



Sistema Económico
Latinoamericano y del Caribe

Latin American and Caribbean
Economic System

Sistema Económico
Latino-Americano e do Caribe

Système Economique
Latinoaméricain et Caribéen

Draft Work Programme for the year 2013

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F O R E W O R D

The Work Programme of the Permanent Secretariat for the year 2013 takes due account of the guidelines established by the XXVIII Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council, through Decision No. 440, according to which SELA's activities are structured in three areas: Intra-Regional Relations, Economic and Technical Cooperation and Extra-Regional Relations. In approving this Work Programme, the Latin American Council took into consideration the proposal submitted by the Permanent Secretariat, which was drawn up on the basis of the guidelines set forth in Decision No. 513. That decision instructed the Secretariat, on the basis of dialogue and an evaluation with representatives of the Member States, to define a proposal focused on the organization's activities, seeking a greater impact and added value within the context of the needs for cooperation, integration and development of its Member States.

For this purpose, since late 2011 until mid-September, 2012, a total of nine meetings took place. Three of those meetings were under the format of informal consultations conducted by the Permanent Secretary with the heads of Mission of the Member States; four of them were held within the context of the Informal Reflection Group, and the other two followed the format of the Working Sub-Group. This mechanism for dialogue and interaction has turned out to be both practical and effective, not only for defining a proposal for a Work Programme conforming to the aforementioned guidelines of the Latin American Council but also to address other important issues of operational nature that are aimed at meeting the needs for greater impact and functionality in the tasks of the organization.

It worth noting that the Work Programme for 2013, as provided for in Decision 527 adopted by the XXXVII Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council in 2011, once again weighs in the linkages that the Permanent Secretariat and its Work Programme are expected to have with the process of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), particularly as regards its contribution to the fulfilment of the 2012 Caracas Action Plan and the mandates to be adopted by the upcoming Summit of the Community, whenever it is deemed appropriate.

The Work Programme for the year 2013 is based on the regular budget of the Permanent Secretariat for that year (SP/CL/XXXVIII.O/DT N° 5-12), according to the financial terms indicated there, i.e. there is no budget increase, in absolute or relative terms, despite the broad range of activities that it includes, but it is rather based on an effort to attract extra-budgetary contributions and cooperation from international and regional organizations.

It should also be noted that the Work Programme for the year 2013 attaches special priority to the activities in the area of Intra-Regional Relations, and consequently to the allocation of resources in that area, responding to the demands of the historical times lived in the region. This is without prejudice to the sustained efforts that should be devoted to the area of Economic and Technical Cooperation – in which priority is given to focalization and the search for the best possible use of regional potentials – and the area of Extra-Regional Relations – which is of paramount importance to understand challenges and take advantage of the opportunities posed by the difficult and volatile international economic environment faced by Member States.

Finally, in the implementation of the Work Programme for the year 2013, the Permanent Secretariat intends to ensure communication, cooperation, coordination, complementarity and synergy with the other regional organizations and mechanisms referred to in the Caracas Declaration, and in particular, to provide collaboration and support to the Pro Tempore Presidency of CELAC, as soon as it is requested.

INTRODUCTION

The Permanent Secretariat has prepared this Draft Work Programme for the year 2013 on the basis of the following parameters:

1. The mandates of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) to:
 - a. "Move forward on the basis of our principles for the strengthening and consolidation of Latin American and Caribbean cooperation, in the development of our economic complementarities and South-South cooperation as an axis of integration in our common space, and as an instrument to reduce our asymmetries" (Caracas Declaration, paragraph 27).
 - b. "Promote action plans for the implementation of the mandates and the fulfilment of the commitments embodied in the Salvador de Bahia and Cancun Declarations, the Montego Bay Action Plan and the Caracas Work Programme" (idem. paragraph 29).
2. **Decision 527** of the Latin American Council, which requested the Permanent Secretariat of SELA to attach priority to CELAC's activities, particularly to the decisions stemming from the December 2011 Caracas Summit;
3. **Decision 521** of the Latin American Council, relating to the Work Programme for the year 2012 and other Decisions with an impact on it;
4. The recommendations made by the Member States on the occasion of the meetings held within the context of the implementation of the Work Programme for 2012, and the informal consultations on its priorities for 2013.

Decision 527- SELA-CELAC Coordination

At the current stage in which the CELAC process is unfolding, and with a view to strengthening it, it is worth noting how the Permanent Secretariat has made strides with the mandate of coordination with CELAC, both at the level of mutual information and synergy of activities during the year 2012:

1. In compliance with Decision 527, the Permanent Secretariat presented a progress report on the activities for the period October 2011-April 2012 (Di N °. 6-12) and held a meeting with Member States on 3 April 2012. On that occasion, the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC reported on the progress of the implementation of the Caracas Declaration and the agenda foreseen for the Ministerial Troika and the National Coordinators.
2. In accordance with the work programme developed by the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC, with the facilitation of the General Secretariat of ALADI in organizing meetings of regional and subregional integration groupings as regards the economic and commercial dimension of integration, and taking into account the mandate of Decision 521 (Work Programme for 2012, Activity I.2.3, Analysis of the elements hindering greater integration and trade complementarity among LAC countries), the Permanent Secretariat of SELA participated, both at the technical level and at a higher level, in consultations convened in pursuit of mechanisms and modalities to promote such integration, and has contributed with analytical documents on the topics covered in that area.

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3. In the area of productive development, where the Montego Bay Action Plan assigned the role of facilitator to SELA, the Permanent Secretariat has conducted studies and analyses that will serve as a basis for the debates of the Meeting of High-Level Officials on Productive Development and Industrialization, intended to take place under the joint co-sponsorship of SELA and the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC in November 2012.

4. In the area of extra-regional relations, the Permanent Secretariat has prepared – and will submit to the Latin American Council – an analysis on the Economic Relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union in the context of the VII Summit of Latin America and the Caribbean-European Union, scheduled for January 2013, with the purpose of making a timely contribution to the preparations of CELAC in this field.

5. With respect to the international financial crisis – a particularly relevant issue in the Caracas Declaration and the Caracas Action Plan of CELAC – the *Regional Meeting: Analyses and Proposals for Strengthening the Regional Financial Architecture and Monetary and Financial Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean* was carried out on 27 and 28 February 2012. The Permanent Secretariat of SELA made available to the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC the base studies and the Conclusions and Recommendations of that Regional Meeting. Subsequently, in support to the preparatory technical meeting for the Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance of CELAC, the Permanent Secretariat updated the baseline study on the situation of the international economy, making it available to Ecuador, in its capacity as host country of the technical meeting when it will be submitted as an official document.

6. In the social area, the Permanent Secretariat has kept up-to-date the database on public policies in Latin America and the Caribbean in the area of poverty reduction, so that it can represent a contribution to the planned Ministerial Meeting on Social Development, scheduled to be held in Caracas in 2012.

7. In the area of culture, the Permanent Secretariat has encouraged regional cooperation for the development of cultural and creative industries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

8. The Permanent Secretariat keeps the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC informed of its activities on a permanent basis, sharing reports of the various meetings and seminars it holds, as well as the analytical documents it produces, so as to take full advantage of them within the context of the regional cooperation and integration process in its broadest perspective.

Taking into account the foregoing, the Draft Work Programme for 2013, in its three strategic areas, intends to:

1. Continue with the analytical activities of the Permanent Secretariat in areas of intra-regional and extra-regional interest, and in line with the mandates and activities of CELAC;

2. Support regional coordination and cooperation in areas which are of priority interest;

3. Facilitate synergy between the activities of the various integration processes at the regional and subregional levels;

4. Promote mutual understanding among those processes;
5. Expand the scope of intra-regional cooperation, by taking full advantage of the potentials of the organization;
6. Promote complementarity and coordination with other organizations and cooperation mechanisms in the region within the framework of CELAC.
7. Provide timely and efficient technical support to the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC.

Area I – Intra-Regional Relations

Guidelines orienting this area and its projects and activities are conducted in close synergy with the process of CELAC.

