

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) is pleased to present you the seventh issues of the ACP MEAs 3 monthly Digest published on the first Monday of every month. As an informative publication, the Digest provides a collection of key information from various sources, including from programme partners on issues related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), environmental governance, ocean governance, sustainable development, and South-South Cooperation relevant for the implementation of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme.

The key highlights of this month's issue include the role of data partnership in achieving SDGs, draft post-2020 global biodiversity framework, release of ACP MEAs 3 policy brief on "Building Back Better", the state of world mangroves, social media and trade in endangered species, policy options to eliminate marine plastic litter, the need for joint action for chemicals and waste management, and upcoming ACP MEAs 3 programme events.

If your organization/department wishes to showcase any of your activities and/or share key information, please send a summary text by the 20th of the month to Mr. Ladu Lemi, communications focal point for the programme at ladu.lemi@un.org

Happy reading!

ACP MEAs Team



Sustainable Development Highlights

Delivering the European Green Deal: Improving the well-being and health of citizens and future generations



The European Green Deal is an action plan consisting of several policy initiatives for a transformational change that to boosts the efficient use of resources. As a just and inclusive initiative that leaves nobody behind, the deal has the potential to play a key role not only in the post COVID-19 recovery but also in addressing long-term threats posed by the Triple Planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. The deal aims to achieve three main goals across eight policy areas including biodiversity, sustainable agriculture and food systems, climate action, and the elimination of pollution among others. [Read more](#)

Advancing inclusive SDG data partnerships for Inclusivity



The Sustainable Development Agenda is for is one of the highly ambitious global effort aimed to leave no one behind while dealing with the most pressing challenges of our planet. Despite all the efforts, we are still lagging behind in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To reach these universal goals, however, the agenda requires an overall transformation in the way we do things, accelerate our actions, and establishing collaboration and synergies across all sectors of the society including measuring and monitoring progress.

A report released in July, titled Lessons learned report: Advancing Inclusive SDG Data Partnerships, highlighted the importance of having inclusive data ecosystems at national level, and advancing data partnership for SDGs. Having such data could help in filling information gaps and build a data-oriented monitoring and reporting culture among countries. [Read more](#)

Contributing to #Building Back Better-ACP MEAs 3 Policy Brief



The devastation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has threatened the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable sections of the society by increasing poverty, eroding long-term economic growth aspirations, and exacerbating social inequalities. For the economic recovery from the crisis to be durable and resilient, the design of national and global policies needs to “build back better” in such a way that reduces the likelihood of future shocks. As a contribution to the policy dimension of “build back better”, the ACP MEAs 3 programme has developed a policy brief, which provides entry points for exploring options for providing inputs to African, Caribbean, and the Pacific countries that are embarking on designing recovery plans. [Read more](#)

Cost-benefit Analysis of Nature-based Solutions in the Latin America and the Caribbean



With the growing disruption of local economies, ecosystems, and biodiversity in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) posed by the changing climatic conditions, effective implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) is important to address the multiple interconnected challenges facing local communities while enhancing jobs and livelihoods and providing other socio-economic and ecosystem service benefits. A valuation report focusing on the LAC region has provided guidelines to support cost-benefit analysis of NbS in order to address the need of policymakers, including climate change, ecosystem and biodiversity practitioners in assessing the appropriateness of nature-based solutions in addressing the triple planetary crisis. [Read more](#)

Biodiversity Conservation Highlights

Uncovering the web of illegal wildlife traders operating on social media



With the advancement of modern technologies, the global digital access and presence has increased tremendously since the past decade. However, the internet is turning into a hub of illegal wildlife trade using the social media platform as a marketplace where criminals find it easy to connect with buyers and market their goods. An investigation carried out by law enforcement agencies in India found 19 YouTube channels with 50 videos about pangolin scales and live pangolin and several phone numbers from different countries. Another study found that a third of the existing social media pages selling illegal wildlife products were using Facebook yet convincing the social media giants to help in the coordination of investigation or disrupt the illegal marketplace has been difficult to achieve globally. [Read more](#)

