

Enforcing Environmental Treaties in Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific- ACP MEAs 3

Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting

7-8 December 2021 Report

Introduction

The Capacity Building related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific Countries (ACP MEAs) Programme is an initiative of the Organization of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (OACPS) and is funded by the European Union, under the Intra-ACP envelope of the 11th European Development Fund (EDF). The Programme is being implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The aim of the Programme is to empower key stakeholders to address environmental challenges and to reap the benefits of improved environmental management at the national and regional levels.

The first and second phases of the ACP MEAs Programme promoted an integrated and synergistic approach to effectively implement the relevant Conventions on biodiversity and chemicals and waste management. This third phase of the ACP MEAs Programme builds on the results and achievements of Phase I and II, by enhancing the mainstreaming and implementation of MEAs related to biodiversity and to chemicals and waste. Its focus being on enforcement of, and compliance with MEAs, enhanced oceans governance and the mainstreaming of biodiversity in agriculture. The theme for the third phase of the Programme is “*Enforcing Environmental Treaties in Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific- ACP MEAs III*”.

The Project Steering Committee held its annual meeting from 7-8 (i.e. 8-9 Pacific) December 2021 virtually due to COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting brought together 62 participants representing more than 15 various institutions which participated online for two days meeting.

Objectives

The main objectives of this Project Steering Committee meeting are:

- To review and update on the status of implementation of the project, impacts made, and lessons learned;
- To discuss the workplan and budget from all partners; confirm any modifications, considering the pandemic related restrictions and delays and approve the same, including the associated budgets;
- To identify strategic priorities and cross-cutting issues the project focuses on, and provide inputs;
- To discuss means of enhancing the visibility and outreach of the project.

Welcome remarks

1. The ACP MEAs Phase 3 Programme Manager Dr. Balakrishna Pisupati welcomed all participants to the second Project Steering Committee meeting, noting that it was unfortunate that the meeting was being held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He thanked the participants for their interest and participation in the meeting and stated that the agenda of the meeting had been circulated and inputs were provided. He further informed that the meeting on the 7th December 2021 will be Chaired by the European Union (EU) and the Organization of Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific States (OACPS) will Chair the session on 8th December 2021.

Opening Remarks

United Nations Environment Programme-UNEP

2. Dr. Patricia K Mbote, Director of the Law Division of UNEP in her opening remarks thanked the members of the Steering Committee and implementing partners for joining the Steering Committee meeting. She highlighted that the third phase of the programme (ACP MEAs 3) is crucial for UNEP to consolidate the gains and experiences it has made since 2009 when the programme started. She expressed her excitement that the programme is focusing on critical issues of environmental governance, including ocean governance which is in line with UNEP's new medium-term strategy for the period 2022 to 2025, and thanked the European Commission for their continuing support to the programme and to the work of building and enhancing the capacities of the ACP countries to comply with and implement Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).
3. Dr. Mbote noted that, the Steering Committee meeting provides the participants with insights of the status of implementation of the three components of ACP MEAs 3 programme that includes enforcement and compliance of MEAs related to biodiversity, chemicals, and wastes. Also, effective implementation of regional sea conventions and mainstreaming of biodiversity in agriculture.
4. Highlighting the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the programme, Dr. Mbote mentioned that the implementation witnessed some 'out of the box' solutions, including the use of virtual meetings to replace face to face trainings and minimize any further delays in the execution of activities.
5. Dr. Mbote also reiterated the continued commitment and support for the programme as the coordinator by working in collaboration with partners to maximize the programme's outputs and impacts. She stressed on UNEP's enthusiasm on the engagement of stakeholders as a key element for success and develop ways to enhance synergistic approaches in the implementation of the various activities, improve the coordination among the three components of the programme and enhance communication to increase impact at the national and international levels.

Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

6. Mr. AlKhafaji Raschad the FAO Director of the liaison office in Brussels in his opening remarks highlighted that the ACP MEAs 3 Programme is aligned with FAO's new strategy and its strategic framework that focuses on making agri-food systems more efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable for better production, better environment, better nutrition and a

better life and leaving no one behind. He informed the participants that the implementation of the third component of the ACP MEAs programme is well underway with the national workplans validated in each of the six focus countries including Solomon Islands, Tanzania and Zimbabwe among others.

