges that is put forth for further public consultation. This annual process creates a "social pact" where each ministry pledges actions to further the agenda.

Workshop delegates reported that, throughout the region, changes in governments often trigger a review of development plans. In many cases, changes are undertaken through formal consultative processes involving public sector agencies, local governments, communities and NGOs who are given the opportunity to infuse their priorities into the political agenda and any existing national development plans. In Mexico, for example, when each new federal government begins its term, public hearings are held at the ministerial level, providing a range of stakeholders the opportunity to raise priority issues and concerns to be addressed. This process is replicated by local governments. In Costa Rica, with each change of government, the Ministerio de Planificación Nacional y Política Económica gathers all members responsible for diverse areas (health, poverty reduction, etc.) for discussions/review of the national objectives.

In some cases, however, changes in the national plan are driven by changes in priorities of incumbent political parties, as was seen in Panama when a new legal mechanism was instantly removed with a change in government.

Participants also observed that, throughout the region, civil society has organized itself with varying degrees of sophistication to address a wide spectrum of issues of concern to the groups' members. Groups representing or concerned with women's rights, persons with disabilities, farmers' organizations, church groups, sports, youth groups, indigenous populations and cultural groups (to name but a few) have sprung up to advocate for the collective interests of their members at various levels of the decision-making ladder. While still not as strong as they could be, workshop participants report that they are becoming an increasingly important voice in the sustainable development discourse in the region. This visibility is evidenced by the regional participatory process initiated by the Government of Mexico with the support of international development agencies that actively solicits the views of these organizations in crafting the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

4.2   Integrated Planning Through Vertical and Horizontal Collaboration

The LAC region displays varied approaches to the vertical and horizontal integration in planning processes. At one end of the spectrum, and particularly in the case of Small Island Developing State members of the LAC region, subnational government structures have limited capacity for planning and implementation. As a consequence, formal engagement in the planning process is generally limited to the provision of project interventions to meet local needs for inclusion in any national-level planning that may be pursued at a given time. In this model, strategic planning is generally within the purview of sector interests, thereby depriving the planning outcome of the richness that may have been possible through the meaningful participation of subnational governments and interests. This approach also undermines democracy and transparency and, in today's connected world, contributes to feelings of exclusion and unrest.

There is, however a growing movement towards greater inclusion of stakeholders in the planning and implementation processes. In some jurisdictions, new or reconfigured state planning agencies are being created with mandates for stakeholder engagement in the articulation of development plans that address both national and subnational development agendas. Ecuador's national plan, Buen Vivir, promotes the "gradual construction of a Plurinational and Intercultural State" (Republic of Ecuador, 2010, p. 5). Its development was based upon a participatory process that included citizen "Inspectorships" for "men and women of different social-cultural background, age, sexual choice, condition" (Republic of Ecuador, 2010, p. 13); Citizen Workshops where over 4,000 participants spoke and a Dialogue and Consensus between Social and Institutional Actors, performed through the "National Councils for Equality." In

some jurisdictions, plans developed through wide consultations are, once approved, returned to local governments and municipalities for implementation along with a reporting requirement to assess progress. In Colombia, for example, once consensus is reached on a plan, it is sent down to the 32 governors and 12,000 municipalities. These local levels are then required to report on how they are complying with the plan in terms of policies they are implementing.

Another shortcoming in the region is the slow uptake of vision-based national development planning. This perpetuates sector-based planning with lost opportunities for improved governance through inclusive planning, synergies across sectors and more cost-effective investments in pursuit of multiple goals. There is, however, growing evidence of countries in the region moving in this direction, including the greater embrace of the green economy model, but this remains an important opportunity for innovation in crafting national Post-2015 Development Agendas. In Mexico, for example, Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) was invited by the Ministry of Environment to participate in a green economy discussion and advised the ministry to carry out a multistakeholder process in order to make new legislation. Saint Lucia experimented with integrated development planning in 2001 in an attempt to prepare and begin implementation of a national sustainable development plan by 2005, but this initiative was thwarted for a myrad of reasons including the perceived erosion of the powers of some ministries.

