

MONTHLY INFORMATION DIGEST

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DEAR READER,

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is pleased to present you the Second Issue of the ACP MEAs 3 monthly Digest for February 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:

- Science-policy interfaces;
- The relevance of international partnerships in SDGs implementation;
- Importance of marine protected areas;
- Mangrove forest restoration;
- Using citizen science to track illegal wildlife trade;
- Conservation significance of coral reef connectivity;
- Policy tools for plastic pollution;
- Global plastics trading exchange;
- Plastic pollution and the planetary emergency;
- Plastic waste and circular economy; and
- List of key upcoming 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!



Sustainable Development Highlights

Science-Policy Interfaces: From Warnings to Solutions

Environmental problems such as climate change, loss of biodiversity and unsustainable use of ecosystem services, require urgent policy measures for the mitigation of negative impacts and adaptation to change. Science-policy interface is a key component of environmental governance designed to make links between science and society that can help address pressing environmental issues by increasing understanding of the problems, support policy, promote learning, and consider new action to develop socially acceptable and environmentally friendly solutions. [Read more](#)



Strengthening cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean

During the 40th anniversary of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean held on 27-28 January 2022, authorities discussed mechanisms for an integrated action in the implementation of MEAs in the face of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and waste crisis. Engaging in dialogue with the executive secretaries of the UN conventions that regulate actions on climate change, biological diversity, desertification and pollution, the authorities aim to achieve cooperation in addressing pressing regional challenges. [Read more](#)



The Relevance of International Partnerships in the Implementation and Achievement of SDGs

According to the sustainable development goal (SDG) 17, international cooperation and partnerships are vital for the achievement of the 2030 agenda. SDG 17 advocates for greater cooperation between public, private and other organizations to implement sustainable development. Yet, with the complexity of the pandemic and the triple crisis, the implementation of SDG 17 has become more important than ever before. A new article on SDGs notes that, when combined with good governance, partnerships among international organizations, local and regional associations have the capacity to help to address these emerging crises. The article also outlines the challenges in the successful implementation of SDG 17. [Read more](#)



Nature at the Heart of Sustainable Development

In the run up for the resumption of the Fifth Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) on 28 February-2 March 2022, UNEP has designed a guiding document to help member States and other representatives prepare for UNEA-5. This high-level event will provide the opportunity to bridge, build on and catalyze impact in relation to multilateral environmental efforts including on biodiversity, climate, food systems, and pollution under the theme Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. [Read more](#)



Biodiversity Conservation Highlights

Protected Marine Areas Serve Nature and People

Marine protected areas (MPAs) are widely considered to be one of the most effective tools to conserve biodiversity and address the challenges of habitat destruction and unsustainable resource extraction to provide resilience against climate change in marine and coastal environments in line with SDG 14. While the ecological benefits of MPAs is undeniable, a new report shows the need for conservationists and managers to understand the complex interactions between people and protected areas from the social, ecological and governance dimension to enhance benefits to both people and the environment. [Read more](#)



Mangrove Forest Restoration Addresses Climate Goal

For several decades, the southeastern coast of Kenya is known for its mangrove forest that offers multiple benefits related to climate change. However, overharvesting of the mangrove trees destroyed about 18 of the existing 451 hectares over the last 25 years, which reduced the forest's capacity to act as the first line of defense against ocean-related catastrophes. In line with the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, three communities are restoring 460 hectares of the mangrove forest to meet the country's emission reduction targets, provide a buffer against natural disasters, and support fishing livelihoods. [Read more](#)



Using citizen science to track illegal wildlife trade

The world ecological hotspots are susceptible to biodiversity loss because of their vulnerability to climate change and natural hazards and a fragmented system of governance across multiple boundaries. Using the biodiversity-rich Himalayas as case study, notes that integrating conservation efforts with citizen science such as citizen reporting tools installed in smartphones could provide crucial data on the status of species and improve management of wildlife by tracking illegal wildlife trade in the biodiversity-rich areas. [Read more](#)



Coral reef connectivity is crucial for conservation

Oceanic ecosystems such as coral reefs are connected to each other to a greater extent than their terrestrial counterparts although not all marine ecosystems are equally connected. Yet, despite their potential to support biodiversity persistence and sustainable fisheries, up to 70% of important dispersal corridors, sinks and sources reefs remain unprotected which indicate the need for increased protection of networks of well-connected reefs. However, a team of researchers showed that to better understand the importance of connectivity and how to build it into conservation requires a deeper understanding of the interactions between human activities and the local environment in order to tailor management. [Read more](#)