7. Mr. Raschad underscored the recognition by the ACP MEAs programme of the logical importance for the implementation of chemical and biodiversity clusters, and multilateral environmental agreements that are of particular importance to low- and middle-income countries where human and financial resources are limited. Mr. Raschad noted that the next two years (i.e. 2022-2023) will be crucial years for the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework expected to be adopted at CBD COP 15, whilst the post 2020 approach for the management of chemicals has been scheduled for adoption during the Fifth Session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management.
8. Dr. Raschad stated that FAO is organizing a seminar on strengthening regulations to protect pollinators from pesticide, which comes at an opportune time as the European Commission is considering the scope for revising its EU pollinators initiative. Nonetheless, the seminar is expected to contribute to improving knowledge of pollinator decline as a result of pesticide application in agriculture and to providing regulatory options to better protect pollinators from pesticides, which are two of the three priorities of the EU pollinators initiative.
9. In his concluding remarks, Dr. Raschad highlighted the important role played by the ACP MEAs programme alongside other FAO flagship initiatives, such as the Hand in Hand initiative, the CID Solution Forum and the Green Cities, in reinforcing strategic FAO priorities to assist the least developed and landlocked countries as well as small islands development states most of whom are Member States of the OACPS. He assured that FAO will continue to provide support at all levels as a trusted partner in those areas relevant to the programme.

The Organization for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific State (OACPS)

10. The Assistant Secretary General of the Organization for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) Secretariat, Ms. Cristelle Pratt, expressed her sincere appreciation to all ACP MEAs 3 Programme partners (EU, UNEP, OACPS, FAO, regional hubs and regional seas conventions) for the dedicated and determined efforts to build capacity of the 79 Member States of the OACPS to fulfil their obligations as parties to the various multilateral environmental governance frameworks to address the environmental challenges that have driven the global biodiversity crisis with unprecedented rates of ecosystem degradation.
11. Ms. Pratt noted that the ACP MEAs 3 Programme is uniquely placed to play a visible role in the lead up to COP15 where Parties will agree on ambitious goals and targets for the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity, including the equitable sharing of biological genetic resources. Recognizing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on activities of the third phase of the ACP MEAs programme, Ms. Pratt noted that, despite the delay the pandemic has also encouraged innovation and initiatives of implementation that are worthy of congratulations.
12. Ms. Pratt urged the implementing partners to make use of the lessons learned when making important decisions to guide next year's work programme and to further revisit the programme activities and their related budgets to take useful decisions in order to ensure that the programme objectives are achieved within the current context.

European Union

13. The representative of the European Union, Ms. Aurelie Godefroy underlined that the meeting was taking place during an important moment but, challenging time compounded by the COVID crisis which is putting a lot of pressure on our economies, societies and our resilience at a time when we are facing planetary crisis of global warming, biodiversity loss and worrying pollution level.
14. Ms. Godefroy drew participants' attention to *The European Green Deal*, an ambitious strategy to tackle the three planetary crisis of biodiversity loss, climate change and zero pollution, to achieve climate neutrality by transitioning economies and societies through energy transformation to clean and sustainable energy technologies, agriculture to transform our food systems to make them more sustainable, and industries to move to circular and climate neutral economies. This will be achieved by developing and passing new legal frameworks, improving regulations and financing mechanism. She highlighted that the European Green Deal has contributed to the adoptions of more than 20 policy documents and the European Union will dedicate about 35% of its funds to climate action, double its biodiversity financing making the European Union the biggest contributor to biodiversity conservation initiatives to support partners across the globe towards a greener and more inclusive society.
15. Ms. Godefroy concluded her remarks by stating that the European Commission is now starting a new programme towards green recovery and urged the partners to highlight concrete achievements, future plans, opportunities and challenges to enable the design of support for the change at national and local levels.

Overall Programme Progress

16. The purpose of this session was to provide an opportunity to examine the overall achievements and lessons learnt so far to better inform future work of the programme. UNEP and FAO provided highlights of the achievements made and lessons learnt.

UNEP Direct Implementation of Specific Objective 1 (SO1)

17. As the overall Coordinator and at the same time as an implementer of the third phase of the programme, the Programme Manager, Dr. Balakrishna Pisupati highlighted that we are in a very critical phase of the ACP MEAs 3 programme, not only in terms of being the second year of its progress review, but also the challenges in terms of implementation due to various issues including the COVID-19 pandemic. The presentation focused on UNEP direct implementation component with some elements of the overall programme coordination and achievement.

Result Areas of focus

18. In order to achieve the objectives of the programme, UNEP believes that stakeholders' engagement is critical. Hence, engagement with the local stakeholders, especially the civil society organisations, the youth, national decision makers and relevant UN agencies has been an overall priority.
19. There are four overarching areas that UNEP is responsible for, in implementing a number of actions. This includes "Enhancing capacity processes and infrastructure to enforce and comply with a select number of MEAs. Improved national frameworks, legislations, and mechanisms

for effective implementations of MEAs. Also, improved knowledge and knowledge sharing, guidelines, and mechanisms. As well as effective communications, outreach and raising awareness increases stakeholder engagement, including political will among decision makers”.