The support focuses on a continuous process of analytical information on the developments of the regional integration processes and their interrelations, with special emphasis on:

1. The availability of specialized databases;
2. The productive integration (mandates from Montego Bay and the 2012 Caracas Action Plan), both in terms of the productive development and industrialization process and the factors related to it (Foreign Direct Investment, Information and Communication Technologies, Trade Facilitation, Single Window, Free Trade Zones, Value Chains, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises);
3. Integration and cooperation processes; new developments, the complementarity and convergence;
4. The development of a prospective vision on the major challenges and opportunities for the region in the long term.

Area II – Economic and Technical Cooperation

The guidelines followed by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA in this area of the Work Programme for 2013 are as follows:

1. Provide support for the process of consultation and coordination among national leaders in the area of economic and technical cooperation, both at the annual meeting of Technical Cooperation Directors and the substantive topics that such forum may select, as part of the efforts undertaken by CELAC in this subject matter;
2. Support the information flows among officials responsible for economic and technical cooperation;
3. Develop intra-regional cooperation in critical areas, in support of concerted regional and international priorities (Productive Development-SMEs, Trade Facilitation, Natural Disasters);
4. Provide support to the Member States through targeted activities for assistance and training.

Area III – Extra-Regional Relations

The general guideline orienting this area is to maintain a continuous process of assessment of the international environment in which the region unfolds, and contribute to focus the intra-regional activities and programmes through an analysis and identification of extra-regional challenges and opportunities.

In 2013, the Permanent Secretariat will continue with previous analyses, focusing on the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Member States within the context of the events held by the organization, while exploring new areas of interest as suggested by the dynamics of the region's external relations, without prejudice to the priorities or requirements that may arise from the political mandates of CELAC.

AREA I. INTRA-REGIONAL RELATIONS**PROGRAMME: SUPPORT TO INTEGRATION AND POLICIES FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (LAC)****PROJECT I.1. Support to Latin American and Caribbean integration. Deepening of coordination and convergence****Activity I.1.1. Compliance with Decision N° 527 of the Latin American Council of SELA regarding the establishment of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)****A. Background and justification**

As a follow-up to this Decision, the Meeting between Member States and the Permanent Secretariat of SELA in compliance with Decision No. 527 "Support of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA and its Work Programme to the Establishment of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)" was held on 3 April 2012 at the headquarters of the SELA. The basic objective of this meeting was to conduct an exchange of views about CELAC's activities and their impact on the Work Programme of SELA.

The Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC briefed on the results of the activities carried out since December 2011 to that date, when CELAC was created, highlighting the results of the Troika meeting held in Santiago, Chile, on 9 January 2012 and the Meeting of National Coordinators, held in March 2012, when the Report of the Pro Tempore Presidency on the implementation of CELAC's activities up to 18 March 2012 and its Annual Program of Activities were submitted.

Subsequently, the Permanent Secretariat has kept close contact with the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC in order to ensure the required ongoing coordination and mutual support. In fact, the Permanent Secretariat has regularly forwarded studies on subjects related to the work areas set forth in the 2012 Caracas Action Plan as well as reports on its activities in areas of mutual interest, as detailed in the report that the Permanent Secretariat is submitting to the Latin American Council (SP/CL/XXXVIII.0/Di N° 28-12).

In this context, the meeting of regional and sub-regional integration organizations in the areas of trade and economics was held on 16 and 17 August at the headquarters of ALADI in Montevideo. Proposals were made to develop common and complementary activities among the various agencies that should be taken into consideration for a similar meeting to be held in Santiago, Chile, in November 2012. The meeting will be convened by the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC, which will determine the tasks to be performed by each Secretariat or jointly by several of them in 2013.

B. Objectives

Support the implementation and consolidation of CELAC, in accordance with Decision No. 527, deepening dialogue, synergy and coordination between the Regional and Subregional Integration and Cooperation organizations of Latin America and the Caribbean, and develop specific tasks and actions according to area competence of

each one of them, so as to assist in the creation of the integrated Latin American and Caribbean space proposed by CELAC.

C. Expected results

1. Support the process of the CELAC Summit at the request of the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC.
2. Permanent monitoring, support and participation, within the competences of SELA in the activities stemming from agreements and mandates of CELAC.
3. Systematization of updated information on the progress in the implementation of the mandates and agreements of CELAC, and make it available to the Member States, the regional and subregional organizations, as well as institutions and general public.

Activity I.1.2. Drafting and distribution of regular reports of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA on the regional integration process

A. Background and justification

The Permanent Secretariat conducts a systematic monitoring and analysis of the integration process in the region, covering its main aspects and inter-relations. This is based on official reports, statistics and studies carried out by various integration and cooperation groupings in the region, the direct contacts with them and the reports from specialized organizations.

Since the regional integration and cooperation processes receive guidelines through consultation and consensus at the level of Heads of State and Government, from the orientation and implementation of the mandates of CELAC and the presidential summits with a subregional scope, the Permanent Secretariat intends to contribute through this regular monitoring and analysis to build up an updated and comprehensive vision of the integration process for use by Member States.

B. Objectives

1. Conduct a permanent analysis of the evolution of the integration process, with emphasis on regional and subregional aspects, taking into account its multidimensional and comprehensive nature in order to report on its progress and the obstacles it faces.
2. Provide the Member States with a timely and comprehensive vision of the progress of regional integration, as well as an appreciation of the real possibilities of coordination and convergence among existing processes.

C. Expected results

1. Submittal to the Member States of an Annual Report on the Evolution of the Regional Integration Process, 2012 – 2013, which includes the status, progress and difficulties faced by this process in the various fields it covers.
2. Publication of the monthly “Bulletin on Regional Integration”, which provides a summary of the evolution of the integration and cooperation process and the main activities within the context of SELA and other regional and subregional integration organizations.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Follow-up of the integration process	On a permanent basis
Submittal of Report on the Evolution of Regional Integration, 2012 – 2013	October 2013
Bulletin on regional integration	Monthly

Activity I.1.3. Development of the productive sector and industrialization (mandates of CELAC, Montego Bay, 2012 Caracas Action Plan)**A. Background and justification**

At the meeting of regional and subregional integration mechanisms of Latin America and the Caribbean, held at the headquarters of SELA, on 25 and 26 October 2010, under the Pro-Tempore Presidency of the Summit of Latin America on Integration and Development (CALC), the Permanent Secretariat of SELA was entrusted with the task of acting as facilitator of the regional dialogue on the productive dimension of Latin American and Caribbean integration.

For this purpose, the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CALC and the Permanent Secretariat of SELA organized the “Meeting of regional and subregional integration mechanisms on the productive dimension”, which took place at the headquarters of SELA, Caracas, on 5 May 2011. On that occasion, the Permanent Secretariat presented the study “Coordination and convergence for productive integration in Latin America and the Caribbean”. After an extensive debate on this document and the papers presented at the meeting, SELA Member States adopted the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. From the most recent experiences and changes in development strategies and policies in LAC, productive integration projects should be prioritized within subregional and regional integration processes.
2. Productive integration is crucial not only to consolidate the integration process itself, but also to achieve progress in terms of social inclusion, reduction in asymmetries within our countries, among our nations and against the world, and improve the international insertion of LAC countries.
3. The proposal for a productive integration agenda in LAC must include, among others, the following components: concepts of partnership and productive complementation as central elements for defining productive integration and development strategies and policies in Latin America and the Caribbean.
4. It is of particular relevance to review and explore regional and sub-regional mechanisms to finance projects for productive integration.
5. The Latin American and Caribbean multinational companies, arising from productive complementation, constitute a very promising tool that should be enhanced in the process of productive integration in LAC.
6. Bearing in mind the importance of the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) – both in economic and social terms – participants noted the advisability of coordinating the various programmes supporting SMEs that have been undertaken in the

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different integration processes co-existing in Latin America and the Caribbean, in particular on productive integration. As part of these joint coordination efforts, a proposal with a regional scope could be defined, with specific initiatives to support SMEs in LAC, taking into account the lessons learned from the various existing regional and subregional projects.

B. Objectives

Follow-up of the mandates arising from the Montego Bay Action Plan and the 2012 Caracas Action Plan in the area of the productive dimension. For this purpose, the following elements should be developed:

1. Contribute to the definition of guidelines for public policies in the areas of productive and industrial development under the current conditions of our region;
2. Identify the potential contributions of its various components to develop concrete productive integration projects in Latin America and the Caribbean;
3. Define the most promising projects of productive integration in Latin America and the Caribbean, based on a critical review of regional and subregional efforts for cooperation in this area.

