

Dear Reader,

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is pleased to present you the ACP MEAs 3 Digest that provides a collation of key information on issues related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), environmental governance, sustainable development and South-South Cooperation to effectively reach out to our partners and stakeholders who are intimately working with us to implement the European Union funded project “Enforcing environmental treaties’ implementation in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries- ACP-MEAs III”.

The project, being implemented in the Africa, Pacific and Caribbean regions through African Union Commission (AUC), the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and regional seas conventions such as the Cartagena Convention, the Nairobi Convention, the Abidjan Convention and the Noumea Convention focuses on enhancing compliance and enforcement to MEAs, strengthening ocean governance through a number of activities related to building capacities and raising awareness. Working in close collaboration with number of MEAs belonging to the biodiversity and chemicals cluster, the project aims to promote multilateral approaches to dealing with current and emerging environmental challenges.

The Digest will be launched on the first Monday of every month with information collected from various sources, including from project partners. If you wish to showcase any of your activities and/or share key information, please share the same by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month with Mr. Ladu Lemi, communications focal point for the project at [ladu.lemi@un.org](mailto:ladu.lemi@un.org)

Your feed-back to improve the Digest is welcome.

Happy reading!

## Sustainable Development Highlights

### New Developments in Sustainable Development Research



Following the approval of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the UN General Assembly in 2015, research and activities related to sustainable development have increased. Some key institutions such as the European School of Sustainability Science and Research (ESSSR) and the International Sustainable Development Research Programme (IUSDRP) have spearheaded research and published their articles for policy makers and other practitioners on issues of sustainable development including:

- COVID-19: the impact of a global crisis on sustainable development research. [Here](#)
- Heading towards an unsustainable world: some of the implications of not achieving the SDGs. [Here](#)

### UN High-Level Political Forum 2021



The high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) is the core United Nations platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The 2021 HLPF meeting will be held from 6 July, to 15 July including the three-day ministerial meeting of the forum from 13 July, to 15 July 2021 under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), where the participants will explore

various aspects of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the various measures and types of international cooperation that can control the pandemic and its impacts on the achievements of the SDGs by 2030. [Read more](#)



### **Stakeholder engagement and awareness raising as tools for achieving the 2030 agenda.**

The engagement of stakeholders and raising their awareness on the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs targets is critical for the implementation, monitoring and reporting mechanisms. This can be approached through institutionalizing relevant mechanisms for stakeholder participation, involving and consulting with stakeholders during decision-making processes, and providing an enabling environment for stakeholders to contribute to SDG implementation, and engaging stakeholders in monitoring and reporting activities. This has been echoed in the fifth Synthesis Report of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) conducted at the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) in 2020, where countries underscored the significance of stakeholder participation in monitoring and reporting, including VNRs preparation towards achieving the SDGs. [Read more.](#)

## **Biodiversity Highlights**

### **High-Ambition Coalition, Financing Biodiversity**



Biodiversity loss is a major environmental challenge that limits human access to a range of invaluable ecosystem services that underpin human health, well-being and economic growth. Given that the costs of inaction to conserve biodiversity are considerable, the need for a more ambitious application of policies and financial incentive mechanisms to address biodiversity and ecosystem service conservation and sustainable use is critical. On 11 January 2021, the Government of France in partnership with the UN and the World Bank organized the One Planet Summit where leaders discussed issues of biodiversity conservation as well as climate change and COVID-19 crisis. Moving forward, a list of “action commitments for biodiversity,” were made by governments from more than 50 countries who pledged to protect at least 30% of terrestrial and marine ecosystems by 2030, including financial commitments for nature conservation. [Read more](#)

### **7 policy recommendations harness the power of landscapes to defend biodiversity.**



As the world wakes up to the strong links between biodiversity loss, global pandemics such as COVID-19, and climate change, the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) and Youth in Landscapes Initiative (YIL) have issued a powerful prescription for these crises, with seven recommendations to harness the power of landscapes to safeguard biodiversity in a report on the One World, One Health. [Read more](#)

### **Prioritizing Nature-based Solutions: the focus for UNEP’s Adaptation Gap Report**



The Paris Agreement and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development both provide a universal policy visions for a country-driven implementation process in which countries are mandated to institutionalized both policy instruments into their national planning process. However, the newly released fifth Adaptation Gap Report by UNEP found that despite having adopted these instruments and advanced in national adaptation planning, huge gap still exist in financing mechanisms which undermines developing

countries' efforts to implement their adaptation strategies to bring real protection against the impacts of climate change at national level. The report recommends the prioritization of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for the protection, sustainable management, and restoration of modified ecosystems to enhance biodiversity benefits for human well-being and climate risk mitigation. [Read more](#)

