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Global funding to help measure environmental changes in the Caribbean

The lack of basic environmental statistics and indicators is considered a major problem in the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the Caribbean. In order to address this problem, a regional workshop at the Sunset Jamaica Grande, Ocho Rios, Jamaica, from 10 to 12 March 2008 will be co-hosted by the Global Environment Facility through two projects-: Integrating Watershed and Coastal Areas Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (GEF-IWCAM) Project¹ and the Inter-American Biodiversity Network (GEF-IABIN).

Indicators, which are quantitative or qualitative statements or measured/observed parameters that can be used to describe existing situations and measure changes or trends over time, are important in determining success in the integration of watershed and coastal area management and the resulting improvement of the environment and associated livelihoods.

This Workshop aims to help Participating Countries identify indicators and keep track of them throughout the life of the projects and to better evaluate the projects' effectiveness. Continued monitoring of indicators after the projects will help to determine long-term impact and sustainability, as well as the efficacy of future interventions at all levels.

The Workshop will include joint sessions between the two projects. Among objectives are: consideration and adoption of draft indicators; and establishing collaborative mechanisms especially among Caribbean states, where project proposals are developed for access to grants.

The GEF-IWCAM Project (www.iwcam.org) is a regional project which seeks to assist participating countries in improving joint management of waters and coastal areas. Major regional and international agencies involved in its execution include the United Nations Environment Programme (through the Regional Coordinating Unit, based in Jamaica), the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute, and the United Nations Development Programme.

GEF-IABIN (www.iabin.net) serves to improve collaboration and coordination among countries of the Americas in collection, sharing, and use of biodiversity information to promote sustainable development in the region.

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¹ The GEF-IWCAM project is co-implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and co-executed by the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention, UNEP Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit (UNEP-CAR/RCU) and the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI) and the IABIN Network is implemented by the World Bank (WB) and executed by the Organization of American States (OAS).