



FIFTH ASSEMBLY OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

**CANCUN, MEXICO
28-29 MAY 2014**

**STATEMENT BY THE HON. ROBERT PICKERSGILL, MP
MINISTER OF WATER, LAND, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Statement by Jamaica at the 5th Assembly of the Global Environment Facility,
Cancun, Mexico - May 28-29, 2014**

Jamaica joins in the commendation of the Global Environment Facility for its contribution to the preservation of global environmental benefits while supporting sustainable livelihoods. We also appreciate the increased pledges for the sixth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund.

Over the past two decades, the Facility has grown to become more finely attuned to the position of developing countries and the challenges we face. The GEF has responded to some of the concerns expressed as seen in the changes from the Results Allocation Framework to the System of Transparent Allocation of Resources. Yet, there are other issues which have yet to be fully considered: at the 4th GEF Assembly, Barbados, speaking on behalf of the Caribbean constituency raised issues related to special consideration for small island developing states, a focus which is not now evident in certain areas. As this consideration is specified in various environmental treaties, in recognition not only of our vulnerability, but also the value of our natural resources, we trust that the GEF will also reflect this clearly and in good time. We note and appreciate the new chemicals and waste focal area and the additional funds pledged, primarily for mercury and new persistent organic pollutants; we are, nonetheless, concerned about the adequacy of funding to address implementation activities related to chemicals and hazardous wastes.

Through the GEF we have had the benefit of independent evaluations by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel and the Evaluation Office. Their reports have surely strengthened the case for urgent action, and emphasized the need to think globally and act locally. We note the comments of the Evaluation Office that although the GEF has been effective in its work, the processes need to be more efficient: for small countries, those processes have been particularly challenging and it is expected that the recommendations will be addressed as soon as possible, drawing on some of the experiences we have had.

We share the excitement of the vision of transformational change as set out in the 2020 Strategy and endorse the focus on the role of civil society. We have seen the practical work done through GEF projects, and the impressive impact of the Small Grants Programme in the sustainable development of communities. Development is not something that happens “to” civil society, but they are part of it, they contribute resources, ideas, and they are the best measure of its success. The GEF has supported a range of civil society players over time, including non-government organizations and church groups. Not only have the project outputs been achieved, but individuals and communities have recognized their potential and been given opportunities for creativity and innovation – elements which are essential for lasting benefits.

The positions of Jamaica are articulated in the statement of Saint Lucia on behalf of the Caribbean constituency. We look forward to the GEF's playing an increasingly effective role in addressing global environmental issues while supporting economic and social development at the national level.