4.3   Scaling Up Implementation Through Crosscutting Policies to Achieve Water, Energy and Food Security

As suggested above, the paucity in the application of integrated development planning tools denies opportunities for cross-sector benefits from policy formulation and program implementation. That said, there are good examples where such benefits are achieved, perhaps the most common of which is in climate change adaptation policies and programs. For instance, Costa Rica and St. Lucia's National climate change strategy crosscuts many areas of public policy. Along the same vein, Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) implementation directs efforts in achieving co-benefits across MEAs and between MEAs and other sectors at both the global and national levels. Under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, for example, parties have decided to integrate climate benefits, waste minimization, capacity building, industry regulation and production efficiencies in investment decisions to achieve the protocol's goals. This is a deliberate policy that evolved over time and careful, sometimes difficult, negotiations to overcome resistance against doing things differently and to take a multi-perspective approach to policy formulation and investments

Examples of policies and programs that generate co-benefits across sectors can be found in diverse countries in the LAC region. Brazil's social safety net program, Bolsa Família, has contributed to significant declines in income poverty and inequality; its PRONAF program supports food security through microcredit; and its Bolsa Verde ("Green Grant") is an incentive mechanism to develop conservation and sustainable use projects (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2013). Colombia's water policy is linked with food security, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services and sustainable consumption. A particularly interesting example of national-level policy generating multiple benefits is Ecuador's Buen Vivir ("Good Life") national development plan to advance towards an improved quality of life, based upon the constitutional rights to water, food, health, education and housing.

Co-benefits can also be generated through policy formulation at local levels, where sector interests are less defined. For example, aligned with Buen Vivir, Ecuador's Socio Bosque ("Forest Partner") program creates a sustainable incentive for communities to conserve their natural capital and also serves as a poverty alleviation effort (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2013). Peru has established watershed committees that look at development in all its forms within the defined watershed boundary. In the Dominican Republic, food security programs work with a range of agricultural associations to provide stakeholders with long-term loans, which have in turn exerted positive pressures in agriculture, exports and unemployment.

4.4   Monitoring, Reporting and Accountability

According to a recent World Bank report,

> Many governments in the Latin America and Caribbean region have gained an increased understanding of the value of monitoring and evaluation to help both governments and donors alike better understand what public investments and interventions work well, which do not, and the reasons why. Monitoring and evaluating the performance of public programs and institutions can help increase their effectiveness, providing more accountability and transparency in how public monies are used, informing the budgetary process and the allocation of public resources, and assessing their effectiveness in attaining their desired objectives such as improving welfare, reducing poverty or enhancing the equality of opportunities. (Burdescu et al., 2005)

In this regard, some countries, notably Brazil and Colombia, which are members of the LAC Monitoring and Evaluation Network, have developed and implemented MER systems and processes to better assess the impact of public sector investments and use the assessments to inform policy and investment decisions. Some of these MER systems are managed at the head-of-state level, conducted by the agencies responsible for program implementation (self-monitoring) and include mandatory reporting to civil society. In other models being practiced, a central agency, usually the ministry responsible for finance or planning, will take the lead in conducting monitoring, evaluation and reporting functions. For example, in Colombia, the national department of planning measures the percentage of expenditure in relation to the allocations, and then reports its findings to the public. This MER process is carried out at all levels of government.

There are national monitoring systems that track progress towards the goals of the national plan in four-year cycles, attempting to gauge the percentage of progress made over time. A central body such as the planning department oversees the process, engaging stakeholders and the public in the monitoring process at these intervals. In Costa Rica, for example, the National Assessment System operates in the Planning Ministry (Ministerio de Planificación Nacional y Política Económica), which carries out monitoring and evaluation of goals and policies of the plan and of public policies. Furthermore, the legislature and the Comptroller General's Office give periodic accountability reports.

