



4TH INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
**Small Island
Developing States**
27-30 MAY, 2024
ST. JOHN'S, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

SIDS4 Conference Side Event

Accelerating SIDS Access to Climate Finance

30 May 2024, 12:00 - 13:30

Organized by: UNOPS

Background on the event

Following COP28 and aligned with the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS), this side event discussed existing strategies and practical ways forward to strengthen capacities and bridge gaps for enhancing SIDS' access to climate finance. Each participating entity shared their ongoing work and highlighted areas of existing cooperation and collaboration. The focus then shifted to exploring how to expand these collaborative efforts in the future.

Keynote speaker:

Jorge Moreira da Silva, UN Under-Secretary-General and UNOPS Executive Director

Moderator:

Giuseppe Mancinelli, Deputy Regional Director, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNOPS

Panelists:

Ricardo D. Marshall, Director, Roofs to Reefs Programme, Prime Minister's Office, Barbados

Marie-Hélène Joseph-Vanderpool, Regional Manager for the Caribbean, Green Climate Fund

Leah Guitierrez, Director General of the Pacific Department, Asian Development Bank

Cary Anne Cadman, Senior Environment Specialist, World Bank

Key Issues discussed

- **Jorge Moreira da Silva (UNOPS):**

Moreira da Silva echoed the sentiment of SIDS4, emphasizing a move from talking about challenges to taking action. He highlighted the unique vulnerability of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to economic shocks caused by climate change, and agrees that current financial systems don't adequately address their needs. Moreira da Silva emphasized that the Multi-Vulnerability Index (MVI) has not been presented as a replacement, but as an additional metric to secure adequate resources for SIDS development priorities alongside existing ones. Unlocking these resources requires not only a greater supply of funding, but also innovative financial mechanisms. Finally, the importance of regulatory reforms to create an environment that fosters progress was stressed, and that financial and policy changes must be complemented with technical assistance. Moreira da Silva underscored that UNOPS, as an operational arm of the UN, goes beyond policy and finance by offering partners the procurement, infrastructure, project management and fund management solutions to bridge the implementation gap. With expertise in financial and fund management UNOPS supports the scaling up of access to climate finance in many ways; fund management to the [CVF - V20](#), co-host to the [NDC Partnership](#) and host of [ICAT](#), grant management to the [GCF Readiness Programme](#), and recent co-host to the [Santiago Network](#) in partnership with UNDRR. In addition, UNOPS is the Executing Agency for [PROCARIBE+](#), a GEF International Waters project that seeks to protect, restore and harness the natural coastal and marine capital of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem.

- **Ricardo D. Marshall (Barbados):**

Marshall referred to Barbados's incoming presidency of the [Climate Vulnerable Forum](#) and [Vulnerable Twenty Group of Ministers of Finance](#) (CVF-V20) and highlighted how the [Accra-Marrakech Agenda](#) of CVF-V20 is aligned with the [Antigua and Barbuda](#)

[Agenda for Small Island Developing States](#). He highlighted the [Bridgetown Initiative](#) as a global roadmap to reform the international financial architecture to benefit vulnerable countries, including the SIDS and referred to the Bridgetown Initiative 3.0 for which the consultations have recently been launched. He showcased Barbados' successful national implementation of international commitments through the [Roofs to Reefs program](#) - a holistic, integrated national initiative for the resilient development of Barbados and the [Blue Green Bank initiative](#) bringing together public, private, and multilateral institutions to ensure that green financing for adaptation and mitigation projects becomes and remains available to the local population.

- **Marie-Hélène Joseph-Vanderpool (the Green Climate Fund):**

Joseph-Vanderpool emphasized the ongoing internal restructuring process within the GCF to accelerate access to climate finance, including by speeding up the approval process and providing technical expertise at the local and regional levels. She highlighted the revised [GCF Readiness Strategy](#) as a tool to empower local partners to access funding, allowing for multi-year programming, enabling direct access by national entities, providing training for local experts, and fostering a community of practice for exchanging knowledge and experiences. The GCF continues to collaborate with partners like Barbados to build robust climate-resilient programs that qualify for GCF support. She also mentioned the Jamaica Blue Green Facility as a successful model for blended finance and concessional loans as well as the Jamaica Systemic Risk Assessment Tool (J-SRAT) that can be replicated internationally. Joseph-Vanderpool also highlighted the capital management reform and the GCF target of USD 50 billion for climate finance by 2030.

- **Cary Anne Cadman (the World Bank Group):**

Cadman referred to several World Bank engagements to address the global polycrisis and to support SIDS access to climate finance as part of the Bank's new vision and playbook. She highlighted the World Bank's commitment to allocate 45% of all loan and grant financing to climate finance both for mitigation and adaptation and with a specific focus on SIDS and World Bank's role as the interim host of the Loss and Damage Fund. An example of targeted support for SIDS in the Caribbean is the rapid response sargassum platform. She also referred to the [Crisis Preparedness and Response Toolkit](#) that the World Bank is rolling out to help countries better respond to crises and prepare for future shocks and highlighted the rapid response mechanism allowing countries to immediately receive up to 10% of undisbursed funds from an existing project loan or other facility for emergency response. Cadman highlighted the Climate Resilient Debt Clause (CRDC) providing an option to Borrowers to defer principal and interest payments and other loan charges for up to two years in the face of a natural disaster. She also referred to the Memorandum of Agreement signed between the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank for a set of coordinated actions to address deforestation and natural disasters. The convergence of banks and countries on shared goals is evident in their practical collaboration to address developing nations' needs with the right tools and solutions. Panel discussions like this side event serve as a testament to these efforts.

- **Leah Guitierrez (Asian Development Bank):**
Guitierrez highlighted ADB's ambition to raise 100 billion USD by 2030 to deliver climate financing to its developing member countries, including 16 SIDS. ADB has taken steps to increase its own financial capacity to better serve its members, especially for climate action. Recently, donors have agreed to replenish the [Asian Development Fund](#) by USD 5 billion for 2024-2028 representing a 22% increase from the previous period out of which one third will be allocated for SIDS and one of the thematic windows is climate action. In 2023, ADB Board approved a capital management reform by increasing the lending capacity by about USD 10 billion per year. To bridge the climate finance gap, ADB's [Innovative Finance Facility for Climate in Asia and the Pacific \(IF-CAP\)](#) utilizes creative financing models. This involves leveraging partner guarantees to unlock billions of dollars in critical climate change investments. Guitierrez emphasized that financial resources alone are not enough. Technical assistance is crucial to prepare projects for funding and build capacity for effective implementation. Recognizing the limitations of small island populations, ADB offers capacity strengthening programs and, when necessary, supplements capacity to address these challenges. Additionally, ADB provides contingent disaster financing, enabling rapid disbursement of funds within 48 hours of a disaster.

Key recommendations for action

- Capitalize from the deliberations and key messages during the panel discussions to further illustrate UNOPS value proposal for SIDS (linking different key partners for financial access, technical support);
- Pursue country-driven projects and programmes for SIDS;
- Enhance collaboration and partnerships among international finance institutions and instruments to address climate finance related needs of SIDS;
- Explore UNOPS value proposal for innovative financial instruments at country and international levels and to leverage blended finance, both public and private. Testing of the MVI in the context of infrastructure investment requirements;
- Focus on technical assistance and build capacities to nurture strong country commitment for developing enabling policies, designing and driving solid plans for climate resilient transformation and bringing in big investors; and

Identify possible pilots to “connect the dots” and explore collaboration and acceleration between the different partners for climate resilient and sustainable pathways. Barbados as a peer-to-peer example.