Activities undertaken in 2021

20. *Support to translation and dissemination of Data management and Reporting Tool (DaRT):* UNEP is leading in terms of data management and reporting related to the Biodiversity Convention. Given the language differences in the ACP regions, the programme provided support in translating the DaRT tool into different languages, essentially French and Spanish.
21. *Support to countries, including in preparation for and during the negotiations of the Bamako Conference of Parties and related follow-up.*
22. *Preparations for technical inputs into this CBD's post 2020, Global biodiversity framework:* the focus in these technical inputs include a number of elements related to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the Nagoya Protocol on access and benefit sharing, focusing on synergies among the biodiversity related multilateral environmental agreements, as well as synergies between chemical and waste cluster MEAs. It also included issues of communication, youth engagement and helping countries raise their voice and improve their effectiveness of participation in many of the governing body meetings such as the scientific body meetings and the Conference of Parties through a number of negotiation preparations
23. *Support to eight IGAD countries in the East Africa region in strategic preparations for biodiversity strategies, including on post 2020 GBF:* this support is to position the countries in the region for the negotiations related to the post 2020 framework and anticipate the outcomes related to mainstreaming activities once the framework has been adopted during the Conference of Parties in 15 meeting of the COP.
24. *Support to preparations of the Basel Rotterdam, Stockholm Conventions COP meetings as well as Minamata COP4 meeting through awareness and publication*
25. *Support to BRS Secretariat in the review of the biodiversity and chemicals MEAs synergies report:* technical inputs on the biodiversity-chemicals and waste linkages were provided looking at the synergies between these two clusters
26. *Organization of capacity development activities for parliamentarians* where discussions with the Inter parliamentary Union and also colleagues from the CBD secretariat were conducted during 2021.
27. *Support for implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety* specifically focusing on emerging issues within those discussions under the Cartagena Protocol related to area of synthetic biology.
28. *Support to youth, media and journalists for CBD COP 15* through capacity building briefing sessions and mentorship programs.

Key Achievements

29. During this particular reporting period, UNEP was able to address a number of cross cutting and overarching issues including youth engagement, working with the small island developing states in terms of finding links between the ACP MEAs programme and the SAMOA Pathway, South-South Cooperation, Gender, policy briefs, communication and outreach, reach out to

other regions other than ACP, working with OACPS Secretariat, internalizing the ACP MEAs programme within UNEP and also links with other programmes. These are in addition to the achievements highlighted in the report submitted to the PSC.

30. *Youth engagement:* During this year, the programme successfully launched youth engagement and training initiative (YETI) where a strategy for youth was developed and rolled out the first batch of training for 32 youths from Africa, through an intense four-month mentorship programme focusing on issues of preparing youth to contribute to the elements of the Post 2020 global biodiversity framework related to contributing to the CBD COP 15 meeting. The programme also organized the Youth Summit on biodiversity with colleagues from various different regions, including Asia, in preparation for the third working group meeting in Colombia during May 2021. Plans to roll out a youth programme for Europe was also presented.
31. *The SAMOA Pathway* is a very important programmatic framework for countries in Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific. In terms of the small island developing states, the idea behind having this particular focus is that 35 of the 79 countries that we work in, are small island developing states. Hence, it is important to establish a link on how the programme could significantly contribute to the SAMOA Pathway. A strategic framework on this has been prepared and UNEP plans to launch it during this PSC meeting.
32. *Gender considerations* have been mainstreamed in the programme and an operational plan was developed and discussed with all the partners before it was launched on 8th of March 2021 to commemorate the International Women Day. The programme also contributed to the CBD's Gender Action Plan in support of the Post 2020 global biodiversity framework and we had discussions with our partners in terms of mainstreaming gender across the different elements of the programmes that are being implemented with an intention to review and monitor the gender actions through annual reports and the division of the operational plans.
33. *Enhancing South-South cooperation element* of the programme because the ACP countries are from the global South, so the programme is looking more at how to enhance the South-South cooperation. Together with the partners, a short operational strategy on how the ACP MEAs programme can contribute to the South-South Action plan is now under preparation. For example, the secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), organized the Third Clean Pacific Roundtable (3CPRT) event where colleagues from Caribbean and Africa participated in support of cross regional exchange of knowledge and information and also to exploring opportunities to work with other regional hubs.
34. *Policy briefs were launched* under the *Building Back Better* series to translate elements of the European Green Deal into considerations within the region at the national levels through first policy brief that has been prepared and the second policy brief is currently in development which will be released in 2022 on the future of ocean governance that also looks at issues of blue economy.
35. *Communications and outreach:* A number of partnerships have been established including work with the African network of Environmental Journalists where the programme organized three briefing sessions for 800 journalists on different elements of chemicals and waste and biodiversity. Contributions from colleagues of the CBD and BRS Secretariats for serving as resource persons were gratefully recognized. Given the importance of the contributions of indigenous people and local communities in terms of supporting activities related to the programme. Therefore, the programme has dedicated an intern to work on these issues