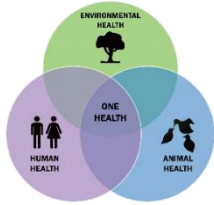
Investors response to draft biodiversity targets ahead of COP15



Among the 21 targets outlined in the first draft of the biodiversity framework released recently by the working group of the Convention on Biological Diversity, are those for financial institutions and companies that require businesses to disclose their dependencies and impacts on biodiversity as well as aligning financial flows with biodiversity values. Investors and financial institutions like banks have praised the new draft Global Biodiversity Framework and call for an explicit mentioning of the institutions in the text of the document to emphasize

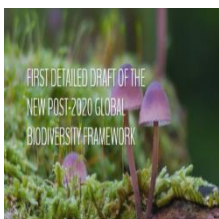
the importance of the financial institutions in reducing their impacts and dependencies on biodiversity and ecosystem services. [Read more](#)

Pandemics and Biodiversity Loss: COVID-19 outbreak underlines the need to focus on environmental health



Human health is intimately linked to the state of the environment. The outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) on “The Future We Want” noted that health is a prerequisite for, an outcome of, and an indicator of all the three dimensions of sustainable development, which include social, economic, and environmental. Yet over the past decades, climate change and biodiversity loss has led to a cross species transmission of a range of pathogens and increase in spread animal diseases to human. Averting future spread of zoonotic diseases and ensuring social wellbeing of communities requires enhancing environmental health through improving air quality, water, sanitation, waste management, and conserving the global biodiversity. [Learn more](#)

Draft Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework Released



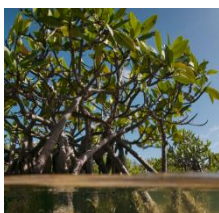
It is expected that during the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Kunming, parties will adopt a post-2020 global biodiversity framework which sets the path towards the 2050 Vision of "Living in harmony with nature". Through its decision 14/34, the parties adopted a participatory process including the establishment of an open-ended intersessional working group for the preparation of the global post-2020 global biodiversity framework. On 12 July 2021, the group released the first draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The 12 pages draft document contains 21 targets and 10 milestones in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity. [Read more](#)

For species in the red, IUCN’s new Green Status signals conservation wins



The aims of conservation include protection and restoration of natural systems and the recovery of species and their ecological functions. In the past decades, IUCN has advanced the global conservation of species by developing a Red List of species at the verge of extinction. The IUCN’s new Green Status of Species is assessment framework that introduces a new way of thinking about conservation impact by providing information about the ecological functionality of a species within its range. Using historical population levels, the framework classifies species into nine recovery categories to indicate if a species has been largely exhausted from its range or has recovered due to conservation efforts. Such information is critically important for conservation planning and measuring the impact of past conservation. [Read more](#)

Understanding the State of the World Mangroves



When we think about the UN Decades on Ecosystem Restoration and Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, mangrove are critical ecosystems, both for biodiversity and for humanity. Mangrove forests nourish biodiversity as critical habitats and nursery grounds for several coastal and marine species and support fisheries as well as providing coastal defense to local communities against extreme weather, stabilize coastlines and slow or reduce soil erosion. Despite their value, however, vast areas of mangroves have been lost. The State of the World’s Mangroves report released by the Global Mangrove Alliance, has provided the latest information on what is known about mangroves and the conservation efforts being taken to conserve these magnificent habitats. [Read more](#)

Chemicals and Wastes Highlights

The Triple COPs 2021: Basel COP15, Rotterdam COP10, and Stockholm COP10 Concluded Virtually



