

# **Draft statement by the Alliance of Small Island States to the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue 10 June 2026**

## **Panel 2: Means of implementation – the special case of Small Island Developing States**

**Presented by Charles Hamilton, Bahamas**

### **The Special Case of SIDS**

At the outset I wish to congratulate the co-facilitators for the vision that they have set out for the dialogue this year, as well as the notion that future dialogues need to become more akin to implementation fora.

The special case of SIDS in relation to sustainable development has been recognized since the 1992 Rio Summit and enshrined in Rio Declaration, and later in the 1994 Barbados Plan of Action and numerous subsequent documents.

The most comprehensive one is found in Barbados, which states: “There are many disadvantages that derive from small size, which are magnified by the fact that many island States are not only small but are themselves made up of a number of small islands. Those disadvantages include a narrow range of resources, which forces undue specialization; excessive dependence on international trade and hence vulnerability to global developments; high population density, which increases the pressure on already limited resources; overuse of resources and premature depletion; relatively small watersheds and threatened supplies of fresh water; costly public administration and infrastructure, including transportation and communication; and limited institutional capacities and domestic markets, which are too small to provide significant scale economies, while their limited export volumes, sometimes from remote locations, lead to high freight costs and reduced competitiveness. Small islands tend to have high degrees of endemism and levels of biodiversity, but the relatively small numbers of the various species impose high risks of extinction and create a need for protection”.

Additionally, this was further elaborated to highlight that unlike for other and often larger developing countries there are concerns that are specific to small island developing States.

- Their small economies need to be taken fully into account.
- The unique, sometimes special, circumstances of “smallness” and “islandness” mark out the range of vulnerabilities of SIDS and the difficulties that they face.

It is for these reasons that AOSIS actively sought the insertion of the phrase “in particular for SIDS” into many other new treaty text (such as on biosafety, persistent organic pollutants, etc) and in relevant FCCC COP decisions – particularly in relation to finance, technology, capacity building and other support. In other words, the means of implementation.

### Finance

Turning first to finance, this is arguably the most pressing concern is access to finance, and the need for targeted assistance to enable SIDS to cope with complicated procedures. The fact that SIDS being severely capacity constrained is thus arguable the most pressing rationale for such special treatment.

It should also be clear that this does not perpetuate the notion of some countries - that SIDS are seeking more than their fair share of the funds. This is not the case and instead highlights the need for assistance to SIDS to access what has already been made available and promised to developing countries. SIDS are simply not accessing even their fair share or that which is needed for climate change action.

In this regard it should be noted that the ocean SDG is the least financed of all SDGs, and that SIDS are getting a very small share of a very small commitment. As many SIDS are in fact large ocean states, and custodians of vast resources of global significance, SIDS should be supported in accessing finance for climate change action in the ocean space – for adaptation, coastal resilience, and ocean based renewable energy to name a few.

### Technology

Turning to technology, the imbalance between adaptation and mitigation technology availability is one issue, as there are few adaptation technologies available or that SIDS are sufficiently aware of and have capacity to implement.

Importantly, the lack of mitigation technologies fit to size or purpose for SIDS has become clear. Thus the rationale for special consideration would be to stress the need for SIDS appropriate technologies.

Upscaling technologies from small size should also be an easier proposition for technology developers, and there would be communities in larger countries that could also benefit from this. Moreover, SIDS could potentially become exporters of energy products derived from installing an excess of renewable energy in the ocean spaces of SIDS.

Ocean based mitigation and adaptation technologies could be prioritised by the international community, mindful that for Ocean-based mitigation, the focus should be on renewable energy. Having a technology repository or information access centre for such technologies would be of great benefit for SIDS, and could be established in partnership with regional organisations of SIDS.

## Capacity building

In relation to capacity building, as stated earlier, SIDS continue to face limited institutional capacity, constrained human resources and high rates of staff turnover. This underscores the need for sustained, predictable and long-term capacity-building support, aimed not only at developing capacities, but also at retaining them.

Specific capacity-building activities to discuss could include:

- pooling and sharing global and regional climate science expertise, including through regional institutions such as Pacific Community Center for Ocean Science in the Pacific, Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies in the Caribbean and the National University of Singapore. There are of course many others that could become engaged;
- targeted support for the planning, design and implementation of ocean-based adaptation and mitigation programmes;
- programme and project management;
- monitoring, evaluation and learning of results and impacts;
- vulnerability, risk and impact assessments; communication and knowledge management;
- strengthening data systems and technical expertise;
- and, of course, access to climate change finance.

Capacity-building for SIDS should be country-driven, responsive to national circumstances and closely linked to finance, technology transfer and implementation support.

Finally, AOSIS would like to stress that recommendations arising from the ocean dialogue must find their way into discussions of COP decisions. While these dialogues have been and continue to be helpful, we need to work towards greater implementation of discussions at these dialogues