- wrapping on new approaches to a strong social media presence, including, using Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn and a website will be launched in the next coming days.
36. *Extending cooperation to not just the ACP regions but also to others.* Through discussions with OACPS and colleagues, the programme was able to reach out to colleagues from Asia on several activities, including the regional preparatory events for the CBD SBSTTA and the working group meetings as well as supported a capacity building programme for the Gulf Cooperation Council regions.
 37. *Internalizing ACP MEAs 3 within UNEP* is extremely important for sustainability and having a larger impact. A number of opportunities including support to the African Group of negotiators, mapping UNEP's medium-term strategy and most importantly linkages with the recommendations from the ministerial meetings of the African and the Latin American regions have been considered. A document outlining linkages on how the ACP MEAs programme can contribute to the outcomes and the recommendations of these ministerial meetings has been developed.
 38. *Links with other European Union programmes* have been developed including with InforMEA programme, the post-2020 global biodiversity partnership, work with the World Conservation Congress, provided inputs to European Development Day, the BIOPAMA programme, the DaRT programme and linking ACP MEAs with the elements of circular economy and nature-based solution
 39. *Wonderful cooperation with OACPS Secretariat has been established* and a briefing for the Subcommittee on Sustainable Development on issues of biodiversity was held including support to the OACPS secretariat to draft the first Ministerial resolution on biodiversity and also considerations for operationalizing some elements of the resolution.
 40. *Other collaborations* with the programme achieved include working with UNEP's digital transformation Task Force looking at issues of synergies between biodiversity chemicals cluster, policy brief on circular economy and nature-based solutions linked to the CBD frameworks on issues of synthetic biology and digital sequence information.

Future Plans

41. The following were presented as potential areas of work for the future:
42. Work with the CBD Secretariat to establish regional hubs for capacity development, technology transfer and knowledge management.
43. Partnering with the regional hubs in implementing the second phase of the Bio Bridge Initiative of CBD.
44. Negotiation preparations and orientation for ACP member states
45. Digital transformation essentially in the preparation for the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and national reports
46. Support development of plans for the implementation of the post 2020 global biodiversity framework and related MEAs in both the biodiversity and chemicals and waste clusters.

Request for the PSC consideration

47. Steering Committee inputs on strategic cross cutting issues
48. Release of the 2nd instalment towards end 2021 and implications for 2022

49. Budget consolidation and review of planned activities in light of developments made in 2021 and 2020
50. New and additional activities in light of the unspent budget, both UNEP components, regional hubs and other partners

Global Overview of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations FAO on Specific Objective 3 (SO3)

51. FAO is UNEP's main global partner of the ACP MEAs 3 programme responsible for the implementation of the programme's third specific objective: Enhancing the mainstreaming of biodiversity and the sound management of chemicals and waste in agriculture in line with related MEAs (CBD, BRS). This indicates that the component has activities at national, regional and global levels, and the programme is currently operational in six focus countries including Niger, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Saint Lucia and Solomon Islands with 19 other countries identified and validated for expansion and replication of good practices.

Snapshot of 2021 Activities

i. Inception phase

52. This phase focused on programme management team being put in place in the six (6) focus countries, holding multi-stakeholder planning workshops to introduce the programme and fine tune national work plans, define national and regional work plans with regional partners and institutional arrangements and developed communication and visibility plans.

ii. Output 1: Integrating biodiversity and sound chemicals management into national agricultural policies

53. Formed a multisectoral project technical units, held meetings and detailed action plans elaborated, identified national institutions to collaborate with and letters of agreement (LoAs) already negotiated, hired national consultants in support of the programme's biodiversity policy, and institutional capacity building activities as well as maintain regular liaising with EU delegations into focus countries.

iii. Output 2: Field implementation

54. In terms of field implementation, follow up on the implementation of the national Pesticide Risk Reduction plans that were developed under the previous phase of the programme have been undertaken and identified national institutions for collaborations. Hired national consultants to strengthen extension services and extension curricula, including in support of FFS activities (e.g. refresher trainings of trainers), built synergy and complementarities with other FAO farming community capacity building projects and farmer field schools. Recruited a videographer to shoot baseline videos on sound pesticide management and environmentally friendly production practices and approaches that are promoted in the project.

iv. Output 3: Enhanced regional collaboration and capacity building

55. Regarding regional level activities, the programme has provided and is providing support to the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community on the implementation of regional guidelines on pesticide management and drafting of regional regional highly hazardous pesticide (HHP) reduction strategies.
56. Preparatory webinar for SADC Member countries and technical session on soil biodiversity for the Pacific region with SPC and SPREP were conducted in preparation for CBD COP 15 and post-2020 GBF processes.
57. Prepared studies for awareness raising on threats to ecosystems and sustainable production and regional working group meetings held on existing legislation to protect pollinators from pesticides and pesticide risk assessment and mitigation methodologies for pollinators.