Laws relating to public access to information are also driving MER reporting and public access to the reports. Whereas there is a concerted effort to pursue objective-based MER practices, the predominant model is more about expenditure reporting and issues of transparency in public sector investments on a sector basis. Under this particular national model, NGOs that receive state funds are subject to scrutiny and have been provided with training to build capacity in program development and implementation, as well as MER functions with the view to enhancing related capabilities. For example, in the Dominican Republic, the planning department ensures that departments are carrying out their goals with the funds they have been given. Due to the law of free access to information, there is constant monitoring/vigilance by civil society.

In Peru, the ministry responsible for economic planning tracks departmental spending with an emphasis on ensuring that the entire budget is used up, rather than on the achievement of agreed objectives. At the subnational level, municipalities conduct hearings to allow public participation in the MER exercise. This particular model lacks a formal process to evaluate progress towards goals and opportunities to adjust approaches in cases where goals are not met.

Overall, the current practices of countries in the LAC region paint a picture of increasing recognition of the value of MER as a tool for improved accountability and governance, for public participation in the development progress and for the efficient investment of public funds in pursuit of development goals. Whereas there is notable progress towards objectives-based MER, the predominant model is still based on expenditure monitoring.

5.0   Capacity-Building Agenda for 2014 and 2015

In considering the capacity needs to support the national-level pursuit of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, participants at the SDplanNet-LAC workshop considered the challenges encountered in achieving the MDGs and related efforts to improve implementation through changes in approaches to development planning, stakeholder engagement, governance, monitoring and reporting. A key outcome of this exercise was recognizing there has been steady but uneven progress in these areas, with some countries reporting greater strides towards inclusive planning, coordination, implementation and MER than others. There was also concensus that several important gaps persist, and these need to be addressed to support the roll-out of Post-2015 Development Agendas. The gaps and capacity development challenges and related solutions are discussed below, according to the respective four areas of analysis explored throughout the workshop.

5.1   Multistakeholder participation

Any level of engagement of subnational stakeholders in national-level development planning requires, at a minimum, political support for this planning model. Meaningful stakeholder engagement is fundamental to democracy, inclusiveness and transparency, and a demonstration of political openness and maturity. The marked variations of stakeholder participation in development planning currently found in the LAC region are perhaps reflective of the varying levels to which member states have progressed towards these ideals. It is also a product of the diverse priorities and planning models that drive the process in the region.

The *absence of a common vision for national development* fragments stakeholder efforts into sector pursuits, thereby limiting opportunities for synergies across sectors. This is both the result of and exacerbated by the predominantly short-term political interests that drive policy and investment decisions and, by extension, the development agenda.

The *capacity of stakeholders to meaningfully engage in development* planning discussions was also noted as a constraint to their greater integration into the process. This relates to the state of organization at the subnational level, access to information and resources that enable active participation, and the structures created to encourage this involvement.

The *limited use of evidence–based planning* was also noted as a reason for sub-optimal stakeholder involvement in planning strategy and decision making because the resulting model supports planning that is reactive, driven by special interests and generally short term in its perspective.

Table 1 shows a summary of challenges and barriers to the advancement of multistakeholder processes and institutions in the region. It offers an analysis of corresponding capacity-building and knowledge-sharing needs to help bridge the gap over the coming years as we approach the implementation period of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and a new set of global sustainable development goals. The scope of the challenges and capacity needs appears quite broad in relation to the specific practice of multistakeholder participation, but this is an inherent reflection of the crosscutting applicability of multistakeholder processes and institutions.

