

Dear Readers,

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) is pleased to present you the ninth issue 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:

- Digital technologies that work for the planet
- Green approaches policy note for parliamentarians
- The power of finance and technology to deliver SDGs
- Achieving ecosystem restoration targets through synergies
- Calls for a UN treaty to address plastic pollution
- Global air pollution legislations
- Launching of a new platform for knowledge exchange in the ACP region

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!



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Sustainable Development Highlights

Digital Technologies that Work for the Planet

Digital technologies can play important role in tackling many environmental crises like climate change through reducing emissions, strengthening resilience to climate related natural hazards, and improving our capacity to act if they are designed and deployed with the Sustainable Development Goals at their heart to impact positive societal development. These technologies can be a force to create greater cooperation for the use of digital public goods to advance climate, nature and pollution goals. [Read more](#)

Green Approaches to COVID-19 Recovery: Policy Note for Parliamentarians

The outbreak of the COVID-19 has showed that there is a link between habitat loss, environmental degradation and climate change on the one hand and, on the other, the emergence of novel zoonotic diseases that are transmitted between animals and humans. This link calls for a sound environmental response to the pandemic



Green approaches to COVID-19 recovery:
Policy note for parliamentarians

Background

This background paper provides a summary of the key findings of the background paper 'Green approaches to COVID-19 recovery: Policy note for parliamentarians'.

that reflect coherently all dimensions of sustainable development, including the environmental pillar. Parliamentarians are key players in the immediate and long-term recovery efforts, given their power to enact laws and oversee government policy. UNEP has released a policy note which sets out some of the key approaches that parliamentarians could consider in promoting a sustainable and green recovery that will: help build more resilient economies; contribute to meeting countries' commitments under the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda; and build momentum towards a strong post-2020 global biodiversity framework. [Read more](#)

The Power of Finance and Technology to Deliver Sustainable Development



Technologies have the potential to drive global prosperity towards the path of sustainable development for people and to improve the environmental footprint of development initiatives by increasing their environmental sustainability. Access to finance is another key component if we are to achieve the sustainable development goals. A recently published report recommends that technological knowledge needs to be exchanged to enhance the development, adaptation, diffusion, and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries as well as encouraging the enhancement of North-South, South-South, and triangular regional and international cooperation. [Read more](#)

The Governance Challenge of Sustainable Use of Natural Resources



Natural resources are central to human wellbeing and as key assets driving development and wealth. However, a report published by the Institute for International Sustainable Development (IISD) notes the distribution of natural resources use and benefits has long been shadowed with inequalities, hindering inclusive decision process making which is key for sustainable resource governance. To better balance the three dimensions of sustainable resources governance like social justice, environmental health, and economic development, the report suggests rethinking economic, social, political, and technological systems that are currently enabling damaging production practices and wasteful resource consumption including inclusive decision processes and respect the needs and ecological knowledge of women, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities. [Read more](#)

Biodiversity Conservation Highlights

Businesses strategies to champion nature-based solutions and climate adaptation



Nature-based solutions and climate adaptation are two of the key focus areas for the coming COP26. Once the negotiations are complete, the private sector is anticipated to play a key role in accelerating action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement on the ground. In a COP26 Focus Week session on Nature-Based Solutions and Climate Adaptation Inspiration, experts provided five key inspiration

tips and information businesses need to deliver climate and nature responses at the scale and pace demanded by science. [Read more](#)

Integrating Ecosystems-based Adaptation into National Adaptation Plans (NAP)

The double planetary crisis of climate change and biodiversity loss are disproportionately driving world's largest population into poverty. Ecosystem-based adaptation has been used as a natural strategy to help people to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. Despite their benefits, these approaches are not widely used due to a variety of barriers, including a lack of awareness. To help countries implement the approaches, UNEP has released guidelines for Integrating Ecosystem-based Adaptation into National Adaptation Plans to show national and local officials around the world how to integrate the approach into national plans to counter the effects of climate change. [Read more](#)



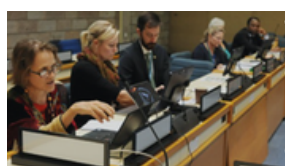
Achieving Ecosystem Restoration Targets through Synergies

With the rising climatic conditions, extinction of existing biological diversity is imminently threatening human wellbeing and health. The inherent interlinkage between climate change and biodiversity can create a catastrophic and irreversible consequences on our natural world. Nevertheless, it also offers opportunities for policy and synergies across sector. Ecosystem restoration can be such a synergistic, win-win solution that provides multiple benefits for biodiversity, combat climate change, promote adaptation and improve human health and wellbeing. Earlier this year, the United Nations launched the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration to accelerate action for the revival of ecosystems all around the world, for the benefit of people and nature. [Read more](#)