C. Expected results

1. Identification of modalities, strategies and lines of action to promote the productive and industrial integration within the framework of CELAC, based on studies carried out by the Permanent Secretary and the results of the meeting of high-level officials of ELAC and SELA, scheduled to be held in November 2012.
2. Counting on an assessment of productive development and industrialization policies applied in the region, while identifying the key elements and strategies to promote productive integration, which should serve as a basis for the debates during a possible Conference on Productive and Industrial Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, within the framework of CELAC.
3. Support the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC in organizing the Conference on Productive and Industrial Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Study-Assessment of the productive development and industrialization policies applied in the region, and to identify the fundamental elements and strategies to promote productive integration.	February-April
Facilitate the organization of the LAC Conference on Productive and Industrial Development in Caracas	To be determined jointly with the Pro Tempore Presidency of CELAC

Activity I.1.4. Cultural and creative industries in Latin America and the Caribbean

A. Background and justification

In the 2012 Caracas Action Plan, the Presidents of Latin America and the Caribbean decided to organize a meeting between regional and subregional integration mechanisms on cultural integration and incentives to the development of creative industries.

B. Objectives

Within the framework of this event, efforts will be made to shape up the elements that allow for adopting a regional consultation and cooperation work agenda on these matters, and to analyze the links between regional integration and cultural-creative industries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. Expected results

1. Two studies, one on cultural integration and the other one on development of creative industries in Latin America and the Caribbean, and
2. Regional Meeting within the context of CELAC.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Update of the studies conducted by SELA	March 2013
Regional Meeting	April 2013

Activity I.1.5. Analysis and drafting of policy proposals for the consolidation of a regional financial architecture

A. Background and justification

The adverse impacts of the global financial crisis on the world and regional economy have prompted a series of economic and financial initiatives that seek to protect the region from the risks raised by the crisis and the unstable international economic scenario. In this regard, there have been proposals and various projects to promote the advancement and consolidation of a Regional Financial Architecture that responds to the challenges posed by the crisis. Moreover, this issue was recognized as a priority by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). The Caracas Summit, held at the end of 2011, addressed issues such as the financing of intra-regional trade, crisis prevention and mitigation of its effects, and the progress made in designing a new regional financial architecture.

In this context, the Regional Meeting "Analyses and Proposals for Strengthening the Regional Financial Architecture and Monetary and Financial Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean" was held on 27 and 28 February 2012 at SELA headquarters. On that occasion, we identified measures aimed at responding to the crisis on the basis of intra-regional cooperation and the organization was invited to continue follow-up and analysis of these issues.

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B. Objectives

1. Continue follow-up to major developments in the monetary and financial areas, with emphasis on the analysis of those elements that might lead to deepening regional cooperation in these areas.
2. Support CELAC's mandates in this field and respond to the requests of the Member States, as soon as they make them.

C. Expected results

1. Development of a progress report on financial cooperation and integration in Latin America and the Caribbean, including mechanisms for payment in national currencies among Member States: SUCRE, reciprocal credits and payments agreements of ALADI, local currency payment system of MERCOSUR, among others.
2. Preparation of study on innovative mechanisms for channelling funds to the productive economy in Latin America and the Caribbean.
3. Convening and holding of a meeting of experts on the debt burden in average-income countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Preparation of terms of reference for the studies to be drafted by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA	January 2013
Hiring of consultants and drafting of study	February – March 2013
Preparation and convening of meeting of experts	April 2013
Conduction of meeting of experts	May 2013
Forwarding of the Conclusions and Recommendations of the meeting of experts to the Member States and relevant regional organizations	June 2013

Activity I.1.6. Follow-up and support to new forms of regional integration and cooperation within the framework of ALBA-TCP, UNASUR, PETROCARIBE and the Alliance of the Pacific, highlighting the possibilities for complementarity with existing integration schemes

A. Background and justification

The noticeable advances and new modalities assumed by the regional integration process, as well as the need to support processes that contribute to the creation of an integrated regional space involve specific work demands for SELA as the regional organization in charge of promoting integration through actions that contribute to the coordination and convergence of integration processes underway.

In this connection, it is advisable to conduct analytical efforts and disseminate relevant information on the newest integration processes, such as ALBA-TCP, UNASUR, SUCRE and PETROCARIBE, thus enriching knowledge among the various economic and social stakeholders in the region, as well as the process to prepare proposals on the architecture of the institutional framework for regional integration.

B. Objectives

To keep under monitoring and analysis the evolution of agreements that are developed within the framework of the ALBA-TCP, UNASUR and PETROCARIBE and Pacific Alliance in the various fields of regional integration and cooperation, in the perspective of their implications for the regional integration process.

C. Expected results

1. A comprehensive study on the experiences and evolution of the agreements developed by ALBA-TCP, SUCRE, UNASUR, PETROCARIBE, and the Pacific Alliance, as well as their impacts on the regional integration process.
2. Regional proposals to bring about a progressive coordination and convergence of integration processes in the region, based on the experiences of the new modalities for integration and cooperation being applied.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Terms of reference for the study	February 2013
Submittal of the study	March -June 2013

Activity I.1.7. Prospective analysis on the economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean**A. Background and justification**

The great uncertainty created by the global crisis and the challenges that it has posed demand for analysis on economic growth and long-term development, which transcends the studies and estimates that focus almost exclusively on the short and medium-term problems facing the region. The Permanent Secretariat intends to complement its situation analyses with this important issue, in order to facilitate the availability of a strategic long-term perspective as a support for scenario analyses.

B. Objectives

Perform a regional prospective analysis on the dynamics and trends in economic growth and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. Expected results

1. Prepare an economic and social prospective study in Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. Hold a Regional Meeting on economic and social perspectives in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the participation of regional experts, in line with the mandates of CELAC.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Terms of reference	January 2013
Hiring of consultants	February–March 2013
Convening of the meeting	May 2013
Conduction of the meeting	June 2013

Activity I.1.8. Maintenance of information tools designed by the Permanent Secretariat to support its programmes and projects and provide Member States with up-to-date information on key aspects of the Latin American and Caribbean integration process

A. Background and justification

The Permanent Secretariat, in order to support research, analysis and decision-making in the areas that define the Objectives of the Panama Convention, has developed databases that both individually and as a whole are valuable resources for strategic information. They require permanent updating and improvement in terms of their functionality. In the context of the new process of CELAC and the broad scope of its objectives, these resources, found in the Digital Information and Knowledge Centre of SELA (CEDIC-SELA) in Regional Cooperation and Integration, are considered to be a unique contribution in terms of its nature and coverage, but also necessary to ensure the success of this process.

B. Objectives

Permanent maintenance and updating of a series of tools of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), integrated into SELA's Web site (www.sela.org) and containing relevant, up-to-date, reliable information to effectively support decision-making and development of initiatives and efforts aimed at promoting integration in Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. Expected results

1. Database on Information and Knowledge about Cooperation and Integration, which contains all the intellectual production of SELA and similar organizations, focuses mainly on the regional and subregional integration processes. This database refers users to the catalogue descriptions and full texts of over 5,000 documents, with most of them being SELA technical documents of various kinds. It also contains key documents generated by the main Latin American and Caribbean institutions linked to the regional and subregional integration processes, and in general, to sustainable development and growth in the region.

2. Database on Public Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean, which is an updated inventory for quick consultation as regards policies, programmes, projects and services aimed at combating poverty, including the regional and local levels in the Member States of SELA.

3. Database on Foreign Trade Flows. This database contains data on imports, exports and trade balances among the Member States of SELA and between different integration schemes, based on the information contained in the Direction of Trade Statistics (DOTS) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

4. Updated Regional Observatory on Summit, reflecting timely information concerning the actions, decisions, resolutions and news of interest for the user registered in the Observatory.
5. Database on Public Policies on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Social Economy Enterprises (SEEs). This database is the result of the systematization of public policies related to ICTs for SMEs and SEEs in the 33 countries in the region. This tool allows user to have access to a complete inventory of public policies published on ICTs, thus becoming an important input for strategic decision-making.
6. Updated profile of each one of the Member States of SELA.
7. Reference service and guidance to users in promoting the efficient and profitable use of both relevant information and ICT tools that SELA provides to Member States, researchers, academicians and the general public interested in the most relevant topics associated with integration in Latin America and the Caribbean.
8. SELA Bibliographical Bulletin, containing recently drafted documents and received by SELA, to be distributed to regional information services related to the process of regional and subregional integration.