TABLE 1: CHALLENGES AND CAPACITY NEEDS FOR ADVANCING MULTISTAKEHOLDER PROCESSES AND INSTITUTIONS

CHALLENGES AND GAPS	CORRESPONDING CAPACITY NEEDS
Systematic/institutional: • Predominance of sector-based planning • Development visions, policies and plans are mostly short term and do not consider the longer term perspectives • Planning tends to be mission-driven rather than vision-driven, thereby perpetuating sector planning • Processes for engaging stakeholders in development planning generally are not well established • Insufficient evidence-based planning • Insufficient opportunities for regional and international cooperation and sharing of best practices in sustainable development planning	• Structures and processes to require cross-sectoral, integrated planning • Processes to institutionalize integrated development planning and multi-perspective analysis • Opportunities and procedures for stakeholder participation to be institutionalized • Development of indicators and related data sets to support evidence-based planning • Creation of networks and communities of practice to support regional and national sustainable development planning processes
Decentralization, devolution of planning • The centralized nature of government often makes it difficult to convey very specific political messages and policies (i.e., privatization of public services) to subnational contexts. • Current centralized planning models do not include adequate opportunities for stakeholder participation in policy-making and planning • Ineffective communication of the international development agenda to local levels	• Systems and processes to effectively and efficiently decentralize policy-making and planning processes for improved vertical communications. • Create avenues for stakeholder participation in policy and planning processes • Structure communication processes and channels to local levels to enable better understanding of international processes and agendas and how they will support, rather than take away from, their own priorities.
Financing • Inadequate funding to support inclusive sustainable development planning • Financing gaps to implement sustainable development plans • Insufficient private sector investments in pursuing sustainable development goals	• Improved capacity of public sector planning agencies to communicate the importance of the planning function to the political level • Capacity to design investment packages that derive co-benefits • Evidence-based resource allocation and investment prioritization • Policies to improve fiscal indicators • Greater private sector engagement in policy formulation and program development • Improved fulfillment of commitments to support sustainable development planning by the international community • Improved incentive packages to encourage private sector investments • Ability to communicate benefits to private sector interests
Stakeholder engagement • Absence of mechanisms to integrate and engage the population in planning and implementation processes • Lack of real mechanisms for acting upon the results and recommendations of citizen/stakeholder participation	• Improving the vertical and horizontal engagement of all stakeholders in the development planning and implementation processes using stakeholder mapping and other tools • Institutionalizing stakeholder engagement in the planning and implementation processes • Inclusive and equitable planning and implementation protocols involving stakeholders

5.2   Integrated Planning Through Vertical and Horizontal Collaboration

Another area of concern is the *sectoral approach to planning, which is cited as hindering the development of a common vision.* The resulting fragmentation of the planning and subsequent implementation processes may present opportunities for special interests, but creates challenges for the active involvement of subnational and non-government stakeholders. This denies the resulting development agenda of inputs from the intended beneficiaries of the process and limits their interest in the process. This could be a cyclical dilemma that needs to be addressed through a deliberate effort from the central government to transition to participative planning either through policy or legislation. Whatever the approach, the *goal of multi-level stakeholder engagement is central to the underpinnings of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.* These gaps and related capacity needs are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2. CHALLENGES AND CAPACITY NEEDS FOR ADVANCING INTEGRATED PLANNING

CHALLENGES AND GAPS	CORRESPONDING CAPACITY NEEDS
• Inadequate institutional and legal frameworks to support holistic planning	• Processes for development planning should be instutionalized or legislated, depending on political preferences • Creation or strengthening, as the case may be, of the planning agency or council to lead a national consultative planning process
• Lack of a clearly articulated and generally accepted vision to serve as the focus for national development planning and investments	• Process to arrive at the vision to be developed • Capability of lead planning agency to engage in consultative process to be addressed • Political support to be secured
• Weak management skills to design and employ vertical and horizontal channels for consultations and collaboration in development planning	• Collaboration skills in management, leadership, accountability and resource management as a broad capacity set. • Technical capacity and willingness of planning agency to engage in broad based consultations • National communities of practice for development planning
• Absence of a formal process to determine development priorities	• Understanding of development as a process that must take into account multiple perspectives to achieve co-benefits. • A formal process to determine development priorities • Stakeholder involvement in determining priorities
• Lack of flexibility of approved plans to address changing internal and external circumstances	• Adaptive policy management • Multi-perspective analysis capabilities and processes • Periodic reviews of development plans
• Low level of technical skills in communicating sustainable development policies and priorities in for political buy-in and attracting investments	• Develop "marketing" and communications skills for making the case for sustainable development issues and opportunities to the political and community levels
Lack of Individuals' Capacities: • Lack of public understanding and knowledge of sustainable development, as well as commitment to sustainable development causes—often, the public can be easily swayed by short-term populist policies • People are not sufficiently empowered with access to information for meaningful participation • Weak stakeholder capabilities in policy formulation, communications, negotiations and consensus building	• Public understanding of sustainable development and related planning, and their roles in the processes. • Educating the population about sustainable development and provisions for access to reliable information to support involvement • Capacity development in related areas to build confidence, promote equity and encourage negotiations

