



GLOBAL CHOICES

UN Conference on  
Small Island Developing States

Apia, Samoa  
1-4 September

2014

**Promoting Career Prospects for young people in the Sciences including the Water Sector to ensure sustainable island living**

September 2<sup>nd</sup>

11:00-12:30

Faleata Sports Complex

CM 5

**Context**

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face challenges which arise from their intrinsic characteristics such as their small size, remoteness, vulnerability to external shocks, narrow resource base and exposure to global environmental challenges. SIDS have relatively high levels of education, however, investment in Science and Technology (S&T) has been limited<sup>1</sup>. Consequently, investment in research and development has been low which results in limited development of domestic technologies<sup>2</sup>. Modalities of technology transfer are defined by the innovation process in SIDS however these modalities, need to be accompanied by the scientific capacity necessary to create and assimilate knowledge to adapt to the challenges faced by islands, their specific characteristics and particular conditions for development. This situation is associated with the decline in market activity and diversification as well as the creation of value added products. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (2007) reported that, specialization in S&T subjects at tertiary institutions within the Caribbean had declined and that growth relied on the import of technology.<sup>3</sup> There is need for SIDS to use Science Technology and Innovation (STI) in a more comprehensive way to achieve sustainable development and encourage young women and men to pursue science related career and entrepreneurial opportunities. Knowledge is the key to transforming the society of SIDS and this requires strategic investment in the opportunities given to the youth. Technological innovation in SIDS require a joint strategy based on a coordinated, comprehensive scientific framework of action and improved cooperation between states, in partnership with Universities, research networks and private sector entities which demand technology.

The decrease in the interest and enrollment of young people has major implications for science–society relations. Sound education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) improves the employability of young people and economic competitiveness, productivity and growth of countries. Furthermore, a well-trained workforce tends to pursue additional learning opportunities, and improves investors' confidence which are important factors for achieving economic stability. Greater investment of SIDS countries in STEM education and more exposure of young people to careers and opportunities in the sciences will be instrumental in sustainably addressing the priority issues of SIDS such as; preventing biodiversity loss and ensuring environmental sustainability, fostering sustainable management of

<sup>1</sup> Five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Report of the Secretary-General (2010) page 23

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.sidsnet.org/science-and-technology>

<sup>3</sup> Five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Report of the Secretary-General (2010) page 23



freshwater and oceans and encouraging sustainable energy use<sup>4</sup>. One way in which UNESCO addresses this issue is by exposing young people to sustainable career paths in the sciences, improving the quality of science education systems and linking it to STI policy; supporting various networks of young scientists, researchers and innovators and facilitating their involvement in global processes; and supporting the innovative efforts of the youth. The side event will explore career options in different fields of science and their practical applications in SIDS-critical areas such as the water sector. It provides an opportunity for UNESCO to connect some of its young scientist networks to be involved in issues that they are passionate about at the global level. It will also showcase the organization's efforts to encourage women in science through the participation of a L'Oreal UNESCO fellow.

### Main objectives:

- ✓ To share information on ways in which UNESCO supports Young Scientists, Researchers and Innovators
- ✓ To sensitize SIDS Members States about the benefits of investing in STI systems and governance including science education
- ✓ To raise awareness about the benefits of encouraging young people to pursue careers in sciences as a way of contributing to the sustainable development of SIDS
- ✓ To increase young people's interest in science-related careers

### Proposed Participants:

1. Mr Ben Anthony Bacar MOUSSA, Teacher, Life and Earth Sciences (Comoros)
2. Professor Rolph Antoine Payet, Minister of Environment and Energy and Chairperson, (Seychelles)
3. Ms. Alexandra V Destin PIERRE Outreach Coordinator, Reef Check Haiti (Haiti)
4. Dr. Bhama RAMKHELAWON, 2014 UNESCO/L'Oreal FWIS Fellow (Mauritius)
5. Ms. Katenia RASCH Engineering Officer, Samoa Water Authority (Samoa)

### Discussants:

1. Ms. Janice Soraia Fortes da Graça, Trainer, youth mobilizer (Cape Verde)
2. Rosajilda Vélez, General Director, Unit for Caribbean Economic and Social Policy Studies, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, (Dominican Republic)

**Lead organizer:** The Ministry of Environment and Energy, the Seychelles

**Co-organizers:** UNESCO, the Government of the Dominican Republic, the World Association of Young Scientist (WAYS), and World Youth Parliament for Water.

**UNESCO Contact Persons:** Douglas Nakashima [d.nakashima@unesco.org](mailto:d.nakashima@unesco.org) ; Miguel Doria [m.doria@unesco.org](mailto:m.doria@unesco.org) ; Melody Ocloo [m.ocloo@unesco.org](mailto:m.ocloo@unesco.org); Peggy Oti-boateng [p.oti-boateng@unesco.org](mailto:p.oti-boateng@unesco.org) ; Lucy Hoareau [l.hoareau@unesco.org](mailto:l.hoareau@unesco.org) and Nicole Webley [n.webley@unesco.org](mailto:n.webley@unesco.org)

<sup>4</sup> Outcome of the Inter-regional preparatory meeting for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados 26-28 August 2013, page 9-19