Chemicals and Wastes Highlights

Policy Tools Could Help Governments Cut Plastic Pollution by 85 Percent

Marine plastic pollution is set to quadruple if governments fail to take decisive action to curb the problem. According to a new research, policy tools have the potential to help governments cut plastic waste. The study shows that a tool known as Plastic Drawdown if adopted by countries can help governments reduce plastic waste by 85 percent by 2030. Plastic Drawdown is a rapid assessment tool designed to help countries with limited data explore solutions to minimise plastic pollution and develop strategies with key stakeholders for effective action. [Read more](#)



A Global Plastics Trading Exchange to be Launch

Plastic pollution is one of the biggest and complicated challenges of our time more than the climate change crisis. This complexity requires a multilevel and multi-actor approach across the plastics value chain. Policies for a global circular economy for plastics would keep plastics in the economy and out of the environment. In the lead towards a circular economy, Abu Dhabi-based start-up company is taking plastics trading exchange to the international markets to give companies access to recycle plastics while tackling environmental issues, and bringing positive social and economic impacts. [Read more](#)



Connecting the dots: plastic pollution and the planetary emergency

With the growing plastic production, emissions into the oceans is due to triple by 2040, hitting a global record of 700 million tonnes and by mid-century, marine plastic pollution will exceed the weight of all fish in every ocean which threatens human health and the environment. According to a report by the Environmental Investigation Agency, global leading companies have joined the calls for a comprehensive, legally binding treaty on the management of plastic that could help to cut the hundreds of contradictory policies, inconsistencies, and opacity that are embedded in the global plastics trade that make it hard to stem the growing accumulation of plastic waste. [Read more](#)



Plastic Waste and Circular Economy

Urbanization, global population and economy growth have resulted into a large amount of waste being generated; and much focus has been placed on finding solutions for improving waste management. An article published by the New Nation notes that to holistically address the issue of wastes, governments should explore ways of transitioning to a circular economy to address the issue of waste management and facilitate sustainable growth. It further notes that shifting to a circular economy could help in achieving more SDGs by promoting investments in innovative technologies and infrastructures, reduce the inequalities in the informal sector and support economic development. [Read more](#)



News from Partners and Associates

Decisions and Resolution of the 113th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers

The 113th Session of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (OACPS) was held on 30 November to 2 December 2021. During the meeting, Ministers and their representatives from the 79 Member States of the OACPS, discussed pressing topics for the organization and their constituents. The discussions culminated to the approval of 12 decisions and two resolutions on topics ranging from partnership agreements, creation of an OACPS Cultural Foundation to the new ACP Endowment and Trust Fund among others. [Read more](#)



Wetlands Action for People and Nation in the Pacific

Wetlands are regarded as kidneys of our planet due to their important functions ranging from hosting massive biodiversity to fighting climate change. While commemorating the World Wetlands Day, SPREP linked the highlights of the theme on the importance of actions to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands for human and planetary health with the State of Environment and Conservation in the Pacific Islands 2020 report, which called for halting the decline of coastal habitats in the region. Wetlands provide Pacific islands region with valuable ecosystem services boosting economic and conservation efforts while reducing the impact of climate change on coastal communities. The adoption of the Pacific Coral Action Plan 2021-2030 will play a crucial role in the region. [Read more](#)



Call for Applications for Special Accreditation to the United Nations Ocean Conference.

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Upcoming Relevant Events to ACP MEAs Programme

- Webinar Series on Science and Policy Issues related to Synthetic Biology-8 February 2022 (Contact: balakrishna.pisupati@un.org)
- Youth Environment Assembly-18-20 February 2022 ([Register](#))
- Fifth Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action (GPA)- 15 February 2022 ([Register](#))
- Circularity and due diligence: exploring the environmental, social, and commercial potential of circular business models- 22 February ([Register](#))
- Global seminar on strengthening regulations to protect pollinators from pesticides-23-24 February 2022 (Contact: acp-meas@fao.org).
- Continued 5th session of the UN Environmental Assembly (UNEA 5.2)-28 February-2 March 2022



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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.