v. Output 4: global level activities

58. Regarding global activities, the programme organized in collaboration with the Rotterdam Convention a side event on finding alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides where country experiences from African Caribbean and Pacific countries were shared.
59. Preparations are ongoing for a global seminar on strengthening regulations to protect pollinators from pesticides and held regional working group meetings for pesticide regulators and biodiversity experts. Additionally, regional webinars/technical sessions were held to prepare countries and regions for CBD COP15 and post-2020 processes.
60. Initiated discussions with regional partners and the CBD secretariat for the preparation of a cross regional technical guidance on integrated agricultural systems for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and finally worked on the highly hazardous pesticides baseline study.
61. On other global level activities, the programme has supported FAO's corporate activities related to sound pesticide and biodiversity management, led the preparation of FAO vision paper for Public Consultation on EU Pesticide Directive, participated in the in EU-FAO Strategic Dialogue 2021 on issues of Food Systems and One Health.
62. involved in organization of *Global Dialogue on the role of food and agriculture in the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework* and provided inputs to UNEP study report on strengthening coordination and collaboration between biodiversity and chemicals and waste clusters.

Communication and visibility

63. In terms of communication and visibility, the programme developed global and national level plans and published ACP MEAs 3 brochure in both English and French available at <https://www.fao.org/3/cb2882en/cb2882en.pdf>. A website has also been launched available at <https://www.fao.org/in-action/building-capacity-environmental-agreements/en/> and in October, the first newsletter and the 2nd edition is on the way while a visual identity for publications is currently development.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and youth

64. In terms of gender equality and the empowerment of women and youth within the agriculture sector, rural women and men both hold the keys to ending hunger and extreme poverty.

Hence, the programme on gender and youth perspectives into the different stages of the work planning, such as in national consultations in support of policy actions and field work. Additionally, a stakeholder analysis to produce gender and youth differentiated data and information that is critical for evidence-based policy developments has been undertaken.

Challenges Encountered and Lessons Learned

i. Virtual meetings

- 65. Although virtual meetings are useful, particularly in the current circumstances of the COVID-19. However, they cannot always replace face to face working group technical meetings which require interaction.
- 66. The government counterparts and other stakeholders have been affected by the lack of ICT equipment and access to affordable and stable Internet which led to poor participation or compromised audio quality.
- 67. Virtual meetings, although they allow work across different time zones, they also lead to extend workdays causing some sort of “*virtual meeting fatigue*” among our stakeholders.

ii. Covid-19

- 68. Travel restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 containment measures and changing rules and regulations on national state of emergencies prevented any gathering which affected the implementation of programme activities such as farmer fields which led to a high reliance on virtual tools and hybrid solution.

iii. Cash flow challenges

- 69. At the implementation level, cash flow has been one of the main challenges due to ongoing negotiations at corporate level between the European Commission and FAO regarding project related costs. Consequently, no funds were received in Year 2 of the programme and this has inevitably led to delays in implementation of activities.

Workplan for the next period (2022)

- 70. The main plan for 2022 is to support countries and regions to implement the ACP MEAs 3 programme based on the national and regional work plans that has been developed. Regarding the work plans for the next period (2022), the regional Coordinator will provide more detailed information in the next sessions of the meeting. Below is a snapshot of the planned actions at the global level.
- 71. To finalize a baseline study for highly hazardous pesticides (working draft in January)
- 72. Planning a global seminar on strengthening pesticide regulations to protect pollinators (23-24 February)
- 73. Publication of global reviews: (i) Review of existing legislation to protect pollinators from pesticides in selected countries; (ii) Review of approaches to the environmental risk assessment (ERA) for bees and other pollinators

74. Fifth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly - UNEA 5.2 (28 February – 2 March): possible joint side event with OACP, EU, UNEP and FAO
15th Meeting of the COP to the CBD (25 April-8 May 2022): organize regional preparatory meetings planned in the run up to COP15, organize a side event and conduct consultation with regional partners and the CBD Secretariat / initiate drafting of cross-regional technical guidance on integrated agricultural systems for the sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystem services (post-2020 GBF).

State of Play in the Regions

75. This session took a regional approach where the various partners and stakeholders presented their activities, indicate results achieved so far, discuss plans for future activities and indicate key changes in work plan and budget shifts for the consideration of the PSC.

The African Region

76. As one of the programme's regions, five (5) partners are currently implementing the ACP MEAs 3 programme in Africa. These partners include the African Union Commission (AUC), Abidjan Convention, Nairobi Convention and FAO who presented on their key achievements and plans going forward.