PROJECT I.2. Analysis, systematization and preparation of policy proposals for strengthening economic and commercial relations among Latin American and Caribbean countries

Activity I.2.1. Analysis of trade and foreign direct investment (FDI) flows between Central American countries and Mexico; Mexico and South America, Cuba and Latin America and the Caribbean, and Dominican Republic and Latin America and the Caribbean. Mechanisms and modalities to promote complementarity and convergence

A. Background and justification

This activity forms part of the 2012 Caracas Action Plan, in line with the dialogue and cooperation required among regional and subregional bodies of Latin America and the Caribbean within the framework of CELAC.

In 2012, the Permanent Secretariat conducted the studies entitled "Mechanisms and modalities to promote trade among South American countries" and "Mechanisms and modalities to develop trade between the countries of the Central American Common Market and the Caribbean Community", which include an analysis of foreign direct investment flows between these groups of countries. With the preparation of the study referred to in this activity we would be covering commercial exchanges of goods among all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

B. Objectives

1. Assess trade in goods and FDI flows, and identify their composition and main trends among the aforementioned countries.
2. Define the institutional and regulatory elements that would be affecting the dynamism and nature of such flows, with the purpose of gaining knowledge about the points of convergence of different trade policies and applied investments.

3. Review of the mechanisms for promotion and facilitation that could encourage trade relations and direct investments among the aforementioned countries.

C. Expected results

An study-assessment of trade flows and FDI for each of the following groups: Central American countries and Mexico; Mexico and South American countries; Cuba and Latin American and Caribbean countries; and Dominican Republic and Latin American and Caribbean countries. The study should present policy proposals and lines of action to enhance and project, in the medium and long term, existing linkages and foster the emergence of new relations and economic interdependencies in the area of regional integration.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Terms of reference for the study	February 2013
Hiring of consultants	March 2013
Submittal of report	June 2013

Activity I.2.2. Free trade zones, export diversification and challenges of international integration of Latin American and Caribbean countries

A. Background and justification

This activity, being developed in more than 400 free trade zones established in 23 countries of the region, largely supports the attraction of investments for productive development of Latin America and the Caribbean, the generation of jobs, the linkages to international value chains, and the international insertion of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. In this connection, the Permanent Secretariat of SELA organized the First Conference of Government Authorities of free trade zones of Latin America and the Caribbean, on 20 and 21 September 2012, in Cali, with the support of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism of Colombia and the Association of Free Trade Zones of the Americas (AZFA).

B. Objective

Develop the activities mandated in the Conclusions and Recommendations stemming from the aforementioned Conference and serve as its Technical Secretariat hereinafter.

C. Expected results

1. Establish a database for exchange of knowledge and information on free trade zones in the region.

2. In its capacity as technical secretariat of the Conference, the Permanent Secretariat should follow-up public policies and instruments relating to free trade zones in the region, their integration with the productive sector of each country and the trends of business within those areas, while developing common indicators to measure their performance and development.

3. Organize the II Conference of Government Authorities of Free Trade Zones in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the city of Ponce, Puerto Rico, in October 2013, within the framework of the XVI Conference of the Association of Free Trade Zones of the Americas (AZFA).

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Construction and feeding of database	On a permanent basis
Hiring of computer information assistant	
II Conference	October 2013

PROJECT I.3. Development of International Trade Single Windows within the framework of international trade facilitation and cross-border paperless trade

Activity I.3.1. V Latin American and Caribbean Regional Meeting on International Trade Single Windows: Interoperability in regional digital integration

A. Background and justification

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have positive side effects on the whole social and economic fabric. However, their impact on the productive and social processes can bring about equally profound inequalities. In the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the effects of technologies are distributed in an asymmetrical and fragmented way, thus deepening asymmetries within the region and with the rest of the world.

The design of public policies aimed at encouraging innovative capacities, as well as the creation and transfer of knowledge and ICTs, is a decisive factor in poverty reduction and in promoting economic and social development. ICTs also have enormous potential for contributing to the regional integration processes and, in particular, a growing impact on the trade facilitation, as illustrated by the development of International Trade Single Windows. Under the impetus provided by the Permanent Secretariat, Single Windows have become a shared effort with the governments of the Member States of SELA, and the cooperation between public and private entities in the region linked and interested in trade facilitation turns out to be a key path towards sustainable development and growth in the region. To date, three Latin American and Caribbean Regional Meetings have been conducted on Single Windows, as well as the "Pilot Project for Interoperability and Harmonization of International Trade Single Windows in the framework of the Latin American Pacific Rim", together with CAF - Development Bank of Latin America.

With the conduction of the V Latin American and Caribbean Regional Meeting on International Trade Single Windows: Interoperability in regional digital integration, the Permanent Secretariat responds to the mandates received from its Member States on this subject.

B. Objectives

1. Contribute to the progressive coordination of regional efforts for the development of International Trade Single Windows, and the digitization of foreign trade procedures, in line with international standards for interoperability, harmonization and facilitation of cross-border paperless trade.

2. Organize the V Regional Meeting on the development of International Trade Single Windows, in Mexico City, Mexico, dealing with progress and regional strategies, with the participation of representatives of the Member States linked with the design and execution of Single Windows and the digitization of trade procedures, as well as with representatives of international and multilateral organizations related to these processes.
3. Organize and execute the technical training actions required by Member States concerned, in the area of facilitation of cross-border paperless trade.

C. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Conduction of the V Regional Meeting on Single Windows	29 and 30 October 2013 Mexico City, Mexico
Preparation for framework training activities for development of Single Windows in Latin America and the Caribbean	5 to 8 March 2013

PROJECT I.4. Knowledge and ICTs for development and integration of Latin America and the Caribbean

Activity I.4.1. III Regional Seminar on e-Health and Telemedicine in Latin America and the Caribbean: Innovation practices for a regionally interconnected health service

A. Background and justification

With this Regional Seminar, SELA, within the framework of the project "Integration and Convergence of Latin America and the Caribbean of in area of health (INCOSALC)", created through Decision 512 of the Latin American Council, seeks to support regional coordination for the creation of a socially-inclusive cooperation agenda based on Regional Digital Integration, through dialogue, dissemination of information and transfer of best practices, and the creation and consolidation of cooperative networks for work, teaching, research and management, and to promote human rights to health, under the essential designs to reduce poverty and seek sustained and sustainable development of the region.

The seminar will focus on the development and dissemination of innovative practices to facilitate progress towards the development of an inter-connected regional health system. As a matter of fact, it will be aimed at the promotion of the regional dialogue started with the first seminar (Caracas, 22-23 October 2009), based on the exchange and dissemination of experiences and best practices relating to the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the provision of medical services, with particular emphasis on innovation, new tools and supports and new regulatory developments, in support to the social integration processes in Latin America and the Caribbean.

B. Objective

Contribute to regional dialogue, based on the exchange of experiences and best practices related to the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in providing medical and sanitary services, with special emphasis on innovation, the new tools and supports for regional interconnectivity in health.

C. Expected results

Organization of the “III Regional Seminar on e-Health and Telemedicine in Latin America and the Caribbean: Innovative practices for regionally interconnected health”, with a retrospective and prospective vision in order to define the challenges that influence or will influence on the development of the e-Health and Telemedicine, as fundamental tools to build a truly effective interconnected health system and also as key factors for promoting health as a human right in Latin America and the Caribbean health, as well as the achievement of the relevant Millennium Development Goals.

D. Activities and schedule

Activity	Dates
III Regional Seminar on e-Health and Telemedicine in Latin America and the Caribbean: Innovative practices	16 and 17 July 2013 Caracas, Venezuela

AREA II. ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

PROGRAMME: SUPPORT TO ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO REGIONAL COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT II.1. Strengthening economic and technical cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean, in line with the mandates of CELAC

Activity II.1.1. XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean

A. Background and justification

The issue of cooperation has been a top priority for the organization since its very inception in 1975, and is one of the objectives and fundamental purposes set forth in the Panama Convention. Such priority was ratified on the occasion of the IX Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council (1983), whose Decision No. 156 designates the organization as the “Regional Focal Point for the exchange of information on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries”.