Third Meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

From 23 August to 3 September, the Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) convened the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) to advance the preparations for the development of the GBF whose adoption by the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to CBD in Kunming, China. Eight agenda items were discussed during the meeting including progress since the second meeting, the Post-2020 global biodiversity framework, digital sequence information on genetic resources among others, where Parties made statements on of the plenary sessions. [Read more](#)



Nature-based solutions for biodiversity conservation and climate action

Climate change and global lack of regulatory actions against it is one of the battles that is linked inextricably to preserving and restoring biodiversity if pursued by the global community. From 3-11 September 2021, IUCN held the World Conservation Congress to tackle the world's most pressing environmental challenges, with essential insights addressing the climate and biodiversity crises, as well as focusing on nature-based recovery. Conducted in segments including the



Indigenous Peoples' Summit, the Global Youth Summit, the CEO Summit and the Local Action Summit, the event explored several topics on nature-based recovery, contributions of Indigenous Peoples to conservation, the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF), environmental human rights among others. [Read more](#)

Tackling Biodiversity and Climate Crises Together and Their Combined Social Impacts



Human activities have caused unprecedented changes in climate and biodiversity which increasingly threaten nature, human lives, livelihoods and well-being around the world and its ecosystem goods and services to people, including nature's ability to mitigate climate change. Biodiversity loss and climate change are both driven by human economic activities and mutually reinforce each other, which suggests that biodiversity loss can only be resolved when it is tackled with climate change together. Despite this, a report by leading biodiversity and climate experts notes that previous policies have tackled biodiversity loss and climate change independently of each other, and to tackle this crisis, it is critical to address the synergies between mitigating biodiversity loss and climate change, while considering their social impacts in order to maximize benefits and meet global development goals. [Read more](#)

Chemicals and Wastes Highlights

Calls for a UN treaty to address plastic pollution



Plastic pollution is rapidly outpacing current efforts to stop it. Yet, the global cost of inaction keeps increasing year-by-year if no steps are taken towards a global solution. Addressing the plastic pollution crisis requires a concerted approach beyond the voluntary action by governments, industry, and civil society, however significant if we are to bring about the necessary changes. A new report suggests that a UN treaty on plastic pollution is crucial to the creation of a circular economy for plastic based on three principles including elimination, innovation and recycling of all forms of plastics. [Read more](#)

The Road to Minamata's Fourth Meeting of Conference of Parties-COP-4



As countries prepare for the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-4) to the Minamata Convention on mercury, the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention has launched online series of events to support government officials, and other stakeholders. Starting in July 2021 with a webinar on "Global change and biogeochemical mercury cycling", the series are arranged in three streams: implementation support and review, mercury science, and COP-4 preparations. The series were initiated as a way of strengthening networks during the COVID-19 pandemic by assisting its Parties and key constituencies to understand the Convention's provisions as well as policy and scientific aspects. [Read more](#)

Plastic waste and the Basel Convention



Plastic production has been increasing rapidly since the 1950s due to high demand for plastics, especially packaging. Plastic waste released into the environment pose a serious threat to terrestrial, marine wildlife and human health. The Basel Convention is the only legally binding global instrument which calls for minimizing the generation of waste and for its environmentally sound management in order to protect human health and the environment by controlling the transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and other wastes. The large amount of plastic waste generated and discarded into the environment suggests the need to change this growing pattern through interventions at the top of the waste hierarchy, which focuses on source reduction, reuse and recycling of materials. This makes the Basel Convention the only global instrument that is currently addresses plastic waste. [Read more](#)

An Assessment of Global Air Pollution Legislations



Air pollution is the biggest environmental risk responsible for estimated 7 million annual deaths from heart attacks, strokes, diabetes and respiratory diseases. Using the Air Quality Guidelines developed by the World Health Organization, an assessment study was undertaken in 194 countries and the European Union to examines the legal measures for determining whether air quality standards are being met and what legal standards exist for failure to meet them. A report titled “First Global Assessment of Air Pollution Legislation” presents the findings of a study and emphasizes that robust air quality governance through the development of legislation for air quality control that integrates accountability, enforceability, transparency, and public participation is critical to attaining air quality standards and public health goals. [Read more](#)