Nairobi Convention

Main areas of focus of the ACP MEAs Programme

77. *Reinforcement of governance frameworks* and associated protocols of the Nairobi Convention.
78. *Supporting the development of regionally representative networks of Marine Protected Areas.*
79. *Supporting efforts on reduction of the influx of waste entering the marine environment of the Western Indian Ocean region.*
80. *Raise awareness on the adverse effects of marine pollution* to promote local management and conservation of coastal areas and marine ecosystem.

Achievement of Activities in 2021

81. *Nairobi Convention Governance Frameworks and associated Protocols were reinforced:* (i) Science Policy dialogue: From March until November, a series of meetings took place where experts and governments came together to come up with a good governance framework. Furthermore, the 1985 Protocol was reviewed, updated and amended. (ii) Emerging scientific and policy issues were identified for decision making and Western Indian Ocean Sharks and Rays report (WCS) were developed. (iii) An adoption meeting of the integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) protocol is expected to happen together with the protocol concerning protected areas.
82. *Regionally representative networks of Marine Protected Areas were developed:* The convention launched the [WIO Marine protected areas outlook](#) which provides the spatial coverage of MPAs in the WIO and provided recommendations for their effective management.

The ACP MEAs 3 project will support implementation of some of the outlook's recommendations. A series of seminars for design, implementation and adaptive management of regional networks of marine protected areas (MPAs) were held in collaboration with SWaM, WIOMSA, WIOSAP, SAPPHIRE. Furthermore, the Western Indian Ocean Marine Protected Areas Network (WIOMPAN) was launched in June 2021, which is an important driver of knowledge and capacity building on the MPAs of the Western Indian Ocean

83. *The influx of waste entering the marine environment was reduced:* There is high volume of waste around urban areas, river discharges from larger catchments into the sea and two countries requested support of marine littering: Comoros and Tanzania. The Comoros marine litter strategy and action plan is underway and a partnership with GPA has been identified to support marine litter action plan in Tanzania.
84. *Awareness and Outreach:* There is a dedicated webpage to the project that is updated regularly with the latest activities and articles. Updates of the programme are also discussed at regional meetings of the Convention.

Impact Created

85. Capacity was built on adaptive management for MPA managers for improved governance and several emerging issues and recommendations came out of Science-Policy dialogues (March 2021), Partners meeting (August 2021) and Focal Points meeting (October 2021) that informed the decisions that were adopted during [COP10](#).
86. At COP10, the priorities of ACP MEAs were recognized and the following 7 relevant decisions related to the MEAs 3 Project were made: review of the Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora, Developing Ocean Governance Strategy, a Regional Action Plan to address Ocean Acidification as well as area-based Planning Tools for Sustainable Blue Economy, monitor the marine and coastal ecosystems at a regional level, develop guidelines on water quality and marine litter and continue the science-policy dialogue.

Gender Actions

87. In terms of gender actions, the convention aims to mainstream gender into project activities. Gender desegregated data was compiled in the Comoros marine litter action plan development process will ensure that 50% of women were involved in each activity.

Lessons Learnt – Partnerships

88. In terms of lessons learned, one area of importance has been at the partnerships that have been growing. For example, on building capacity of marine protected areas resource managers.
89. The convention has also other growing partnerships with WCS, WIOMSA, SWaM, SADC to build capacity related to various areas such as: ocean governance strategy, ocean acidification action plan, marine spatial planning, marine litter action plans.

Challenges Encountered

90. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted several stakeholder engagements and caused a delay and slow process of the implementation of activities and events in 2020 and 2021

Planned activities for 2022

91. *Please refer to the annex 2 (PSC presentations-Nairobi Convention)*

Key Expectations from Project Steering Committee

92. Possible no-cost extension to account for the one-year delay in 2020/2021 occasioned by COVID-19 pandemic
93. Promote exchange and twinning program for learning purposes and best practices including south-south cooperation for the duration of the program
94. Potential collaborations with other entities such as the GPA on developing national marine litter action plans
95. Potential funding sources to compliment NC activities e.g funding for MPAs on coral reefs in Comoros

Abidjan Convention

Overview

96. The Abidjan Convention suffered serious delay in the implementation of the programme for almost two years. Activities implementation started officially only in March 2021 where an ownership workshop was organized to align the activities with the new situation.

2021 Activities snapshot

97. In March 2021, the convention officially launched the implementation of the programme activities, organized ownership workshops with experts to fine-tune the activities to the situation and adapt to the new COVID-19 situation
98. Organization of a workshop on MPAs and created a Working Group to develop an additional protocol and a series of 19 webinars to develop a regional action plan against plastic pollution. This led to the convention's obtaining a grant from GIZ for the campaign for a global legally binding treaty against plastic pollution.