In compliance with these mandates and with the purpose of promoting regional and international cooperation, SELA has promoted since 1987 the Meetings of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean, which provides a space for rapprochement of cooperation stakeholders and for the exchange of ideas, experiences and best practices from a Latin American and Caribbean perspective. Each year, the meeting selects a topic considered to be of high priority for the region and evaluates the various sectoral cooperation initiatives undertaken by the different regional and subregional integration mechanisms and groupings.

In 2013, the XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean will also review a broad range of issues of regional priority and it is expected to be held in El Salvador, during the first half of the year, in coordination and with the co-sponsorship of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador.

B. Objectives

The general objectives of the Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean are as follows:

1. Provide a space for rapprochement between authorities and national focal points responsible for international cooperation so that they can exchange ideas, experiences and best practices as regards priority issues on the cooperation agenda, development assistance, as well as South-South cooperation and Triangular cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean;
2. Identify areas and define actions and initiatives that allow for greater coordination and synergy among the various cooperation stakeholders at the regional, subregional and international levels;
3. To promote the identification of bilateral and multilateral sources of cooperation for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the opportunities for South-South and Triangular cooperation, which can be taken advantage of within the region;
4. Identify proposals and policy recommendations for strengthening regional cooperation.

C. Expected results

Expected results are as follows:

1. Conduction of the XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean;
2. Preparation of a study on the status of cooperation on issues considered to be of top priority on the regional cooperation agenda;
3. Follow-up of the conclusions and recommendations stemming from the XXIII Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean, related to food security.

D. Activities and schedule

The XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean will last two days. Participants will include the national focal points responsible for international cooperation in the Member States of SELA, representatives of regional and international organizations, bilateral and multilateral development agencies, regional and international organizations, as well as experts, academicians, and cooperation stakeholders.

Activities	Dates
Convening of the XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean	March 2013
Conduction of the XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean	June 2013

Activity II.1.2. Promotion of the exchange of information on international cooperation and South-South cooperation

A. Background and justification

The current economic and financial crisis has had a significant impact on development assistance policies and international cooperation. This situation highlights the importance that South-South and Triangular cooperation have gained over the last several years for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, as swift, dynamic and efficient cooperation mechanisms, which can be adjusted to the realities and needs of the region, and are characterized by the principles of solidarity and sovereignty that guide this kind of cooperation.

Taking advantage of such cooperation requires coordination and swift and permanent information exchange mechanisms. This has evidenced the importance of creating a digital space for cooperation directors and making information resources available to the Latin American and Caribbean States. This activity was entrusted to the Permanent Secretariat of SELA within the framework of the XXI Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean of 2010 (Suriname) and was launched during the meeting of 2012 (Belize). Its execution has been materialized through the construction and maintenance of a digital space to disseminate information from national cooperation authorities of the Member States of SELA, concentrating in one place the various efforts undertaken in the region as regards this issue. This is expected to progressively contribute to an exchange of offers and demands for cooperation and technical assistance in the region, in those areas and sectors considered to be a priority for economic and social development.

Cooperation and coordination with regional and international institutions specializing in the cooperation, particularly with the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation of the UNDP, the Perez-Guerrero Fund Trust of the Group of 77, the Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (ECLAC), and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) will be sought for the development of these activities in order to avoid duplication of efforts and take full advantage of the initiatives already underway.

B. Objectives

Maintain and further develop the Subportal on South-South cooperation, and to offer and disseminate information to the International Cooperation Directors of the Member States of SELA and its network of users of the organization's cooperation database.

C. Expected results

1. Maintenance and further development of the Subportal of International Cooperation Directors for LAC on SELA's Web page.
2. Prepare a bulletin on cooperation to disseminate information about the network of cooperation of SELA among the International Cooperation Director in Latin America and the Caribbean.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Maintenance of the Portal of the International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean on SELA's Web page	November 2012
Bulletin on Cooperation	November 2012

Activity II.1.3. Partnership between public and private sectors for disaster risk reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean. Promoting strategic alliances with the private sector

A. Background and justification

Based on the mandates stemming from the Latin American Council, over the past few years, the Permanent Secretariat has been working on the issue of risk management closely with the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR). This was formalized through the signing of a memorandum of understanding for the period 2011-2015 to promote cooperation between governments and the private sector for disaster risk reduction.

In addition, the issue of "Partnership between public and private sectors for disaster risk reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean" is of high priority for Latin American and Caribbean institutions specialized in disaster risk reduction (CAPRADE, CEPREDENAC, CDEMA, REHU, among others), which have supported and developed internal initiatives to take advantage of the potential of the private sector in supporting policies and actions for disaster risk reduction and humanitarian aid at the national and regional level.

The importance of this issue was ratified during the conduction of the "V Regional Meeting on International Mechanisms of Humanitarian Assistance", which took place in the Panama City, from 28 to 30 March 2012, and was organized by the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the government of Panama. As a matter of fact, that regional meeting formed part of the commitments taken on by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), as reflected in the 2012 Caracas Action Plan, adopted by the Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean, who gathered in Caracas, on 2 and 3 December 2011, on the occasion of the "III Summit of Latin America and the Caribbean on Integration and Development" (CALC) and the "XXII Summit of the Group of Rio".

As a result of the V Regional Meeting, the "Panama Declaration" and the "Action Plan of the V Regional Meeting on International Mechanisms of Humanitarian Assistance" were adopted, focused on four priority areas. Within the framework of the issue "Integral Risk Management and Participation", and specifically the "Private Sector: Encouraging Strategic Partnerships with the Private Sector", the Permanent Secretariat actively joined such regional process, by coordinating those actions and conducting the Regional Seminar "Partnerships between the Public and Private Sectors for Disaster Risk Reduction: Continuity of Government and Continuity of Operations during Disasters", which took place in Lima on 7 and 8 June 2012. The event was jointly organized by the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR), the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID-OFDA), and the Government of Peru through the National Institute of Civil Defence (INDECI) and the National Centre for Estimation, Prevention and Disaster Reduction (CENEPRED).

In 2013, the Permanent Secretariat is expected to continue with the tasks of facilitating and monitoring public-private meetings for the creation of partnerships and coordination of actions against disasters by lending support to the national authorities in charge of disaster risk reduction, while promoting synergies with specialized regional and subregional institutions, as well as private sector associations and enterprises.

B. Objectives

1. Deepen coordination and cooperation relations between governments and the Latin American and Caribbean institutions specialized in disaster risk reduction and the private sector;
2. Follow up on the conclusions and recommendations stemming from the Regional Seminar on "Partnerships between public and private sectors for disaster risk management: Continuity of government and continuity of operations during disasters" (Lima, Peru, 7 and 8 June 2012), as well as the commitments derived from the V Regional Meeting on International Mechanism for Humanitarian Assistance (Declaration of Panama and Action Plan) mandated by CELAC.
3. Identify successful cases of public-private cooperation mechanisms for the disaster risk reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean;
4. Continue to analyze continuity of government, business and operations in case of disasters, from a prospective and integral perspective.

C. Expected results

1. Conduction of the Regional Meeting for the Promotion of Public-Private Partnerships for disaster risk reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean, so as to deal with topics considered a priority by Member States and the regional and subregional institutions specialized in this area.
2. Preparation of a study on the status of cooperation between the public and private sectors for disaster risk reduction in areas of high priority for regional and subregional institutions specialized in this field.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Conduct the Regional Meeting for promoting strategic alliances with the private sector for disaster risk reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean	July 2013

Activity II.1.4. Supporting regional and subregional institutions for disaster risk reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean in building strategic alliances with the private sector

A. Background and justification

In view of the priority that has been given to the issue of building strategic partnerships between the public and private sectors and the international relevance of this topic, especially within the United Nations, and particularly the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA),

as well as regionally, especially for those institutions in charge of disaster risk reduction, it was deemed important to make progress in the construction of a digital space that allows for access to all the regional efforts being undertaken to promote partnerships between the public and private sectors for risk management and humanitarian aid.