## Oceans and Seas Highlights



### Protecting the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities

It is estimated that eighty per cent of marine pollution comes from manageable land-based sources that promote the degradation of coastal areas and the associated ecosystems that support food production and livelihoods. As the mandated global body, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1974 launched a Regional Seas Programme to support cooperation for clean and healthy seas, followed by several other initiatives including Agenda 21 of the Rio de Janeiro's Earth Summit which established the basis for the Global Programme of Action (GPA) for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities. Despite these efforts, marine and coastal pollution from land-based sources continue to increase. The experience of GPA, however, has shown the significance of multi-stakeholder partnerships in increasing the effectiveness of action, although diversion in interests among partners is found to inhibit action. [Read more](#).



### Tools Improve Data Availability in Pacific for Decision Making and Environmental Reporting

Effective environmental reporting is a major challenge in the Pacific island countries due to the lack of historical and current environmental data, and inadequate information management and access for decision making. The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), has executed a National and Regional Capacity Building Project (*The Inform Project*) to Implement MEAs by Strengthening Planning and the State of Environmental Assessment and Reporting in the Pacific, which played a key role in promoting environmental data availability, management, and access in the region by supporting the development of the Pacific Environment Portal, 14 national environment data portals, and the Indicator Reporting Tool. [Read more](#)

## Chemicals Highlights



### 16th Meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee to the Stockholm Convention (POPRC-16)

Since 2005, the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Review Committee to the Stockholm Convention has conducted on a yearly basis a review of all substantive issues submitted to the convention for consideration. From 11-16<sup>th</sup> January 2021, the Review Committee held its 16<sup>th</sup> meeting online to draft risk profiles on Dieldrin and its syn-isomer and anti-isomer, and on methoxychlor, including examining a proposal to the Convention by the Government of Switzerland for the inclusion of UV-328 in Annexes A, B and or C. [Read more](#).

## Disproportionate Impacts of Chemicals on Women



Chemicals and wastes have become a gender issue due to the positioning of men and women on account of their exposure and the differing levels of health reactions they experience when exposed to toxic chemicals. In a report published by the International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN) and the Strategic Alliance for International Chemicals Management (SAICM), women are found to have been impacted disproportionately yet gender inequalities re-lated to decision-making around chemicals and waste management continues to grow unabated in many economies. The report, however, suggests concrete steps to protect women's health and their decision-making role at all levels. [Read more](#)

## Partnership for the Removable of chemical and waste pollution in the Food chain



The global increase in human population, economic growth, and urbanization comes with associated increase in human needs and demands that shape the production and consumption of agricultural products. Yet the impact of climate change on food production has resulted into excessive use of pesticides and fertilizers. While the use of pesticides and fertilizers in the past decades has led to several benefits, this comes with adverse impacts on the environment and human health. In close consultation with Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), and a wide range of experts and stakeholders, UNPE has released a report on the environmental and health impacts of pesticides and fertilizers and priority actions to minimize those impacts ahead of the 5<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Environment Assessment (UNEA-5), scheduled for 22-23 February 2021. [Read more](#)

## Partners and Associates News



### Policy Support Facility launched by OACPS Research and Innovation Programme

The Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) Secretariat is glad has launched a Policy Support Facility (PSF), an innovative mechanism to boost research and innovation (R&I) in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. It has further opened call for Expression of Interests for ACP countries to request a policy service. [Read more](#)

## Upcoming Events Under the ACP MEAs Project



XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean. Bridgetown, Barbados – 1-2 February 2021. (Contact: [Andrea.brusco@un.org](mailto:Andrea.brusco@un.org))

MEAs negotiations training – 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021, organized by Secretariat to Cartagena Convention (Contact: [ileana.lopez@un.org](mailto:ileana.lopez@un.org))

Discussion meeting on gender approaches in operationalizing the ACP MEAs 3 project – 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (Contact: [ladu.lemi@un.org](mailto:ladu.lemi@un.org))

ACP MEAs 3 project led regional preparatory events in support of participation during the Informal Session in Preparation for SBSTTA 24 – 11 - 12 February 2021 (Contact: [balakrishna.pisupati@un.org](mailto:balakrishna.pisupati@un.org))

Informal Session in preparation for SBSTTA 24 – 17-19 February and 24-26 February 2021 (More information: <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/>)

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