



**Republic of Mauritius**

**THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

# **National Report of the Republic of Mauritius**



UNDESA



## **Acknowledgements**

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# Table of Contents

Message of Dr. The Hon. Arvin Boolell

⊕ Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

Message of The Hon. Devanand Virahsawmy 6

⊕ Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development

The Republic of Mauritius 7

I. Introduction 8

II. Progress in implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action & Mauritius Strategy 13

III. Gaps and Constraints encountered in BPoA/MSI implementation 20

IV. New and Emerging Challenges 22

V. Way Forward and Recommendations 24

VI. Post 2015 UN Development Agenda 28

VII. Partnerships for SIDS 29

VIII. Conclusion 30

## List of Abbreviations

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>BPO</b>     | Business Process Outsourcing                             |
| <b>BPoA</b>    | Barbados Programme of Action                             |
| <b>CEB</b>     | Central Electricity Board                                |
| <b>CERT</b>    | Computer Emergency Response Team                         |
| <b>CFL</b>     | Compact Fluorescent Lamp                                 |
| <b>DAI</b>     | Digital Access Index                                     |
| <b>EE</b>      | Energy Efficiency  |
| <b>EEMO</b>    | Energy Efficiency Management Office                      |
| <b>EEZ</b>     | Exclusive Economic Zone                                  |
| <b>ESD</b>     | Education for Sustainable Development                    |
| <b>ESTP</b>    | Economic and Social Transformation Plan                  |
| <b>FIT</b>     | Feed In Tariff   |
| <b>GEF</b>     | Global Environment Facility                              |
| <b>ICT</b>     | Information and Communication Technology                 |
| <b>IOC</b>     | Indian Ocean Commission                                  |
| <b>LED</b>     | Light Emitting Diode                                     |
| <b>LTES</b>    | Long Term Energy Strategy                                |
| <b>MID</b>     | Maurice Ile Durable (Mauritius Sustainable Island)       |
| <b>MSI</b>     | Mauritius Strategy for Implementation                    |
| <b>NDS</b>     | National Development Strategy                            |
| <b>NTM</b>     | Non-Tariff Measure                                       |
| <b>PBB</b>     | Programme Based Budget                                   |
| <b>RE</b>      | Renewable Energy   |
| <b>S&amp;T</b> | Science and Technology                                   |
| <b>SCP</b>     | Sustainable Consumption and Production                   |
| <b>SDGs</b>    | Sustainable Development Goals                            |
| <b>SIDS</b>    | Small Island Developing States                           |
| <b>SIPP</b>    | Small Independent Power Producers                        |
| <b>SSDGS</b>   | Small Scale Distribution Generation System               |
| <b>TNA</b>     | Technology Needs Assessment                              |
| <b>UNDESA</b>  | United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs |
| <b>UNDP</b>    | United Nations Development Programme                     |
| <b>URA</b>     | Utility Regulatory Authority                             |

# The Republic of Mauritius

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The Republic of Mauritius comprises a group of islands in the South West Indian Ocean, consisting of the main island Mauritius and the outer islands of Rodrigues, Agalega, Saint Brandon, Tromelin and the Chagos Archipelago. The total land area of the Republic of Mauritius is 2040 km<sup>2</sup> and the country has jurisdiction over a large Exclusive Economic Zone of approximately 2.3 million km<sup>2</sup> with significant potential for the development of a modern and prosperous marine and fisheries-based sustainable industry. The population, estimated at 1.3 million, is composed of several ethnicities, mostly people of Indian, African, Chinese and European descent. Most Mauritians are multilingual and speak and write in English, French, Creole and several Asian languages.

The Republic of Mauritius is a democracy with a Government elected every five years. The 2012 Ibrahim Index of African Governance ranked Mauritius first in good governance. According to the 2012 Democracy Index compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit and which measures the state of democracy in 167 countries, Mauritius ranks 18<sup>th</sup> worldwide.

Mauritius has a well-established welfare system. Free health care services and education to the population have contributed significantly to the economic and social advancement of the country. Support to inclusive development, gender equality and women empowerment are being addressed through the development of strategies, action plans and activities geared to meet the social targets set by the Government. To facilitate social integration and empowerment of vulnerable groups, a Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment has been set up in 2010.