The importance of these issues was evident not only in the meetings held by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA in this area – particularly in the “Regional Seminar: Cooperation between governments and the private sector for disaster risk reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean: Focus, progress and challenges” (Panama, 17 and 18 November 2011) and the Regional Seminar on “Partnerships between public and private sectors for disaster risk management: Continuity of government and continuity of operations during disasters” (Peru, 7 and 8 June 2012) – but it was also ratified at the “V Regional Meeting on International Mechanisms for Humanitarian Assistance” (Panama, 28 to 30 March 2012).

The Permanent Secretariat intends to work in coordination with Latin American and Caribbean institutions specializing in disaster risk reduction, and particularly to support the efforts being made at the international level by the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR), through the “Disaster Risk Reduction Private Sector Partnerships for the Americas”.

B. Objectives

1. Support the creation of strategic partnerships among regional and subregional institutions for disaster risk reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean (CAPRADE, CDEMA, CEPREDENAC, REHU, CELAC, as well as UN/ISDR and OCHA) and private sector associations and enterprises in the region;
2. Identify sensitive enterprises and private sector associations in Latin America and the Caribbean which are interested in contributing and cooperating in the area of disaster risk reduction, and in supporting mechanisms for humanitarian assistance with a global, comprehensive and prospective approach, in coordination with national authorities in charge of risk management.
3. Promote an exchange of information about initiatives and successful experiences for disaster risk reduction among regional and subregional focal points.

C. Expected results

1. Design of a digital space to publish and disseminate information on the efforts underway to encourage the construction of strategic partnerships between the region’s public and private sectors.
2. Preparation of a directory of enterprises and private sector associations concerned with disaster risk reduction, and dissemination of information to those actors.
3. Support to regional and subregional institutions for disaster risk reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean (CAPRADE, CDEMA, CEPREDENAC, REHU, CELAC, as well as UN/ISDR and OCHA) in complying with their mandates.
4. Support the work carried out within the context of the “Forum on coordination and cooperation of sub-regional mechanisms for disaster risk management of the Americas”, of the “Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction” and the “Regional Meeting on International Mechanisms for Humanitarian Assistance”.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Digital space to encourage the construction of strategic partnerships between the regional private and public sectors	July 2013
Directory of enterprises and private associations interested in disaster risk reduction	July 2013

PROJECT II.2. SELA-SMEs Project: "Inter-institutional cooperation for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Latin America and the Caribbean"**Activity II.2.1. Strengthening of capacities of institutional and business bodies that implement programmes to support SMEs****A. Background and justification**

During the past 13 years, SELA has encouraged the dissemination of strategies and public policies applied in the countries of the region for SMEs, in issues related to partnership, coordination and productive integration, clusters, business networks, export consortiums, innovation and productivity, productive chains, and guarantee and financing systems for SMEs.

In 2013, the Permanent Secretariat of SELA deems it necessary to capitalize on the experiences gained and to establish the SELA-SMEs programme as an essential element to support the establishment of a productive integration process in Latin America and the Caribbean, while taking advantage of the successful experiences and preserving the activities agreed to with national counterparts.

B. Objective

Contribute to strengthening institutional capacities of government and business focal points, as well as other bodies concerned with promoting and implementing programmes to support SMEs. Among other things, efforts will be made to undertake projects to encourage the creation of new productive units, expand existing ones, partnerships, technological transformation and productive articulation of SMEs.

C. Expected results

1. Capacity-building of focal points in SELA's Member States responsible for programmes for developing SMEs in matters relating to productivity, internationalization, innovation and financing.
2. Exchange of institutional experiences as regards programmes to promote improvements in the offer of products and services of SMEs.
3. Support to the creation of thematic networks on SMEs.
4. Encourage cooperation among the Member States of SELA.
5. Timely and concrete technical assistance in accordance with the demands of Member States for cooperation in developing projects for SMEs.

Activity II.2.2. Analysis and design of public policies to support SMEs and their participation in regional value chains

1. PUBLIC POLICIES

A. Background and justification

Public policies to support SMEs, aimed at facilitating and promoting consolidation of this industry, must make available tools that encourage and contribute to the substantial improvement of business efficiency, based on more and better production infrastructure, access to information for decision-making, better knowledge management and access to technology, innovation, credits and markets.

SELA has carried out several activities with government representatives on the issue of SMEs to public policy development in this area. Example of this work is the Project of Transfer of Best Practices in Public Policies to support SMEs, conducted in 2010 by Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.

B. Objectives

The general objectives of this activity are as follows:

1. Exchange information on the design and implementation of public procurement policies that encourage the development of SME supplying goods.
2. Promote technical assistance and advisory directly or through triangular cooperation to stimulate the organization of SMEs in the region, with a view to improving their joint supply capacity for participating in the markets.
3. Draft an action plan, along with government representatives of SMEs in the region, so as to define actions, strategies and instruments to encourage the development of suppliers.

C. Expected results

1. Holding of forum on Public Policies aimed at developing suppliers, along with government representatives.
2. Develop an Action Plan for SMEs in the region, based on the requirements of Member States.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Organization of the Forum on Public Policies for the development of SMEs suppliers	March 2013
Preparation for technical assistance and advisory on public policies, based on the requirements of the Member States	April – October 2013

2. PRODUCTIVE COORDINATION

A. Background and justification

One of the fundamental characteristics of the SME sector is the flexibility and swiftness they have in responding to changing market demands. This feature, in terms of generating economies of scale, limits their ability to be competitive in world markets. As a solution, all analyzes and successful experiences conclude that "partnerships" are the most suitable mechanism.

The opportunities offered by partnerships are viewed as a collective learning, which expands into innovative management processes, and are derived from the coordination of models with a long-term impact on economic growth and competitiveness.

SELA has been conducting seminars and workshops on inter-entrepreneurial cooperation and partnerships, with a view to strengthening productive integration capacities of SMEs into value chains, thus favouring the formation of sectoral production chains.

B. Objectives

1. Contribute to developing and strengthening government and business institutional capacities to develop productive integration projects, such as clusters and productive consortiums.
2. Spread information about productive coordination strategies such as joint development of clusters, chains, local production developments, industrial districts, among others, which have been successful in the region.
3. Identify productive coordination projects in the countries of the region that require assistance and direct technical assistance or through triangular cooperation that encourages partnerships among SMEs in the region.

C. Expected results

1. Conduction of a Seminar on ongoing productive coordination projects in Central America.
2. Facilitate the direct assistance and technical advisory required by the countries of the Central American region to develop projects for productive articulation.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Organization of the Seminar on experiences and opportunities of SMEs in productive coordination projects in Central America	May 2013
Preparation for technical assistance and advisory on productive coordination, based on the requirements of the Member States	April - October 2013
Preparation of document on the assessment of productive coordination capacities in Central America	September 2013

3. INTERNATIONALIZATION

A. Background and justification

Small and medium-sized enterprises confront the challenge of exporting, and to achieve that goal they must outline strategies with well-defined long-term objectives, with a view to searching for new markets, well-trained staff at all levels, who act in an integrated way and establish various forms of sectoral links.

The experience gained by SELA in this subject is well recognized, as the organization has been conducting courses and workshops on SMEs internationalization, supported by experts from various public and private organizations of several countries in the region. A significant number of these that have successfully promoted strategies, programmes and instruments to facilitate the inclusion of SMEs in international markets. For example, the Latin American Seminar on SMEs Export Consortiums was held in June 2012, UNIDO, which created a Latin American Network of Export and Origin Consortiums made up by Latin American public and private institutions promoting the formation of consortiums. This network aims to promote the exchange of experiences and foster best practices in promoting export and origin consortiums in Latin America and Caribbean.

B. Objectives

1. Promote productive development strategies, forming export and internationalization consortiums of SMEs for their foray into international markets.
2. Encourage the exchange of goods and services among Latin American and Caribbean countries, in order to strengthen productive integration in the region.
3. Form business missions and encourage SMEs participation in fairs and business events.

