



**Declaration of the Delegation of Colombia
UNDP/GEF CLME+ Project Steering Committee Meeting
18 June 2020**

Dear members of the CLME+ Project Steering Committee, representatives of International Organizations, members of the Project Coordination Unit, and members of the consulting team.

Colombia would like to thank the project coordination unit for the efforts made in recent weeks to hold this important meeting of the CLME+ Project Committee virtually. Similarly, we would like to recognize the work carried out by the consultants so far and for considering our opinions with regard to the proposed mechanism.

We wish to express that the Government of Colombia is committed to the sustainable development of marine and coastal resources in the Wider Caribbean Region, and so we have advanced and worked constantly, not only within the framework of this project to achieve the conservation and sustainable use of these resources. Our commitment to environmental sustainability has always been present, as demonstrated with the endorsement of the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) by four national Governmental authorities, including three Ministries and our fishing Authority.

For us, it is timely and necessary to refer specifically to Agenda Item 5 “Discussion and possible decisions on the Permanent Coordination Mechanism”.

In this regard, Colombia’s contributions and participation through this process have been based on careful and detailed preparation for each meeting, by rigorously reviewing the submitted documents, providing inputs to enrich the discussions, thus the analyses are profound, well-founded and well-informed.

At the previous regional consultation meeting on this matter, held in Panama City (2019), Colombia expressed that a coordination mechanism that facilitates synergy and optimizes the use of available resources in the CLME+ Region beyond the project and the SAP was evidently necessary. However, we also expressed our concern that a coordination mechanism would imply the establishment of a new structure, with financial contributions and new administrative arrangements. For Colombia, the priority is then to seek greater



coordination, efficiency and synergies among existing mechanisms, to avoid duplicating efforts.

During this Steering Committee meeting, we have carefully listened to all discussions and interventions made by countries and intergovernmental organizations. We are aware that our vision differs from other countries in the region, which agree in the establishment of a new body with legal personality, that would become the permanent Policy Coordination Mechanism, along with all the financial and administrative associated implications. In this sense, Colombia wants to express that we cannot support the decision for the establishment of this body, based on the reasons manifested in this meeting, in the several regional consultations, and in the written documents sent to the project coordination unit. However, we have decided to step aside on this decision in the interest of not breaking the regional consensus, that is now evident.

Colombia considers the work made by the consultants is valuable, but we also consider that it could have completed the objectives by presenting several and different options for this mechanism, rather than just one for final countries decision making, as initially agreed. Similarly, we highlight the draft of a Memorandum of Understanding, which does not seem to be the most suitable mechanism for the establishment of an international organization.

We thank the PCU and all the Steering Committee meeting participants for opening this space and listening to us. We would like this text to be an integral part of the meeting report and that each time this decision is mentioned, the position of Colombia is clarified.

Thank you very much.