Significant structural changes have been brought to ensure that Mauritius transforms itself from a sugar, manufacturing, tourism economy to a high-tech, innovative financial and business services hub. Policy and institutional reforms programmes have been articulated to enhance competitiveness; consolidate fiscal performance and improve public sector efficiency; improve the business climate and widen the circle of opportunity through participation, social inclusion and sustainability. The adoption of the “Maurice Ile Durable” framework and the Economic and Social Transformation Plan are the new development paradigm for the Republic of Mauritius as they strive to promote sustainable development and transform itself into a middle-income country.

# Section I: INTRODUCTION

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Sustainable development emphasises a holistic, equitable and far-sighted approach to decision-making at all levels. It rests on integration and a balanced consideration of social, economic and environmental goals and objectives in both public and private decision-making.

This concept of sustainability is very important in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and this was first acknowledged at the Earth Summit in 1992. The vulnerabilities of SIDS arise from a number of physical, socio-economic and environmental factors. SIDS small size, limited resources, geographical dispersion and isolation from markets, place them at a disadvantage economically and prevent economies of scale. For instance, due to the small size of their economies, SIDS are highly dependent on trade but lack the factors that are decisive for competitiveness. Similarly, international macroeconomic shocks tend to have higher relative impacts on SIDS small economies. The combination of small size and remoteness leads to high production and trade costs, high levels of economic specialisation and exposure to commodity price volatility. Furthermore, in SIDS, the following natural resource base: energy, water, mineral and agricultural resources are limited and resource extraction tends quickly to meet the carrying capacities of the small islands. The latter also face unique threats related to global environmental issues, mainly climate change, biodiversity loss, waste management, pollution, freshwater scarcity, and acidification of the oceans.

As a SIDS, much progress has been achieved in Mauritius due to benefits derived from the Welfare State, namely: free access to education from pre-primary to university levels, transport to students and the elderly and health services to all and also from bilateral and multilateral trading agreements, the skilled work force, entrepreneurship, a stable democratic government and peace. However, despite its performance, the country is now facing the brunt of a number of global challenges, namely, the global economic, financial, energy and food security crises. The impacts of climate change, sea level rise, natural disasters and biodiversity loss are also having their toll on progress achieved so far.

## **Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on SIDS to be held from 1 - 4 September 2014 in Apia, Samoa, will seek a renewed political commitment to address the special needs and vulnerabilities of SIDS by focusing on practical and pragmatic actions. Building on assessments of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI), the Conference will aim to identify new and emerging challenges and opportunities for sustainable development of those States, particularly through the strengthening of partnerships between small islands and the international community.

In addition, the Conference will provide an opportunity for the elaboration of sustainable development issues of concern to SIDS in the process of charting the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including the sustainable development goals. Towards this end, the Conference is intending to serve as a platform for the international community to strengthen existing partnerships and voluntary commitments, as well as act as a launch pad of new initiatives, all with the common objective of advancing the implementation of the BPoA/MSI.

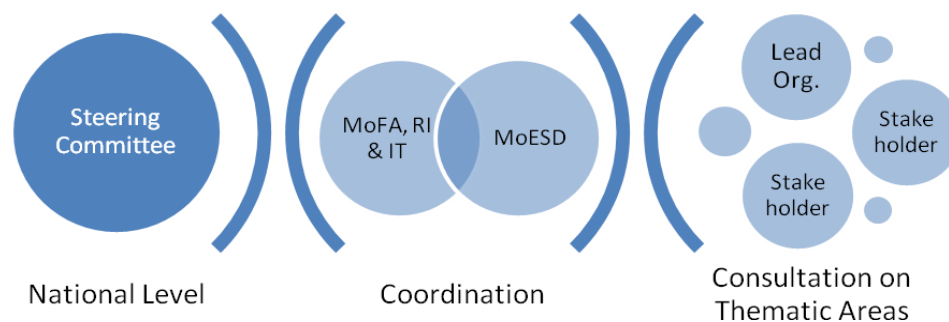
## National Preparatory Process

The effectiveness of the Samoa SIDS Conference will depend first and foremost on national level preparations that will feed into the regional, interregional and global processes. National preparations for the 3<sup>rd</sup> International SIDS Conference are currently underway. The preparatory process has begun with the preparation of a National Assessment Report. The results of the national consultations will in turn feed into the discussions at regional and inter-regional meetings, leading up to the conference itself.

