

MONTHLY INFORMATION DIGEST

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DEAR READER,

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is pleased to present you the Third Issue of the ACP MEAs 3 monthly Digest for March 2022. 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:

- State of global environmental governance 2021;
- Health in the global environmental agenda;
- State of finance for nature;
- Failure in global climate-adaptation funds;
- Protecting vital ecosystems;
- Nations agreed to end global scourge of plastic pollution;
- Mainstreaming ocean acidification into national policies;
- Plastic credits help solve the waste crisis;
- Enforcing the polluter-pays principle;
- Gender equality and sustainable green future.

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!



Sustainable Development Highlights

State of Global Environmental Governance 2021

Poverty, discrimination and the destruction of the natural environment has created enormous fragilities in our societies, making COVID-19 pandemic to thrive globally taking lives and livelihoods. A publication by IISD has explored key highlights of negotiating global agreements on climate action, biodiversity restoration and plastic pollution control and notes that in 2021 global environmental governance was framed by the prominence of voluntary pledges, which have little or no international oversight. It also notes that pledges have become a popular way to govern the environment. [Read more](#)

Pushing for Breakthroughs in Global Environmental Governance

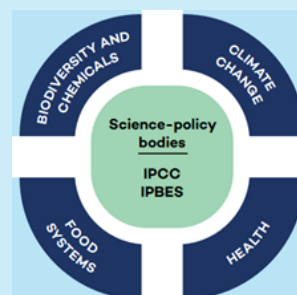
In 2021 when environmental crises reached an unprecedented prominence on the global stage, UNEP in accordance with its mission to inspire, inform and enable nations to live in harmony with nature backed the world's efforts to transform its relationship with nature and tackle the triple planetary crisis. A recent report outlines UNEP's achievements in 2021 in the areas of climate action, nature action, chemicals and waste action and the planetary action and also notes that, more actions are needed to address the triple planetary crisis as countries build back better from the devastation caused by COVID-19. [Read more](#)

Health in the Global Environmental Agenda: A policy Guide

There is now consensus that approximately 25% of global deaths are attributed to decisions that directly or indirectly affect the environment. Yet, the participation of health stakeholders in the discussions on global environmental policies for addressing the environmental determinants of health outcomes and health inequities is limited. A new policy guide has now identified meaningful information to enable health experts with technical and diverse knowledge to engage in environmental processes, focusing on intersections where policy approaches for MEAs implementation could incorporate health and well-being crucial for sustainable development. [Read more](#)

State of Finance for Nature: Tripling Investments in Nature-Based Solutions

The annual contribution of nature to global economy is undeniable. Although building conservation and nature-based solutions represent a massive opportunity to address the interlinked crises of species extinction, global warming, the growing number of extreme weather events and zoonotic diseases, obtaining finance to harness nature's benefits can be challenging. However, a report by UNEP and partners has expressed the need to invest in sustainable action that enhances the resilience of ecosystems and addresses societal challenges by outlining opportunities to increase investment in nature-based solutions. [Read more](#)



Biodiversity Conservation Highlights

Benin: Two Marine Protected Areas Created

Benin is one of the contracting parties to the Abidjan convention with a wealth of rich biodiversity. In a move to fulfilling its obligations to the convention by protecting endangered species, the national authorities have recognized two important sites as marine protected areas to conserve the mangrove and fishery resources threatened by human activities. These sites are known to inhabit marine turtles, the African manatee, the whale, the dolphin, and various species classified as “at risk”. Experts in the region applaud the decision as a move in a right direction to promote the protection of biodiversity, the development of ecotourism and sustainable fishing in region. [Read more](#)



Global Climate-Adaptation Funds Failed to Reach Most Vulnerable Nations

A study analyzing the disbursement of climate fund has shown that nearly half of the world’s most climate-vulnerable nations continue to miss the green climate fund (GCF) grants for adaptation. In Africa, many countries that are experiencing both severe climate vulnerability and armed conflict are struggling to access money set aside to prepare them for climate change. Most of these countries have been hindered by complex processes and weak institutional capacity. The study notes that, only 6% of the successful nations managed to obtain GCF funds through their national institutions, while most countries rely on international bodies to broker the process on their behalf. [Read more](#)



Bleached Coral Reefs Can Provide Nutritious Seafood

Microscopic algae and coral enjoy a symbiotic relationship that helps each other to thrive and give coral reefs their vibrant colors. However, when sea temperatures rise, corals are put under stress driving the algae away, resulting in bleached corals. Reef systems provide shelter, protection and spawning grounds for a huge number of marine species, including crabs, jellyfish and turtles. Without these vital support networks, many species will face extinction. A new study shows that fish living in bleached coral reefs can remain rich sources of micronutrients. [Read more](#)