The global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted and shifted mega-conferences from its traditional face-to-face to online platform. This week between 26 and 30 July, the first segment of the meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions (Triple COPs) was held online under the theme, “Global Agreements for a Healthy Planet: Sound management of chemicals and waste”. The key outcomes of the meetings included resolving and reviewing issues of compliance, financial mechanisms for the implementation of related conventions and the inclusion of plastic wastes particularly to the Basel Convention. [Read more](#)

Recommendations for Post-2020 Chemicals Declaration



In July 2020, the President of the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) convened an informal drafting group to develop recommendations base on the views of the participants of the intersessional process on a possible High-level Declaration (HLD) component of a SAICM on a post 2020 chemical agreement. Through six virtual meetings held between October 2020 and June 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic, the group has issued a final report which will set the basis for the ICCM5 President’s proposal for the continued discussion of the high-level declaration during face-to-face meetings. The report identifies critical issues that requiring review, including science-policy interface, peer review, funding, and capacity building among others as well as strengthening collaboration and synergies between MEAs. [Read more](#)

Understanding Chemicals and Waste Management: ACP MEAs 3 programme trains environmental journalists in Africa



The triple planetary crisis is exacting heavy losses on communities and economies, threatening all forms of life on our planet. Hence, there is an urgent need to address the knowledge gaps that can help make sense of the environmental challenges to halt and reverse the damage done to the natural world. Media professionals and journalists are at the forefront of efforts to communicate key messages to the public. On 6 July 2021, the ACP MEAs 3 programme, in collaboration with the Africa Network of Environmental Journalists (ANEJ) organized a virtual capacity building and awareness-raising briefing session for environmental journalists in Africa on issues of environmental governance, focusing on chemicals and waste management and related MEAs (BRS) for the safe and better management of the environment and knowledge sharing. Ninety-three participants from 48 countries in Africa, including the Congolese Minister of Environment attended the session. [Read more](#)

Regulating Our Waste-Full World to Protect the most Vulnerable -Brief



Among all forms of environmental pollution, waste is the most tangible one because almost all stages of production and consumption generates waste which eventually end in the environment. Despite its general depiction, waste is not necessarily waste but some of them are someone’s fortune due to the value in its second life when recycled. However, hazardous wastes can have a detrimental impact to the environment and human health if not safely managed throughout their life cycles. In a brief published by the international institute for sustainable development (IISD), the author has outlined ways on how to regulate the world

wastes and legitimate global governance of hazardous waste to enable governments to protect the most vulnerable. [Read more.](#)

Policy Options to Eliminate Additional Marine Plastic Litter



It is now known that plastic pollution is increasingly becoming a major threat to marine species and ecosystems with an estimated 11 million tonnes of plastics being discharged annual into our oceans, causing enormous impact on human health, livelihoods, and global economies. A policy options guideline document developed by the International Resource Panel (IRP) notes that, the cost of inaction exceeds the cost of taking action to protect the environment and human health, and to ensure that we achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 12 and SDG 14, we need to change the way we use plastic. The document indicates that using new modelling systems, municipal solid plastic waste is set to double while the amount of plastic in the ocean is set to quadruple by 2040 if appropriate national policies are not in place. It proposed a set of policy options for changing the plastic economy and deliver on the Blue Ocean Vision. [Read more](#)

Chemicals, Wastes and Climate Change Joint Action Opportunities.



The impact of climate change and the sound management of chemicals and waste are closely linked key environmental challenges that affect the achievement of Sustainable development. For example, increase in temperature causes to land degradation and loss of soil fertility, which in turn leads to increased production and use of chemical pesticides in agriculture and the associated waste leading to emission of greenhouse gases. A report published by BRS and Minamata Conventions has explored the existing interlinkages between climate change and chemicals and waste and identified opportunities for addressing the two issues simultaneously. It also noted the potential of creating synergies in the development of inventory guidelines for GHGs, mercury, POPs and other pollutants to reduce GHG emissions. [Read more](#)