Impact Created in the Region

99. The creation of working groups has made it possible to mobilize all the major actors involved in the sub-region around the Abidjan Convention in areas of fight against biodiversity loss and plastic pollution.
100. IUCN and the PRCM have signed a funding agreement to support the efforts of the Abidjan Convention to develop an additional protocol on MPAs. The project will be presented at the PRCM forum to be held in Bissau in 2022.

101. A Community of Practice and a booklet for the development of a regional action plan was created
102. New partners and new funding were mobilized (GIZ, WWF, IUCN...) and a network of partners of the Abidjan Convention and reinforcement of its position as a major partner in ocean and coastal management was developed.

Lessons Learnt

103. Discussions and partnerships with many overlapping initiatives in the sub-region made it possible to pool resources and create bridges for the rational use of resources to a certain extent. This trend must be reinforced in the years to come.

Gender Actions

104. The programme ensured that participation in the activities was inclusive and gender sensitive. For example, the launch ceremony served as an example where the master of ceremonies, the general rapporteur and three out of four group chairs were women.

Communication Actions

105. Various communication actions were taken, including a teaser, video to promote the ACP MEAs III programme, communication tools, a ACP MEAs III video for the 40th anniversary of the Abidjan Convention and a video for the campaign for the adoption of a global legally binding treaty against plastic pollution

Challenges Encountered

106. The slow pace of recruitment has hindered the implementation of activities. The project assistant has still not been recruited, increasing the workload of the coordinator. The convention proposes to combine some activities to make up for the delay.
107. The convention proposes a revision of the budget of the coordinator and the project assistant in order to cover at least the period remaining from the initial project end date.

Workplan for the next period (2022)

108. *Please refer to the annex 2 (PSC presentations-Abidjan Convention)*

Key Expectations from Project Steering Committee

109. Correcting the difference between the initial budget and the updated budget for the staff (coordinator, assistant, staff time)
110. Deletion of the activities for which no budget had been allocated (2.1.2 and 2.2.6) - merging some activities (2.1.3 and 2.3.3 on the legal framework on plastic pollution in the region)
111. Merge activities 2.1.4, 2.1.6 and 2.1.7 on ocean governance and international cooperation)
112. Provide for the acquisition of equipment (computers...) for the project staff (3.1)
113. Rebalance the budget items while maintaining the activities and expected results.

- 114. Developing cooperation between the stakeholders of the programme
- 115. Support the establishment of Abidjan Convention resource center

African Union Commission (AUC)

- 116. The representative of the AUC Hub, Dr. Harsens Nyambe was not present at meeting, hence the ACP MEAs 3 Programme Manager, Dr. Balakrishna Pisupati provided an update.

Achievement of Activities in 2021

- 117. Attempt to implement program with African Union Commission but there are some delays. The partnership agreement was signed during September 2021.
- 118. UNEP supported several activities related to communication and outreach in the region during 2021. For example, Environmental journalists network collaboration resulted in several media reports and orientation to African journalists.
- 119. Working with the Africa Group of negotiators, UNEP supported regional consultations in preparation for the Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework related issues (colleagues from the Africa Regional Office joined this call). UNEP aims to continue the support the Africa Group of Negotiators
- 120. Working together with IGAD countries, including with the regional IGAD secretariat and the national focal points, UNEP supported drafting the regional strategy on biodiversity and chemicals MEAs to be tested at national level.

Challenges Encountered

- 121. Challenges include delays in terms of signing the partnership agreement with the African Union Commission. This is mainly attributed to challenges related to planning of kickoff and inception meeting with African Union Commission and delays in responses from the Commission.

FAO – Presentation for African Region

FAO ACP MEAs 3 main activities in Eastern, Southern and West Africa

- 122. Focus of activities in Niger, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe. There are 2 regional coordinators and 4 national coordinators. The regional scaling is carried out through East African Community (EAC), Southern African Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of West African States, African Union. This scale up countries include Burkina Faso, Burundi, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Senegal, South Sudan, Uganda, Zambia.

