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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Ministry of Sustainable Development and Climate Change Hosts Caribbean Regional Workshop**

*Belmopan, May 2, 2024.*

The Ministry of Sustainable Development and Climate Change officially concluded a three-day Caribbean regional SIDS-SIDS Peer-Learning Workshop focused on environmental data management mechanisms, tools and approaches, and associated best practices by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the region. This will improve environmental reporting for Belize and the region.

The workshop is being supported by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, the United Nations (UN) and the SIDS Coalition for Nature under a project funded by Spain, *“Fostering Caribbean SIDS-SIDS Peer-Learning and Cooperation on Data Solutions for Nature to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework”*. With the generous support of Spain, the European Union, and the Republic of South Korea, this project directly responds to the SIDS Coalition for Nature’s Call for Action made at Biodiversity COP15 in 2022.

The workshop will be instrumental in identifying, supporting, and seizing specific SIDS-SIDS knowledge transfer opportunities and will cover the thematic areas of environmental data coordination, data production, and data dissemination/reporting, including reporting against the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAS) such as the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Biodiversity Framework. In order to ensure coherence and synergies, the workshop gathered representatives of both ministries of environment and national statistical offices from the Caribbean SIDS.

Hon. Ramon Cervantes, Minister of State in the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Climate Change, highlighted in his keynote address that regionally, there is a need to enhance coordination and standardization in our data management practices. Minister Cervantes encouraged active engagement to *“bridge the gaps in data quality and establish systematic approaches to monitor and report on biodiversity.”*

Mr. Raul Salazar, the UN Resident Coordinator for Belize and El Salvador, emphasized that the workshop holds significant importance as *“it provides a*

*platform for us to collectively identify success stories and best practices from within SIDS communities.”* The CARICOM Secretariat’s representative, Ms Faustina Wiggins, of Regional Statistics highlighted the Secretariat’s role in facilitating Capacity Building Related to MEAs in African Caribbean and Pacific Countries Project, “to continue to provide support to the region and promote integrated and synergistic approaches to improve MEAs reporting”.

As a Co-Chair of the Coalition for Nature, Belize welcomed the Caribbean delegates. The Ministry thanked the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, the UN Department on Economic and Social Affairs, ECLAC, the CARICOM Secretariat, and SIDS delegates.

**Ends**