5.3 Scaling Up Implementation Using Crosscutting Policies for Achieving Water, Energy and Food Security

Sector-based planning and limits to stakeholder involvement in the process make it difficult to produce policies, programs and plans that pursue goals across sectors and derive multiple benefits from investments. In fact, these tendencies limit the opportunities to explore co-benefits and perpetuate the status quo. Table 3 captures the gaps that exist between current practice and the desired state discussed in Section 2 and identifies the related capacity needs.

TABLE 3: CHALLENGES AND CAPACITY NEEDS FOR IMPLEMENTING CROSSCUTTING POLICIES AND PROGAMS

CHALLENGES AND GAPS	CORRESPONDING CAPACITY NEEDS
• Poor understanding of stakeholders and their needs, interests, power, etc. This is stakeholder mapping and can help with identifying co-benefits. This tool is not common in the region.	• Understanding the perspectives of other stakeholders (stakeholder mapping, including visible and hidden agendas).
• Lack of negotiation and communication skills: A ministry manages a sector and a municipality manages a place. These are different and have different needs. Searching for co-benefits requires input from both.	• Strengthening groups (know the basics – training in negotiation and communication). • Develop capacities for land-use planning and management that are used at the higher and national levels
• A lack of alternative solutions for planning and decision making (e.g., that focus on the long term or that enable power distribution across a location)	• Finding solutions – alternative alliances, resources, time, strategies
• Lack of networks to help advance the practices	• Understanding of development as a process that must take into account multiple perspectives to achieve co-benefits. • A formal process to determine development priorities • Stakeholder involvement in determining priorities
• Lack of flexibility of approved plans to address changing internal and external circumstances.	• Establishing networks
• Capacity to develop and implement policies	• Skills in multi-perspective analysis and integrated development planning
• Limited awareness of examples of successful crosscutting policies	• Creating an inventory of crosscutting policies in the LAC region

5.4 Monitoring, Reporting and Accountability

The weaknesses in the regional application of MER as a tool to inform policy and investment decisions were discussed earlier in this paper. In considering the gaps between current practice and the desired state, it was noted that central to the solution is a cultural shift in thinking about data collection, analysis and reporting, accountability and evidence-based decision making. In admitting to the inherent difficulties in achieving this, the workshop noted the progress some LAC countries have made and accepted the importance of MER in pursuing a sustainable future. The related capacity issues are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4. CHALLENGES AND CAPACITY NEEDS FOR MONITORING, REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

CHALLENGES AND GAPS	CORRESPONDING CAPACITY NEEDS
Disparities and poor flows of information: • Imbalance between supply and demand for information to support policy formulation and planning at all levels of government • Lack of horizontal and vertical information flows	• Improved data collection, analysis and dissemination to all stakeholders • Ensuring timely information generation and exchange across sectors, among departments and subnational level stakeholders • Ensuring public access to relevant information
Lack of ability to manage information: • While at the state (federal) level the skills are there, at local levels skills are lacking with respect to managing, analyzing and using information • Excessive red tape – too much paperwork and bureaucracy in many information processes	• Local-level information management, analysis and application • Increasing local control and management of Information at the local level • Procedures to simplify public access to information
Objective-based monitoring, reporting and accountability • Monitoring, reporting and accountability are not sufficiently linked to development objectives	• Systems to hold implementing agencies accountable for achieving goals

In relation to implementation and monitoring, workshop participants called for steps to be taken to create or strengthen, as the case may be, "data culture" to support the MER functions. There is also a clear need to nurture an informed and knowledgeable citizenry, with the capacities and competences to intervene in consulting, planning and monitoring processes. Capacity-building efforts should focus on developing mechanisms to tackle information disparities (e.g., ensuring information gets to all relevant decision-makers, encouraging information exchange across sectors, among departments, and providing access by all citizens in a transparent and timely manner). One participant noted, "In the LAC region, it is important to set mechanisms that make the institutions accountable for the compliance with their predetermined targets, i.e. accountability that is clear and easy to interpret. In this sense we must look for the way to share good practices, offering sources of information adapted to the digital era and not restricted to a technical sphere."