News from Partners and Associates

Africa lights a path for Europe to ban toxic mercury in fluorescent bulbs



In the journey towards phasing out the production and trade of mercury-containing products as required by the provision of Article 4 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, a group of African countries is taking the global lead in phasing out mercury in the most commonly used fluorescent lighting bulbs imported into the continent from developed countries. An article published by the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) notes that, due to the supply shortfalls in disposal and recycling facilities in Africa, mercury in lighting bulbs poses a major public health concerns in the continent. Hence, the European Union should buy in the African proposal and ban the production and export of all kinds of mercury in light bulbs. [Read more](#)

OACPS Member States in Eastern Africa to Benefit from new ACP-EU Culture Programme



On 28 July 2021, the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) backed the launching of a new European Union funded programme for Eastern Africa for the creative and cultural industries. The programme, known as *Ignite Culture* is a global ACP-EU Culture and Creative initiative for Central, Southern and Western Africa and well as the Caribbean and the Pacific. [Read more](#)

The Regional Marine Species Programme and Action Plan virtual meetings-Pacific



The Regional Marine Species Programme and Action Plan virtual meetings for the Pacific region commenced from 28 July to 3 August 2021. The virtual meetings aim to create awareness on the threats and conservation actions occurring to the Pacific's iconic marine species as well as to discuss the five Action Plans to protect the Threatened and Migratory species in the Pacific. For the detail outcomes of the meeting, contact Ms. Anastacia Amoastowers at anastacias@sprep.org

Leading Change in the Midst of a Pandemic-OACPS 2020 Annual Report



The year 2020 presented a new episode to the already existing challenges of climate change, wreaking havoc on the livelihoods of Small Island States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to devastate local economies. The 2020 annual report of the Organization of African, Caribbean, and the Pacific States (OACPS) notes that, addressing these global threats requires global response through multilateralism. The report highlights key achievements that despite the impact of the global pandemic, the organization was able to achieve with the support of its partners and Member States. [Read more](#)

New InforMEA Explainers



As part of a growing series exploring the interconnections between environmental issues and the international legal frameworks in place to address them, InforMEA has a series of new online products explaining the issues and delving into how InforMEA can be used to research the web of law behind them. From the role of bees and pollinators in the cycle of life, to the service peatlands play as rich ecosystems and carbon sinks, to the story of plastics from production to dissolution as microplastics in the ocean, check out InforMEA's series of videos and infographics taking a deeper look:

- How InforMEA Works: [Peatlands](https://peatlandscroll.webflow.io/) -<https://peatlandscroll.webflow.io/>
- Saving the Bees: InforMEA and Pollinator Protection- <https://bees-scroll.webflow.io/>
- Plastic - <https://plastic-scroll.webflow.io/>

Applying for funding through the Special Programme



UNEP's special programme is supporting countries on their journey towards healthier communities and ecosystems through improved chemicals and waste management. Governments of developing countries interested in submitting an application are invited to prepare their project application before the deadline on 7 August 2021. [Read more](#)

Upcoming Events Under the ACP MEAs Programme



- CBD negotiators briefing sessions in preparation for CBD OWG 3 meeting for South Asia (10th August 2021), Africa (12th August 2021), East Asia (16th August 2021), the Pacific (17-18 August 2021 and the Caribbean 19th August) (balakrishna.pisupati@un.org)
- The Caribbean Academy of Sciences (CAS) Virtual 22nd Biennial Conference and General Meeting, August 13 2021 (Contact: teshia.jnbaptiste@caricom.org)
- Joint UNEP/University of Eastern Finland Annual Course on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), August 2021 (Contact: rami.abdel-malik@un.org)
- Launch of Youth Engagement and Training Initiative (YETI) activities, 16th August 2021 (Contact: mary.kanyua@un.org)

- Launch of the “Support SAMOA Pathway” note from ACP MEAs 3 Programme – August 2021 (Contact: mary.kanyua@un.org)

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