Pollution Action Note-Data you need to know



Air pollution and climate change are closely linked as all major pollutants have an impact on the climate and most share common sources with greenhouse gases. Studies have showed that nine out of ten people worldwide breath air containing high levels of pollutants that exceed WHO limits. Improving our air quality will bring health, more net development and environmental benefits, along with mitigating climate change. The UNEP Pollution Dashboard displays the global state of air pollution, major sources, the impact on human health and national efforts to tackle this critical issue. [Read more](#)

News from Partners and Associates

Supporting Caribbean Countries Deploy Modern Tools Against Illegal Trade in Endangered Species



The Caribbean region is extremely biodiverse and home to numerous species listed in the CITES Appendices. To help parties improve the implementation of the Convention, CITES has introduced electronic CITES permit for government agencies to better target their inspections and identify those actors that break the law. As part of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme in the region, CARICOM and CITES Secretariat convened a workshop to raise awareness of the potential benefits of automated permitting systems, the increased transparency and control they can bring to the supply chain and the role they can play in the development of electronic risk management systems using modern information and communication technologies to combat illegal trade.

[Read more](#)

InforMEA Re-launched Two Courses on Global Chemicals and Wastes MEAs



InforMEA has re-launched two courses on global chemicals and wastes MEAs in its new interactive and engaging format. The re-launch also brings these two courses up to date with the latest developments. The Stockholm Convention course introduces you to the history of the Stockholm Convention and how it requires its Parties to take measures to eliminate or reduce the release of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) into the environment. The Rotterdam Convention course will introduce you to the history of the Rotterdam Convention and how the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure functions. Enroll to these courses through the following links.

Stockholm: <https://elearning.informea.org/course/view.php?id=75>

Rotterdam: <https://elearning.informea.org/course/view.php?id=74>

Launching a New Platform of Exchange to Cross-fertilize Knowledge and Catalyse Innovation in the ACP Region



Knowledge creation and sharing are fundamental to making research and innovation a driver for sustainable development. The organization of African, Caribbean and the Pacific States (OACPS) Research and Innovation (R&I) Programme has launched an online InnovationXChange Platform. The InnovationXChange Platform brings together researchers, innovators, policymakers, academics, civil society and journalists, who believe that exchanging knowledge, skills, experiences and good practices on current and emerging R&I topics and challenges are key to accelerate the changes needed for a sustainable and resilient world. [Read more](#)

Launching Pacific's environmental Indicators Guidebook



An environmental indicator helps provide insight into the state of the environment or human health that are developed based on quantitative measurements of environmental condition. The environmental indicators for Pacific Countries guidebook provides a simplified procedures for the development and use of environmental indicators by summarizing 34 core indicators across six broad

themes of the region's state of the environment and conservation 2020 report to help SPREP Member States in the development of sound environmental policy and legislation as well as to implement and track environmental indicators. [Read more](#)

Upcoming Events Under the ACP MEAs Programme



- FAO 49th Session of The Committee on World Food Security – 11th- 15th October 2021 (Contact Tempelman, KimAnh at KimAnh.Tempelman@fao.org).
- Ministerial consultation/forum to increase political will for the adoption of existing legislation on biosafety and other MEAs -October 2021 (Contact Teshia Jn Baptiste at teshia.jnbaptiste@caricom.org).
- Regional Pre-COP workshop and post-COP technical support to Caribbean ACP Countries – October 2021 (Contact Teshia Jn Baptiste at teshia.jnbaptiste@caricom.org).
- Abidjan Convention Bureau Meeting – October 2021 (Contact Abdoulaye Diagana at abdoulaye.diagana@un.org).
- Abidjan Convention Focal Points meeting to take ownership of the ACP MEAs 3 program and define criteria for the selection of implementing countries- November 2021 (Contact Abdoulaye Diagana at abdoulaye.diagana@un.org).
- ACP MEAs 3, CBD Secretariat Dialogue series of Synthetic Biology - 10 November 2021; 10 December 2021 and 6 January 2021 (Contact Balakrishna Pisupati at Balakrishna.pisupati@un.org).
- Webinar on "Outcomes of ACP MEAs 3 YETI Youth Mentorship Programme in support of post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework" November 2021 (Contact Balakrishna Pisupati at Balakrishna.pisupati@un.org).

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The ACP MEAs is a joint UNEP- EU-FAO-OACPS partnership programme. It aims to build the capacity of 79 countries in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific to fulfill their obligations to multilateral environmental agreements. Phase III (ACP MEAs 3) of this programme is being implemented in Africa by the African Union Commission (AUC), Abidjan Convention and Nairobi Convention, in the Caribbean by the Secretariat of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Cartagena Convention, in the Pacific by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) is the civil society partner. This Newsletter has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views, policies or official opinion of the European Commission, UNEP or contributory organizations.