6.0   Strengthening and Coordinating Community of Practice Networks in the LAC Region

CoP networks are playing an important role in helping countries to share good practices for mainstreaming sustainable development into national plans and scaling up implementation. Such networks exist in each region and can help counties address their capacity building and knowledge sharing needs in a number of ways. Indeed, networks are important components of adaptive governance, based on their ability to create social capital within and among communities of practice for sustainable development and, in turn, enhance the ability of governments to respond to change and surprise (United Nations Environment Programme, 2012). This adaptability and responsiveness will be a critical and necessary feature of governance in the 21st century—a period that will certainly experience a continuation of frequent economic shocks and turbulent ecological and social conditions.

6.1   Analysis of Existing CoP Networks in the Region

In a final session, participants at the SDplanNet-Lac workshop in Panama discussed networks operating in the region with synergies in the area of planning for sustainable development, and to determine how SDplanNet could best move forward in the next two years. A list of prominent networks in the region was identified, encompassing planning networks, social/economic development, public administration, and thematic and technical cooperation networks (Table 5).

TABLE 5: LAC REGIONAL NETWORKS IDENTIFIED BY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS (LISTED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

NETWORK	OVERVIEW
CELAC – Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (Spanish: Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños)	Recently created network consisting of 33 of the 35 countries in the Americas (does not include Canada, the United States nor the territories of France, the Netherlands, Denmark and the United Kingdom in the Americas). Objective is to deepen Latin American integration and to reduce the influence of the United States on the politics and economics of Latin America. Seen as an alternative to the Organization of American States (OAS)
CLAD – Latin American Centre for Development Administration (Spanish: Centro Latinoamericano de Administracion para el Desarrollo – www.clad.org)	Headquarters in Caracas, Venezuela. Created in 1972 endorsed by the United Nations. Consists of 21 countries in the region, plus Spain. Objective is to establish a regional entity that focuses on modernizing public administrations as a strategic factor in the process of social economic development.
FOCARD-APS - Central America and Dominican Republic Forum for Water and Sanitation (Spanish: Foro Centroamericano y República Dominicana de Agua Potable y Saneamiento) http://www.sica.int/focardaps/	Headquarters in La Liberdad, El Salvador. Founded in 2004, integrated into the Central American System of Social Integration (SICA) in 2006. Mission is to promote and support institutional strengthening financial, technical and institutions of the drinking water and sanitation.
Green Economy Networks	Workshop participants suggested that LAC regional networks focused on the green economy should be researched and added to the list.
GN-NCSDS - Global Network of National Councils for Sustainable Development and Similar Bodies http://www.ncsds.org/	Facilitated by the Stakeholder Forum (of the U.K). Aims to strengthen and enhance the work of the highest-level national sustainable development bodies.
ICAP – Central American Institute for Public Administration (Spanish: Instituto Centroamericano de Administración Pública) http://www.icap.ac.cr	Headquarters in San Jose, Costa Rica. Created in 1954 by Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Its mission is to be a strategic centre in generating thought for the government and the Central American Integration.