Protecting Vital Ecosystems Through Those Living in Them

With an estimated 75% of the earth’s surface impacted by unsustainable human activities, the world is losing its biodiversity at unprecedented rate, with an estimated one million species to be extinct within the next few decades. However, we still have the opportunity to reverse the trend to save global economy and people livelihoods that depend on the health of the natural ecosystems. These actions require mobilizing every sector of the society in order to bring solutions to scale, pooling financial resources and directing funds to the right needs. In the heart of these actions, is involving indigenous and local communities that lived with the problem in the development of solutions for the future of our planet. [Read more](#)



Chemicals and Wastes Highlights

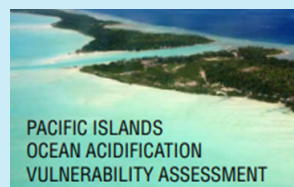
Nations Sign Up to End Global Scourge of Plastic Pollution

For the first time ever in history, global leaders at the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) threw behind the backdrop of geopolitics that has hindered some development in global environmental governance and showed multilateral cooperation. This was evident in Heads of State, environment minister and other representatives from 175 nations endorsing a historic resolution to end plastic pollution and forge an internationally binding agreement by 2024. UNEP Executive Director, Inger Andersen notes that, the resolution against plastic pollution is an insurance policy for the current and future generations, so they may live with plastic and not be doomed by it. [Read more](#)



Mainstreaming Ocean Acidification into National Policies: A Handbook

Ocean acidification (OA) is one of the threats to coral reef erosion in all marine ecosystems globally. Just like in the case of climate change, OA is a cross-cutting issue whose management requires a multi-sectoral approach. A guideline document for the Pacific Islands notes that to support and advance implementation of regional recommendations, mainstreaming OA into existing national policy frameworks is crucial. It recommends that governments should coordinate efforts across appropriate Ministries and departments in collaboration with local institutions, experts and traditional knowledge holders. [Read more](#)



Plastic Credits Could Help Solve the Waste Crisis

With the growing rate of plastic production and pollution, adopting the concept of circularity is critical to promote sustainable conception and production pattern in the plastic value chain. One of the approaches to circularity is plastic credit, which is a transferable unit that represents a specific quantity of plastic waste. Plastic credits can help address industry's environmental footprint by removing pollution from the environment and gives companies a way to account and take responsibility for the share of plastic they generate. [Read more](#)



Enforcing the Polluter-Pays Principle

The polluter-pays principle (PPP) is an environmental policy instrument that is used for allocating costs of pollution prevention and control measures to encourage rational use of scarce resources and to avoid distortions in international trade and investment. As a principle of international environmental law, PPP can contribute to environmental protection as well as sustainable development if effectively enforced and implemented in conjunction with other principles. Hence, national authorities should promote the internalization of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments, taking into account the approach that the polluter should bears the cost of pollution. [Read more](#)



News from Partners and Associates

Gender Equality Today for A Sustainable Green Future

Considered in many traditions as the custodians of environment and natural resources, women play a critical role in environmental management. In this issue, we feature the work of a Samoan mother and a businesswoman, Ms. Nua Va'ai, who stands out as an example of women leaders in promoting sustainability, creating green jobs through waste management to build a clean and safe environment for our future generations. Using a business model for waste management, Va'ai leads a bottled water company and waste recycling efforts in Samoa and excels in this complex sector characterized with plastic wastes that most bottled water companies have failed to prevent their plastic bottles from polluting the environment. [Read more](#)



Database for Marine Protected Area Network In The Wider Caribbean

The Caribbean ecosystem is one of the spectacular global biodiversity ecosystems that has evolved over millions of years of geological and biological processes and created diverse and complex habitats. To sustain this biodiversity and the vibrant economies it supports for the region and for the societies that depend on it, the Cartagena Convention has created a Marine Protected Area Network in the Wider Caribbean to strengthen connections and collaboration to conserve the Caribbean ecosystem. The Convention has recently updated and redesigned the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) database. [Read more](#)



CARICOM Gender Ministers Meet Ahead of Global Women's Conclave

From 14-25 March 2022, the commission on the status of women (CSW), a body dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women will convene its 66th assembly under the priority theme: 'achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes'. In preparation, CARICOM gender ministers held a meeting to identify regional needs and priorities that will be incorporated into the CSW 66 Agreed Conclusions for the empowerment of women and girls in the region. [Read more](#)



Upcoming Relevant Events to ACP MEAs Programme

- Webinar Series on Science and Policy Issues related to Synthetic Biology-8 March 2022 ([Register here](#)).
- Seventy-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee-7-11 March 2022 (Contact: Rami at rami.abdel-malik@un.org).
- Twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (Resumed)- 13-29 March 2022 (Contact: Diane Klaimi at _diane.klaimi@un.org).
- Third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (Resumed)-13-29 March 2022 (Contact: Diane Klaimi at diane.klaimi@un.org).
- Third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (Resumed)-13-29 March 2022 (Contact: Diane Klaimi at diane.klaimi@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.