

# **Opening Remarks**

**by Mrs Atheline Haynes**

**Permanent Secretary**

**Ministry of Environment, Energy &**

**Natural Resources**

**for the**

**Caribbean Planning for Adaptation**

**to Climate Change Project**

**Advisory Committee Meeting**

**on July 8, 1999**

**Mr Jan Vermeren, representatives from the World Bank, Dr Trotz - CPACC, ladies and gentlemen, I extend a warm welcome to all of you participating in this annual meeting of the Advisory Committee to the Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Climate Change Project.**

**I have been invited to open this meeting and I am extremely pleased to be here among people who now seem to be old friends. I am also pleased because I always have the feeling that this is a project in which real progress is being made.**

**As you are aware this project was one tangible result of the Global Conference held here in 1994. All SIDS recognized then the critical impact which global warming was likely to have on their countries and their economies. The Government of Barbados has been constant in its commitment to participating actively in the Framework Convention and activities at the international level even when its human resources are stretched beyond their natural limits. It has always been committed to contributing 100% to this regional project in the Ministry. We propose to continue this support. We are always ready therefore to provide any assistance which we can when called upon to do so.**

**We are of course honoured to have the Implementation Unit in Barbados and the Government has as the saying goes, 'put its money where its mouth is' by readily providing a new home for the Unit. I hope Dr Trotz that you and your staff will be extremely happy there.**

**As you are aware we have now reached the midpoint of the CPACC Project. I have been informed that although there are some areas which are slightly behind schedule for the most part CPACC is well on track. So far the project has established a regional sea level monitoring network and has provided state of the art tidal gauges throughout the region. There has been improved communication and data sharing of climate information among regional institutions. The geographic information system capability of some organizations in the region has been evaluated, with training provided. Computer software and hardware has been provided to regional institutions to allow for Internet access. Equipment has been purchased to expand the ongoing monitoring of coral reefs within the region. In addition pilot coastal vulnerability assessments are underway in Barbados,**

**Grenada and Guyana, while in St Vincent a greenhouse gas inventory is almost complete. I understand that component 3 of the Project, Inventory of Coastal Resources and their use will be underway soon.**

**By any standard, these are achievements of which you can be proud. Certainly in Barbados, we consider that we have reaped substantial benefits especially our overall institutional capacity to respond to the impacts of sea level rise. I am sure that other countries have had a similar experience and that as a region therefore our capacity to respond to the impact of sea level rise has been enhanced.**

**The importance of this project to the region demands that we look to the future.**

**CPACC is for four years only. There are pilot components to the project which are generating valuable information. It is clear that there will be a need to replicate many of the outputs of those pilot projects in all of the participating countries. In addition many other issues pertaining to climate change are arising.**

**The Clean Development Mechanism is one such issue, where countries in the region need further guidance. CPACC can provide that further guidance for countries in the region on the issue of CDM and for so many other climate change issues. It seems to us therefore critical for CPACC to be extended beyond the initial four year period, and perhaps it is necessary for the establishment of a regional or international climate change centre. Any such move would of course need support from the World Bank and GEF, and so I put it on the table here.**

**We know how long the process is and so we must initiate discussion in all appropriate fora now. I hope that during this meeting you can put aside some time to discuss this important topic and the best way to move forward. This is too important to the region to allow the valuable work done in this project to languish and to have this important support withdrawn. I am depending on you to come up with good ideas and methods to move from a project to a more permanent institution.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen I know that you have a lot of ground to cover and that the time is short so I will say no more at this time. I will merely wish you an extremely successful meeting. Do try as well to take in a Calypso Tent or some other Crop Over activity while you are here.**