C. Expected results

1. Training of officials and Latin American and Caribbean businessmen on internationalization strategies for SMEs, especially on the issue of logistics channels and promotion of goods and services within the region.
2. Direct or triangular assistance to officials and businessmen of the countries of the region, who might require technical support to implement strategies and programmes for internationalization of SMEs, forming consortiums and partnerships with foreign clients.
3. Dissemination of information and operation of the online platform to promote exchanges of knowledge, experiences, publications and activities conducted by the members of the Network of Consortiums.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Conduction of a workshop on intra-regional logistics and promotion of goods and services among SMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean	September 2013
Preparation for technical assistance and advisory on internationalization of SMEs, based on the requirements of the Member States	September - December 2013
Feed and promote the Network of Export and Origin Consortiums of Latin America	October 2012 - October 2013

4. INNOVATION, PRODUCTIVITY AND COMPETITIVENESS

A. Background and justification

SMEs face the challenge of seeking for constant improvements of their products and services, which is essential for encouraging innovation processes. Such processes involve, in most cases, the implementation of changes (technological and organizational changes) to respond to the problems derived from competition and market changes. Moreover, ongoing technological changes have contributed to a rapid transformation towards a market economy in “real time”, thus improving business productivity.

In order to meet the demands from employers and governments on this issue, SELA has been organizing courses, seminars and other training activities that have tried to convey the concepts and methodologies to promote innovation and to boost productivity and competitiveness, favouring a more efficient business management by SMEs. An example of those activities was the Seminar-Workshop on Innovation, Local Productive Arrangements and Productivity for SMEs, held in April 2012, which allowed for exploring business innovation in Latin America from the perspective of the various stakeholders and instances of innovation systems.

B. Objectives

1. Share experiences and provide working methodologies to promote innovation processes and knowledge management in areas such as productivity, quality and competitiveness, in order to outline activities, programmes and training workshops focused on the areas identified.
2. Train officials and businessmen to develop mechanisms for technology transfer, innovation processes and improvement of competitiveness and productivity in SMEs.

C. Expected results

1. Spread information about some technology transfer mechanisms that have been undertaken, and examining the possibility of replicating these experiences in other SMEs in the region.
2. Provide assistance and direct technical advisory through triangular cooperation to encourage the development of SMEs in the region.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Organization of the “Seminar on technology transfer mechanisms for SMEs”, aimed at SMEs associations in Latin America and the Caribbean	May 2013
Preparation of activities on technical assistance and advisory in innovation, competitiveness and productivity of SMEs, based on the requirements of the Member States	June – October 2013

5. FINANCING

A. Background and justification

One of the most recommended actions to facilitate SMEs access to credit is strengthening security systems in the region, by increasing the levels of support for funding, creating regional guarantee mechanisms, refinancing, insurance and reinsurance, and diversifying the types of customers.

Guarantees are mechanisms traditionally used by the financial system to cover the risks of financial operations. More recently, they have been recognized as useful to overcome information asymmetry problems between lenders and borrowers. This instrument is considered within the standards of solvency regulation of financial institutions and taken into account in credit risk assessments. Hence, the guarantees have the expected effect of reducing capital requirements and provisions of financial institutions.

For the last fifteen years SELA has actively participated in the organization of the Annual Forums on Guarantees and Financing for SMEs, gaining recognition about the role that the institution has played in this area. The Training Course on Guarantee Systems to Support SMEs was held in July 2012, analyzing the possibility of undertaking an initiative for the creation of a regional guarantee system in the Caribbean.

B. Objectives

1. Disseminate information about the progresses made in creating guarantee systems and innovative financial instruments for SMEs in the region.
2. Foster the development of new initiatives, both institutional and instrumental for providing financing and guarantees to support SMEs in the region.
3. Promote the training of officials and businessmen for the creation and implementation of guarantee systems, upon demand from Member States.

C. Expected results

1. Evaluate the possibility of creating a guarantee system in Central America.
2. Train staff of Central American and Caribbean guarantee systems supporting SMEs.
3. Assistance to officials and businessmen of the Member States demanding technical support for creating guarantee systems to support SMEs in the region.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Conduction of a Seminar-Workshop on Credit and Guarantee System in Central America, with a view to developing a Central American Programme on Guarantees	December 2012
Preparation for technical assistance to the Caribbean region in order to develop a pilot programme on guarantee systems for SMEs in the Caribbean	March – October 2013

6. ENTREPRENEURSHIP

A. Background and justification

Entrepreneurship provides an opportunity for the population excluded from the formal labour society to enter national or local productive chains, by increasing not only the added value of goods and services within the economy, but also improving the quality of life of its inhabitants and inserting them into the productive chain, thus reducing poverty.

Most programmes and public policies to promote entrepreneurship focus only on the last stage of the entrepreneurial process, once the company is installed. That is why we recommend outlining public policies that address development of enterprises ventures beyond the development of SMEs, such as the creation of incubators of second-generation enterprises, education and training, promotion of business networks, among others.

SELA has gained extensive experience in this area. For instance, the Course on Entrepreneurship Strategies for the Development of New Entrepreneurs, held in Guatemala in late 2011, served to provide information to representatives from universities and public and private entrepreneurship promoters, on successful methodologies in some countries in the region.

B. Objectives

1. Encourage business organizations in sectors that represent economic and social opportunities, and promote the creation of national systems of business incubators, among other mechanisms to foster entrepreneurship.
2. Propose new forms of financing for the entrepreneurial process, as seed capital funds, angel investors' networks, and risk capital funds.

C. Expected results

1. Promotion of corporate training programmes and national incubation systems in sectors that offer economic and social opportunities in the countries of the region.
2. Conduction of a Regional Workshop on Entrepreneurship for Caribbean countries, focused on the development of projects for creating business incubators in the countries of the region.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Conduction of a Workshop on entrepreneurship for the Caribbean region, focused on the development of projects for the creation of enterprise incubators in the countries of the region.	May 2013
Preparation for technical assistance and advisory focused on the promotion of entrepreneurship and formulation of enterprise incubator projects	May – October 2013

Activity II.2.3. Training and direct technical assistance

A. Background and justification

The training and technical assistance activities are the result from the activities carried out as regards various topics in previous years. Based on these activities, direct technical assistance projects have emerged in specific areas for the development of SMEs, as requested by government counterparts, including CARICOM and of some of its member countries.

B. Objectives

Encourage, educate and promote programmes and technical assistance actions, in accordance with the requests made by Member States for the development of SMEs in specific areas.

C. Expected results

1. Channel the technical support and assistance required by government agencies of SMEs to respond to specific needs as regards productive coordination, internationalization, financing, entrepreneurship, innovation and competitiveness, with the purpose of strengthening specific sectors and regions of interest for the Member States.
2. Promote mechanisms for access to financing for SMEs in priority sectors, according to the country's needs.
3. Encourage potential entrepreneurs to seek business opportunities and foster the creation of business incubators.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Conduct a Workshop on Guarantee Systems for micro-producers in Haiti	November 2012
Homogenize and distribute the projects submitted by Cuban authorities to international cooperation bodies for development of Agro-Food Mini-Industries in that country.	February 2013
Conduct a training seminar on mechanisms for innovation and entrepreneurship for SMEs in Suriname.	April 2013
Conduct a Workshop on e-Health and Telemedicine in Jamaica	June 2013
Organize a Workshop on Experiences of SMEs in the promotion and internationalization of agricultural production in Belize.	August 2013

Activity II.2.4. Cooperation of Latin America and the Caribbean in trade and competition. UNCTAD-SELA joint project. Working Group on Trade and Competition (GTCC)

A. Background and justification

Since 4 July 2011, the Working Group on Trade and Competition in Latin America and the Caribbean has been conducting its consultation and coordination activities. The Group held its second general meeting on 18 and 19 June 2012. Noteworthy, the work of this Group in the region can help foster a culture of competition, improve the institutional

framework in this area and favour consumers, SMEs and productive and commercial integration in Latin America and the Caribbean.