### National Steering Committee

Broad based consultation, an inclusive approach and ownership are at the heart of the national preparatory process. To this effect, the Ministries of Environment & Sustainable Development and Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade are jointly chairing a multi-stakeholder Steering Committee comprising Government, the private sector and civil society representatives<sup>1</sup>. The Committee is the platform for the 2014 SIDS meeting and mandated to among others to:

- a) Provide support and guidance for the preparation of the National Report;
- b) Provide guidance on any other matters and activities related to the conference until the Samoa Meeting in 2014; and
- c) Follow up on the 2014 Samoa outcome.



### The National Report – The Methodology for the consultative process

The national report is based on both the responses to the guiding questions<sup>1</sup> prepared by the United Nations to steer discussions at the national level and on a bottom-up, inclusive consultative process. This report needs to be read in conjunction with the following documents which provide detailed background information on the actions already undertaken by the Government of Mauritius to implement the BPoA and the MSI and the challenges thereof:

- State of the Environment Report prepared for 1992 UN Earth Summit;
- Report of the International meeting to review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the sustainable Development of small Islands Developing States 1994;
- Mauritius Staking Out the Future - National Report for Mauritius International Meeting 2005;
- The Mauritius Strategy for Implementation National Assessment Report of 2010;
- Mauritius Environment Outlook Report 2011;
- National Synthesis report 2012 for the RIO+20 Conference
- Mauritius Report on the Post 2015 UN Development Agenda – The Future we want, and
- Maurice Ile Durable report, June 2013

<sup>1</sup> The list of the members of the National Steering Committee is at Annex 1

## A. Summary of the consultations with the 18 thematic focus groups

A series of consultations were undertaken with key stakeholders to ensure cross-sectoral participation and diversity of views. 18 thematic focus groups were set up on the MSI thematic areas. A lead Ministry was identified with regard to each of the 18 thematic themes of the BPoA and MSI:

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Climate Change & Sea Level Rise   | 12. Trade: Globalization & Trade Liberalization                              |
| 2. Natural & Environmental Disasters | 13. Sustainable Capacity Development & Education For Sustainable Development |
| 3. Management of Waste               | 14. Sustainable Production & Consumption                                     |
| 4. Coastal & Marine Resources        | 15. National & Regional Enabling Environments                                |
| 5. Freshwater Resources              | 16. Health   |
| 6. Land Resources                    | 17. Knowledge Management & Information For Decision-Making                   |
| 7. Energy Resources                  | 18. Culture  |
| 8. Tourism Resources                 |  |
| 9. Biodiversity Resources            |  |
| 10. Transport & Communication        |  |
| 11. Science & Technology             |  |

Each focus thematic group was composed of relevant stakeholders from both public and private sector and most of these groups met on at least two occasions<sup>2</sup>. Each group considered the 8 guiding questions and responded accordingly. The main recommendations from the group reports are given under the relevant sections II, III, IV and V of this report.

## B. National Consultative Workshops

Three national workshops were held. The first national workshop<sup>3</sup> was held on 21 May 2013 and saw the participation of representatives from various sub-sections of society such as the youth, women, NGOs, civil society, trade unionists and local authorities. A second workshop<sup>4</sup> was held on 11 June 2013 in Rodrigues to ensure that the specific concerns of that particular territory of Mauritius were fed into the process. The Mauritius Private sector was also briefed on the process and their views were sought on 11 June 2013. Finally, a national validation workshop<sup>5</sup> was held to present the report, and to seek its endorsement from the representatives of all stakeholders who participated in the focus group meetings and consultations.

### **1) Summary of the National Dialogue with Major Groups**

- ⊕ Need for better adapted education, employment and a better quality of life, including through the promotion of family values, protection of traditions and cultures;
- ⊕ Need for increased transparency, equity, security and good governance and in this respect

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