NETWORK	OVERVIEW
ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (Spanish: Gobiernos Locales por la Sustentabilidad) http://www.iclei.org	Global headquarters in Bonn with two secretariats in the LAC region. Founded in 1990 at a UN conference in New York. Members include 12 mega-cities, 100 super-cities and urban regions, 450 large cities as well as 450 medium-sized cities and towns in 86 countries. Mission is to is to build and serve a worldwide movement of local governments to achieve tangible improvements in global sustainability with a focus on environmental conditions.
ILPES – Latin American Institute of Social and Economic Planning (Spanish: Instituto Latinoamericano y del Caribe de Planificación Económica y Social)	Headquarters in Santiago, Chile. Created in 1962 as part of ECLAC. Leader in research, technical cooperation and training in planning, economics and management in the public sector for the development of the LAC region. Objective is to contribute to national and subnational efforts aimed at improving the quality of public policies and strengthening institutional capacities.
Novagob - The Social network of public administration (Spanish: La Red Social de la Administración Pública www.novagob.org)	An online social network allied with CLAD (see above), a spinoff of the Autonomous University of Madrid. Objective is to become the online community of reference of the Public Administration in speaking.
nrg4SD – Network of Regional Governments for Development http://nrg4sd.org/	Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. Established in 2002 at the World Summit of Johannesburg. Includes 50 subnational governments from 30 countries and seven associations of subnational governments. Objective is to promote sustainable development at the level of subnational governments around the globe.
OAS - Organization of American States (Spanish: Organización de los Estados Americanos)www.oas.org	Headquarters in Washington, U.S. Founded in 1948. Members include 35 independent countries in the Americas. Objective is to promote regional solidarity and cooperation among its member states, through strengthening democracy, fostering free trade, defending human rights, promoting sustainable development, among other goals.
RedePlan – LAC Network for Planning and Development (Spanish: Red de América Latina y el Caribe de Planificación para el Desarrollo) http://redeplan.info/	A network of 12 members and five observers of national planning ministries in LAC. Created in 2010 with the support of IBD (secretariat now run by Ecuador; governments each contribute to the budget). Objective to "urge" the LAC development planning institutions.
Redlach – Latin American Network of Techincal Cooperation in Watershed Management (Spanish: Red Latinoamericana de Cooperación Técnica en Manejo de Cuencas Hidrográficas)	Network created with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization in 1980 (watershed management). Objective to progressively increase technical capacity in watershed management based upon exchanges of experience, knowledge management and technical cooperation among countries. Publishes a bulletin (http://www.rlc.fao.org/es/tecnica/redlach/boletin.htm)
Redlacme – Latin American and Caribbean Network of Monitoring and Evaluation (Spanish: Red de Monitoreo y Evaluación de América Latina y el Caribe) http://redlacme.org/	Created by the World Bank in 2005. Objective is to improve the design and implementation of public policies and programs.

NETWORK	OVERVIEW
REDPARQUES – Latin American Network of Technical Cooperation in National Parks, other Protected Areas, Flora and Fauna (La Red Latinoamericana de Cooperación Técnica en Parques Nacionales, otras Áreas Protegidas, Flora y Fauna Silvestres)	Created in 1983 with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization. Objective is to progress the management of protected areas in Latin America and the willingness of countries to share expertise and experiences available in the region more effectively.
SDplanNet-LAC Latin America and the Caribbean www.SDplanNetLAC.org	Created in 2008 and sponsored in its current phase by GIZ GmbH on BMZ. Objective is to help government professionals at the national and subnational levels share best practices and build capacity in the preparation and implementation of strategies for sustainable development or development plans that incorporate sustainable development principles.
UNECLAC – United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	Headquarters in Santiago, Chile. Created in 1948 as a UN regional commission to encourage economic cooperation. Currently inludes 44 member states (20 in Latin America, 13 in the Caribbean and 11 from outside the region).
UNEP-ROLAC – United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean http://www.pnuma.org/english/	Headquarters in Panama City. Works closely with the 33 countries of the region, including 13 Small Island Developing States with the mission to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

In discussing options for how SDplanNet-LAC can support countries in pursuing the goals of the Post-2015 Development Agenda as well as their own development priorities, participants made the following recommendations:

