

Minutes from SEAF second regional workshop for Latina America and the Caribbean

Kingston, Jamaica. February 16-17, 2009

The pilot phase of SEAF for Latin America and the Caribbean was launched in a regional consultation workshop held in Kingston, Jamaica between 16th and 17th February, 2009. The workshop was jointly organised by ROLAC, URC and UNEP. The language of the workshop was English.

The workshop gathered representatives of the energy sector from a number of Caribbean countries and Suriname (see attached annex). Participants were officially welcomed by UNEP and URC staff. During the first day of the workshop, SEAF staff introduced the new launched initiative, including operation mechanisms, criteria for selection of participants and the required conditions to qualify for SEAF assistance. The objectives, scope and the services SEAF could offer to participating countries in its pilot phase were also highlighted (for more information visit <http://uneprisoe.org/SEAFLAC>). A presentation about one of SEAF's previous interventions implemented in Mali was presented by Lawrence Agbemabiese from the DTIE branch of UNEP. Similarly to the previous workshop held in Panama City the previous week, the need for monitoring and follow-up mechanisms to assess the outcome of the projects was highlighted. SEAF staff emphasised the need of taking it into consideration also in the implementation of this pilot phase. A summary of existing renewable energy needs, plans and ongoing activities in the region was given by representatives from OLADE.

During the second day of the workshop representatives from the participating countries presented more in detail the current energy situation in their respective countries. In the last session of the workshop, participants were divided into working groups and asked to discuss the requirements for SEAF assistance. They were also asked to discuss potential SEAF interventions based on the needs of their corresponding countries. A list of potential interventions was presented after discussions to SEAF staff (for more information visit <http://uneprisoe.org/SEAFLAC>). Once the potential interventions had been discussed, coming steps and deadlines were presented (for more information visit <http://uneprisoe.org/SEAFLAC>).

The main conclusions from the workshop were presented by staff from ROLAC and URC. Some of these are:

- there is a concrete need for assistance and support in the region;

- although participating countries have similar needs, some of the interventions should be targeted in a way that meet specific needs (some countries have more advanced energy policies than others which may optimise sustainable energy interventions);
- In contrast to the Panama workshop, the needs revealed by the participants required interventions more at the individual country level rather than common interventions;
- SEAF is able to provide the required platform to facilitate the implementation of sustainable energy activities in the Caribbean region.

In a similar way to the Panama workshop, the outcome of the this workshop was considered to be successful; a better understanding of the current energy situation and energy needs prevailing in the region was obtained, but also, because participants got a good understanding of the objective of the SEAF initiative and how it could help in achieving a more sustainable energy development in the Latin American region.