



United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy For All (2014-2024)

PRESS RELEASE

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SIDS DOCK and GRID-Arendal announce strategic partnership for sustainable use and management of marine resources in small islands and low-lying developing countries
Projects will support the economic and livelihoods systems of the populations and promote nature-based solutions and technologies

19 May 2020, United Nations Headquarters, New York, U.S.A.: SIDS DOCK, the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Sustainable Energy and Climate Resilience Organization, has signed an agreement with GRID-Arendal to collaborate on the promotion of nature-based solutions and technologies for the sustainable use and management of marine resources to support the economic and livelihoods systems of the populations of small islands and low-lying developing countries. The signing ceremony took place on Thursday, 14 May 2020, by means of a virtual conference between representatives in New York City and Norway, as a way to contain the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

In signing on behalf of SIDS DOCK, His Excellency Mr. Ronald J. Jumeau, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Seychelles to the United Nations (UN) and Chair of the SIDS DOCK Executive Council, welcomed the partnership and commended GRID-Arendal for its strong support, noting that it has been a reliable and supportive partner since 2014. “This SIDS DOCK/GRID-Arendal partnership will provide us with a framework for cooperation to accelerate the synergistic deployment and monitoring of nature-based solutions to the challenges of ocean environmental management, rehabilitation of ecosystems, and the development of ocean-based renewable energy technologies in our SIDS DOCK Member Countries, and will also allow us to learn many lessons from Norway, as it too tries to achieve a low-carbon society,” he said, after affixing his signature to the agreement.

Dr. Peter Harris, Managing Director of GRID-Arendal, welcomes the strengthened cooperation with SIDS DOCK. “For over thirty years, GRID-Arendal has worked with partners around the globe to address the most pressing environmental challenges of our time. This partnership gives us the opportunity to develop practical solutions for countries and communities experiencing some of the most immediate consequences of environmental change, from climate change to plastic pollution. GRID-Arendal was honoured to be present at the United Nations when the SIDS DOCK Treaty came into force in 2015 and looks forward to supporting its mission for a sustainable and resilient future.”

(MORE)

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The agreement provides support to SIDS DOCK for:

- Establishment of an Ocean Technologies Knowledge Network (OTN) to provide access to information, experiences and lessons learned from deployment of nature-based solutions and SIDS-Appropriate Technology Applications on small islands in order to facilitate sustainable development, and help islands build their capacities to plan, develop, and successfully implement projects to boost climate resilience.
- Development of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for ocean technologies applications on small island developing states, building upon meso-scale information collected through activities undertaken by both parties, as well as other regional and international organizations and institutions.
- Assessment of opportunities for addressing coastal erosion and loss of ecosystems through nature-based solutions, such as blue carbon, biorock technology, waste-to-energy systems, and renewable desalination systems.

While relatively small in landmass, small island developing states govern over and serve as the “Blue Guardians” of their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), vast ocean territories extending up to 200 nautical miles from their coastlines. These ocean areas are vital “blue carbon” sinks that also help mitigate global climate change. SIDS DOCK now moves forward with a bold plan of action with its member nations in the Caribbean, Pacific and Atlantic and Indian Ocean (AIO) regions through this urgently needed initiative to address climate change threats to their survival. Oceans and coasts play a disproportionately large role in the lives and livelihoods of island populations.

Managing, monitoring, and protecting these EEZs, however, has proven financially and technically challenging for SIDS. The impacts of climate change exacerbate the existing socio-economic and environmental vulnerabilities in these countries. Harnessing the nature-based climate mitigation and adaptation values of coastal and marine ecosystems can help SIDS to effectively address and manage climate impacts, while supporting coastal communities through the wide range of ecosystem benefits these ecosystems provide. Such an approach, supported by access to technical information and data infrastructure capacity building, will allow SIDS to adapt and build resilience to climate change and sustainably manage their interconnected “Ridge-to-Reef” terrestrial, coastal, and marine ecosystems.

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GRID-Arendal was established in Norway in 1989 with the mission to create environmental knowledge that encourages positive change. GRID-Arendal organises and transforms available environmental data into credible, science-based information products, delivered through innovative communication tools and capacity-building services.

SIDS DOCK – the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Sustainable Energy and Climate Resilience Organization – was established in 2015 and is a United Nations–recognized international organization with all the rights and privileges for addressing climate change, resilience, and energy security in small islands. SIDS DOCK represents 32 small islands and low-lying developing states, and is so named because it is designed as a “DOCKing station,” to connect the energy sector in SIDS with the global markets for finance, sustainable energy technologies and carbon. The organization’s work is coordinated by the Secretariat in Belmopan, Belize. Small islands comprise more than one-fifth of the total membership of the UN, and have stewardship over more than 20 percent of the world’s oceans.

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