B. Objectives

Make strides with the study of policies, regulations and sectoral experiences in the region in the area of trade and competition, at the global, thematic and sectoral levels, in line with the activities of the Working Group on Trade and Competition in Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. Expected results

Organization of the III Regional Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Competition of Latin America and the Caribbean

AREA III. EXTRA-REGIONAL RELATIONS

PROGRAMME: SUPPORTING THE ANALYSIS AND DRAFTING OF POLICY PROPOSALS TO PROMOTE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN EXTERNAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND THE REGION'S PARTICIPATION IN DISCUSSIONS ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC AGENDA

PROJECT III.1. Evaluation, promotion and diversification of extra-regional economic relations of Latin American and Caribbean countries

A. Background and justification

The Permanent Secretariat has analyzed the historical trends that have prevailed in our region's economic relations with two key extra-regional members - the United States and the European Union – and more recently it has started to systematize information and propose actions to promote and strengthen relations of our countries with China, India, Russia, the Middle East and the African nations.

Similarly, in view of the uncertain evolution of the global economy, the Permanent Secretariat has strived to keep track of the dynamics of the international economy with a view to providing an updated overall perspective of the macroeconomic environment and the current situation in which the economies of the region are operating.

These processes of analysis require continuity to contribute to the purpose of a more effective consultation and coordination, particularly by deepening the study on the environment and external relations, as required and suggested by the various regional forums addressing these issues within the framework of SELA.

Activity III.1.1. Permanent analysis of the dynamics and trade policies of the United States and their impact on Latin American and Caribbean countries. Prospects for relations in the context of the global post-crisis scenario

A. Objectives

Keep on monitoring and analyzing the dynamics of the U.S. economy, and the adoption of trade policy actions that could have an impact on the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

B. Expected results

1. Preparation and dissemination of the quarterly SELA Antenna in the United States of America.
2. Conduction of a study on the economic relations (including trade, financing and cooperation) between the U.S. and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.
3. Convening a regional meeting to review the status and prospects of U.S. economic relations with Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Design of a preliminary thematic structure for the four issues of SELA Antenna in the United States	January 2013
Delivery of the quarterly issues of the SELA Antenna.	March, June, September and December 2013
Preparation of terms of reference for the study	November 2012
Hiring of consultant and preparation of the study	November 2012 – January 2013
Preparation and convening of the Regional Meeting	January 2013
Conduction of the Regional Meeting	February 2013
Forwarding the Conclusions and Recommendations stemming from the Regional Meeting and its Final Report to the Member States and relevant regional organizations	March 2013

Activity III.1.2. Analysis and monitoring of economic relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and Canada

A. Objectives

Keep track of economic and cooperation policies between Canada and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, and to identify regional and subregional cooperation proposals.

B. Expected results

Update of the study on economic and cooperation relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Preparation of terms of reference for the study	November 2012
Hiring of consultant and preparation of the study	November 2012 – January 2013
Forwarding of the document to the Member States of SELA, and dissemination through the Web portal	February 2013

Activity III.1.3. Analysis of economic relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union**A. Objectives**

To continue monitoring and analyzing the current situation and prospects of economic relations and cooperation between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, in light of the current crisis in the euro area countries and the Bi-Regional Summit of 2013.

B. Expected results

1. Preparation of an evaluation study on the Bi-Regional Summit EU-Latin America and the Caribbean, including the impact of the financial crisis in both regions.
2. Conduction of a Regional Seminar on economic relations and cooperation between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean, as a follow-up to the Bi-Regional Summit of 2013.

C. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Preparation of terms of reference for the study	February 2013
Hiring of consultant and preparation of the study	March 2013
Preparation and convening of Regional Seminar	May-June 2013
Conduction of Regional Seminar	July 2013
Forwarding the Conclusions and Recommendations stemming from the Regional Seminar and its Final Report to the Member States and relevant regional organizations	August 2013

Activity III.1.4. Analysis of the economic relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, India and South Africa**A. Objectives**

Continue analyzing and monitoring the current situation and prospects of economic relations between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, China, the Russian Federation, India and South Africa, in view of their systemic importance within the regional and global economy.

B. Expected results

1. China: a) Update of the study on relations of Latin America and the Caribbean with the People's Republic of China, drafted in 2012, and b) convening a regional meeting to

discuss the relations of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean with China (with regional organizations and CELAC).

2. Russian Federation: a) Monitoring Report on the relations of Latin America and the Caribbean with the Russian Federation, within the context of Eurasian integration, while identifying new realities and trends, b)-SELA-ILA Seminar (Latin American Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Russia) to identify possible areas of cooperation and financial mechanisms;

3. India: a) Conduct a study on the economic relations between Latin America and the Caribbean with India and its potentials, and b) Convene a regional meeting to discuss the relations of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean with India (with regional organizations and CELAC).

4. South Africa: conduct a study that addresses the main elements of the economic relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and South Africa, as well as the possibilities for improving them.

C. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Preparation of terms of reference for the studies to be drafted by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA	November 2012
Hiring of consultants and preparation of studies	January 2013
Preparation and convening of China/India Regional Meeting with Latin America and the Caribbean	February 2013
Conduction of the Regional Meeting	April 2013
Forwarding the Conclusions and Recommendations stemming from the Regional Seminar and its Final Report to the Member States and relevant regional organizations	May 2013

Activity III.1.5. New forms of economic and cooperation relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and other emerging countries and regions

A. Objectives

Explore through studies the economic and cooperation relations between Latin America and the Caribbean with emerging countries and regions.

B. Expected results

1. Preparation of study on economic relations and cooperation between Latin America and the Caribbean and the countries of the Pacific Rim.

2. Update of study on the economic and cooperation relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa.

3. Conduction of a Regional Seminar on the relation between Latin America and the Caribbean and the countries of the Pacific Rim.

C. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Preparation of terms of reference for the study	December 2012
Hiring of consultant and preparation of the study	January 2013
Forward the analytical document to the Member States of SELA and disseminate it through the Web Portal	April 2013
Conduction of the Regional Seminar	June 2013

Activity III.1.6. Strengthening relations with United Nations agencies**A. Objectives**

Strengthen synergies between the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System and the United Nations system as regards issues related to the Work Programme. In 2013, the Permanent Secretariat has planned to execute an activity centred on the issue of trade in services at the regional level with the support of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Such activity focuses on the preparation and holding of the first regional event on the services sector, and would have the following objectives:

1. Review the various integration processes, at the subregional and sectoral levels, concerning the integration of the services sector, in order to consider ways to incorporate this sector within the creation of the Latin American and Caribbean productive and commercial integration process of CELAC.
2. Promote the design of a long-term work agenda, under a regional view, based on the progress achieved and ongoing activities.
3. Seek a symmetrical and harmonious development of the services sector among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.
4. Promote the strengthening of productive, commercial and investments integration, in order to overcome development, trade and investment asymmetries and foster productivity in the region.

B. Expected results

Preparation of studies on the services sector in Latin America and the Caribbean. as well as a regional meeting with trade and planning authorities.

C. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Preparation of terms of reference for the study on services	January 2013
Hiring of consultants and preparation of the studies	February 2013
Preparation and convening of Regional Meeting	May 2013
Conduction of the Regional Meeting	June 2013
Forwarding the Conclusions and Recommendations stemming from the Regional Meeting and its Final Report	July 2013

PROJECT III.2. Follow-up, evaluation and preparation of proposals on the central elements of the international economic agenda

Activity III.2.1. Analysis and monitoring of the international economic agenda and its impact on Latin America and the Caribbean

A. Objectives

Keep tracking of the main issues and trends of the international economic agenda and its impact on the region.

B. Expected results

1. Quarterly publication of the Bulletin "Strategic Outlook".
2. Follow-up report on initiatives and proposals by Latin America and the Caribbean at the G-20.
3. Analysis of the effects of the international economic situation on the migration of human resources from Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Design of the thematic structure of the four issues of the bulletin "Strategic Outlook"	January 2013
Submittal of the quarterly issues of the bulletin "Strategic Outlook"	March, June, September and December 2013
Preparation of the terms of reference for the follow-up reports on the proposals of Latin America and the Caribbean at the G-20	November 2012
Forwarding of the follow-up reports on the proposals of Latin America and the Caribbean at the G-20.	December 2012 – July 2013
Preparation of the terms of reference of the study to be conducted by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA	January 2013
Hiring of consultant and preparation of the study	February 2013
Forwarding analytical document to the Member States of and dissemination of it through the Web Portal	April 2013

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