

Dear Reader,

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is pleased to present you the third issue of the ACP MEAs 3 Digest that provides a collation of key information through this Digest 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 3”.

The ACP MEAs 3 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), the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) 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 of MEAs and 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 send the same by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month to Mr. Ladu Lemi, communications focal point for the project at [ladu.lemi@un.org](mailto:ladu.lemi@un.org)

Happy reading!

### Sustainable Development Highlights

#### A landmark framework to integrate natural capital in economic reporting

Since the end of the World War II, gross domestic product (GDP) statistics have dominated economic reporting as a measure of economic prosperity and human well-being. However, experts have realized that despite the significance of GDP in showing the value of goods and services exchanged in markets, it does not show the dependency nor the impact of the economy on nature. In a move to reshape decision and policymaking towards sustainable development, the United Nations has adopted a new framework “the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting-Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA)” to ensure that natural capital such as forests, wetlands and other ecosystems that generate benefits for people are recognized in economic reporting. The framework is built on five core accounts including ecosystem extent, ecosystem condition, ecosystem services and monetary ecosystem asset. [Read more.](#)



#### Trade and Environmental Sustainability are key agenda topics for WTO

The global economic growth resulting from trade expansion through globalization can directly impacts on the environment by increasing pollution or degrading the natural environment and its resources if trade and environmental sustainability policies are not designed in such a way that they can harness the benefits of trade while minimizing environmental costs. As a continuation of its 2020 Trade and Environment Week initiative, delegates from the World Trade Organization (WTO) on March 2021 held a meeting exploring key issues to be covered in the Trade and Environmental Sustainability discussions. This initiative is expected to create unique positive synergies opportunities between the trade and environment agendas at the international level through WTO-MEA relationship. [Read more.](#)



## Using the Joint Crediting Mechanism to achieve the SDGs and accelerating Climate Action



The adoption of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals was a landmark breakthrough in international diplomacy that depicts a universal blueprint for sustainable society. The release of the report, “Maximizing Co-benefits by Linking Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Action” by UNFCCC established collaborative approaches that maximize synergies and minimize trade-offs for achieving the objective of the PA and SDGs such as the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM). Since its adoption, JCM has resulted in a number of best practices in regard to SDG achievement through the diffusion of low-carbon and zero emission technologies, products, systems, services and infrastructure. [Read more.](#)

## Oceans and Seas Highlights

### Tackling Plastic Pollution - how InforMEA works



As a global issue requiring a global response, the legal and policy framework provided by Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), international goals and policies, and national legislation is essential to meet the challenges posed by plastic. InforMEA acts as a bridge that helps visitors to search and retrieve all this diverse and scattered information in order to understand how the international community is seeking to tackle this cross-cutting and highly relevant issue. [Learn more.](#)

### Sustainable Ocean Economy Classification



The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 recognize the importance of oceans for human life and the development of livelihoods and requires countries to conserve and sustainably use marine resources for sustainable development. To achieve this, however, policy coherence at the sectoral, national and international levels are essential for the development of ocean economy with regard to production, trade and the environment which goes beyond the current focus on ocean ecosystems and ocean management. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in a new publication has proposed for countries a sustainable ocean economy classification for tradable goods and services. The publication takes into account national ocean economy classifications, the structure of existing international classifications of goods and services, lessons learned from the implementation of ocean economy trade strategies essential for the assessment of the pillars of sustainable ocean development and the comprehensive analysis of the value chains as part of the ocean-based sectors. [Read more.](#)

### Small Islands, Large Oceans: Voices on the Frontlines of Climate Change



Vulnerability to the impact of climate change, natural disasters and economic shock is one of the major challenges facing the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The Covid-19 pandemic has added yet another burden by halting their tourism dependent economies. An article published by International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) indicated that, adopting an integrated approach that promotes economic diversification, innovative financing instruments, and scaling up of the blue economy could save the SIDS from the dual impact of climate change and Covid-19 pandemic. [Read more.](#)

### Blue food for thought: Ideas for protecting oceans



The year 2020 was regarded as a super year for the ocean where bold international decisions to reverse the trend of marine biodiversity loss would be taken. Before those decisions could be taken, however, the world witnessed a drastic shift in attention towards Covid-19 response at unprecedented scale compared to the global efforts to stop the degradation of ocean ecosystems. A paper published by the Varda Group entitled “Blue Food for Thought”, identifies four major ideas for protecting the ocean including marine Exploitable Areas, numerical management of large fish populations, subsidies elimination agreement and fleet

disarmament agreements, and the isolate plastic litter from the biosphere which are among what the ocean community is striving to achieve. [Read more.](#)

## Chemicals and Wastes Highlights

### National Legislation on Labelling Refrigerant Cylinders



The implementation of the Montreal Protocol on Substance that Deplete the Ozone Layer has contributed significantly in the phasing out ozone-depleting hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) used as refrigerants. As industries involved in the refrigerants trade chain adopt more ozone- and climate-friendly refrigerants, these substances are flammable and toxic posing high risks during their handling, transportation and storage. In a technical brief document on refrigerant cylinder labelling, UNEP Ozone Action has called for the formulation of national legislations for the implementation of mandatory labelling of refrigerant cylinders at the point of production to promote safety throughout the life cycle, law enforcement and reporting as enshrined in Article 7 of the Montreal Protocol. [Read more.](#)

### Children at Risk of Harmful Chemicals in their Toys



The health risk of exposure to chemicals of concern contain in plastic products can be exceptionally high in young children because of they are sensitive to toxic chemicals in comparison to adult due to their physiological characteristics such as drinking more water, high consumption rate, breathing in a greater amount of air per kg, and high surface area to body weight ration. The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has published a report which indicates that 25% of children's plastic toys contain harmful chemicals which included 126 chemicals of concern. [Read more.](#)

## News from Partners and Associates

### InforMEA – Diploma in International Legal Framework on Biological Diversity



The InforMEA Diploma will help you to gain a broader perspective and knowledge of the six thematic areas of InforMEA. You can follow the dedicated Learning Path for Biological Diversity at your own pace to obtain the InforMEA Diploma.

- See the link to Diploma [here](#).
- See instruction on taking the Diploma course [here](#).
- Register for an InforMEA account [here](#).

### Call for Experts in research and innovation (R&I) in ACP countries



As part of its new 'Policy Support Facility' (PSF), aimed at boosting research and innovation (R&I) in ACP countries, the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) Secretariat has launched a Call for Declarations of Interest, to establish a roster of experts for short-term assignments in R&I policy domains across the ACP region. Application details can be found [here](#).

## Upcoming Events Under the ACP MEAs Project



Call for Proposals- the Abidjan Convention, 15 April 2021 (Contact: [abdoulaye.diagana@un.org](mailto:abdoulaye.diagana@un.org))

Third Clean Pacific Roundtable, April 2021 (Contact: [joped@sprep.org](mailto:joped@sprep.org) and [anastacias@sprep.org](mailto:anastacias@sprep.org))

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