- Map networks and their activities; creating a directory of networks
  - Contact these networks to see how SDplanNet-LAC could support their work
  - Attempt to establish a formal partnership with REDEPLAN, CLAD and other networks active in promoting planning for sustainable development, aiming to ensure the multiplication, rather than the duplication, of efforts.
- Identify the most relevant and helpful networks
- Define SDplanNet's members, focus, approach
  - Survey of SDplanNet participants
  - Carefully define SDplanNet to ensure it does not duplicating efforts of other LAC networks
  - Define the network's unique selling point/niche (e.g., linking national planning to post-2015 design, then implementation). This is also important to ensure there is interest.
  - Be very clear who SDplanNet's constituency is—it currently states "national planners," but does this need to be more specific? (i.e. Within which ministries? At what level of seniority?)
  - Potentilly focus on convening, bringing constituent members together
  - Determine if SDplanNet can assist in aiding internal cooperation within countries (between departments, different levels of government/decision making; government and stakeholders)
  - Ensure that SDplanNet approach and activities are very targeted and concise since members only have limited time to participate

- Include in the SDplanNet website:
  - o Inventory of good practice—the strength of which would rely on the commitment of members to submit and update information
  - o Historical trajectories/institutional knowledge, so we can learn from the past without restarting the process every time a new government comes in
  - o Country profiles: each listing form, functions, focal points, recent activities and resources/publications of/ from relevant national bodies
- Hold an annual conference/meeting, in person but do most other activities virtually
  - o Webinars could be a good way to proceed for much of the discussions
  - o Online discussion forums and Google drive also suggested for collaboration
- Disseminate a regular newsletter/bulletin with a summary of members' recent activities and updates—a good way of everyone keeping up-to-date quickly
- Provide/facilitate specific training/capacity building activities on issues that members identify as priority areas to be developed (especially in relation to post-2015).

7.0   Conclusion

The inclusive paradigm and need for structural changes being promoted in the Post-2015 Development Agenda will require the strengthening of vertical and horizontal dialogue in crafting national and subnational development agendas. These will present opportunities for strengthening existing arrangements for stakeholder engagement and encourage their creation where they do not exist. Changes in development planning practices will call for organizational change as well as changes in the culture that drives the process. The need for information flows and evidence-based planning will be brought to the fore in this approach and will likely call for more robust data collection, analysis and dissemination on infrastructure and processes. It will also strengthen monitoring and reporting frameworks, thereby strengthening accountability. Whereas these will not be easy to achieve, there is a notable desire to move in this direction and this augers well for the roll out of development planning in the post-2015 era.

The evolving engagement of multiple stakeholders is not without its challenges. Inclusiveness and trust have to be built in ways that cross political barriers and engender a sense of ownership of the process and its outputs. Key to achieving this is the engagement of subnational levels of government in the planning and implementation phases, and related reporting requirements. Whereas some countries are already embracing this model, its relative novelty will call for a shift in the planning culture and will require capacity building, financial and human resources, and information flows to enable effective policy formulation, program development, and monitoring and reporting at the subnational level.

Notwithstanding several successful examples, there is much scope to pursue co-benefits as a deliberate approach to policy and program formulation in the LAC region. Participants at the SDplanNET-LAC workshop were clear about this need as much as they were about the need for all stakeholders to be meaningfully engaged in these processes. And on this point, they were particularly clear of the need to engage local, state and city governments and non-government groups in a vertical arrangement that allowed for the free flow of ideas up to the central level and back down to the level where investment benefits are to accrue.

Monitoring and evaluation plays a central role in achieving development goals. Without adequate and accurate information on relevant benchmarks, targeting resources, improving programs and identifying expenditure inefficiencies are not possible. Opportunities exist to draw on the experiences of the region and the world to develop effective MER mechanisms, procedures and capacities to ensure measurable progress toward development goals.

There are a number of networks operating in the LAC region sharing the objectives of SDplanNet, especially REDEPLAN and CLAD. In terms of the way forward for in the coming two years, it is clear that in order to have maximum impact, SDplanNet-LAC should focus on forging relations with existing networks, determining where the needs and challenges lie in strengthening planning for sustainable development and offering to provide support to toward achieving common goals.

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