Achievement of Activities in 2021

- 123. In **Niger**, a national consultant was recruited to lead project activities on biodiversity and pesticide management (workplan and budget development). The multisectoral Project Technical Unit (PTU) was constituted. Inception workshop were held in April 2021 and the work plan was validated. FFS activities were planned in 5 regions of Niger in collaboration with

- the Directorate of Extension Services for Technology Transfer. Various meetings were held with institutions to define collaboration and LoAs content - 5 LoAs under signatures with:
124. In **Rwanda**, consultative meetings were held including with EUD to Rwanda. In February 2021 the preliminary Agrobiodiversity policy stocktaking exercise and policy gap analysis were completed. Furthermore, a multisectoral Project Technical Unit (PTU) was constituted. In May 2021 an inception workshop was held. Moreover, a national consultant was recruited to lead activities to reduce risks for HHPs while another consultant was recruited to work ongoing for season long Farmer Field School refresher training of trainers in 6 selected districts.
 125. In Tanzania meetings with stakeholders from different sectors to introduce project in 6 districts and draft national work plan was conducted. A Multi-sectoral 15 member Project Technical Unit (PTU) was constituted and an inception workshop was held.
 126. In **Zimbabwe**, consultation meetings were held with EUD and stakeholders from different sectors to introduce project in 6 districts and draft national work plan. Furthermore, a preliminary Agrobiodiversity policy stocktaking exercise, policy gap analysis was completed, and the baseline report drafted.
 127. **On a regional level in East Africa:** ACP MEAs 3 was introduced to EAC Secretariat and FAO SFE and several meetings were held with the Centre for Pesticide Suicide Prevention for collaboration on finalization of the EAC regional strategy on HHPs. Furthermore, the EAC roadmap including ToR for HHP TWG was elaborated and an international consultant was recruited for drafting HHP Strategy with HHP TWG.
 128. **On a regional level in Southern Africa:** ACP MEAs 3 was introduced to SADC Secretariat and FAO SFS, the work plan was incorporated into the SADC/FAO joint work plan including support to SADC to revise regional BSAP. A SADC Preparatory webinar was hold for CBD COP-15. The support to SAPREF for implementation of SADC Regional Guidelines on Pesticide Management is ongoing as well as the collaboration with SADC Secretariat, CPSP, University of Cape Town to support the SAPReF HHP TWG to finalize the SADC regional strategy on HHPs
 129. **On a regional level in west Africa:** consultative meetings to define activities for scaling up of Niger's experience on agroecology in other West African countries through the National Platform of Farmers were hold. Further consultative meetings were held to define processes to support development of national policies of West African countries to facilitate agroecological transition.

Impact Created in the Region

130. Cross-sectoral information-sharing and collaboration with civil society, public and private sector actors was fostered. Furthermore, the collaboration and leveraging support and expertise of regional institutions was strengthened. National and regional capacities for pesticide management were enhanced and awareness of risks of HHPs was increased.
131. Facilitation of joint action with national and regional MEAs partners (e.g. AU, EAC, SADC & proposed collaboration in Tanzania)

Gender Action

132. Integrating gender perspectives at different stages of work planning and implementation of activities, including stakeholder analysis

133. Paying attention to gendered dynamics that impact on production, access to PGRFA, markets and pesticide risk reduction
134. Incorporating specific reference to inclusion of women and in alignment with FAO, national and regional gender policies

Workplan for the next period (2022)

135. *Please refer to the annex 2 (PSC presentations-Abidjan Convention)*

The Caribbean Region

136. In the Caribbean region, the ACP MEAs 3 programme is being implemented by three partners including the CARICOM Secretariat, Cartagena Convention Secretariat and FAO who presented on key achievements and their plans for the next implementation phase in 2022 focusing on the first, second and third specific objectives of the programme respectively.

CARICOM Secretariat

137. Ms. Amrikha Singh, the Programme Manager, highlighted that, the design and objectives of the ACP MEAs programme has a programmatic fitting into the overall strategic vision for the CARICOM, a region composed of 14 Member States. It's important to note that the Caribbean community is currently in the process of updating its regional strategic plan which envisage to prioritize the issue of environmental resilience and sustainability for region's sustainable development, where the ACP MEAs programme is contributing to the outcome of strengthening regional environmental governance through capacity building and policy dialogue on the biodiversity, chemicals and waste related conventions.

Snapshot of 2021 activities

138. The 2021 programme activities were clustered into four strategic groups including regional coordinating mechanisms, partners engagements, synergistic engagements and internal programmatic engagements.
139. In regard to the regional coordination mechanisms, CARICOM Minamata Focal Points input, consultations and training and other capacity building workshops were explored, CITES Focal Points workshop and capacity assessment and bilateral meetings with Bahamas, coordinated UNEP-CARICOM CBD SBSTTA and SBI briefings.
140. On partnership engagement, the programme in the Caribbean engaged with the European Environment Bureau (EEB) and consultant on the review of chemicals and waste work and action plan. Engaged with FAO to explore areas of joint activities/synergies and with CITES in a workshop to create awareness on automated permitting systems (e-CITES). Also, increased communication and visibility through the virtual exhibition and CARICOM Virtual Pavilion High Level Dialogue on climate change, biodiversity loss and nature-based solution (NBS) was undertaken.
141. Synergistic engagement involves creating synergies between the ACP MEAs 3 programme with GEF ISLANDS, conducting validation workshop and regional inception meeting. Held global

- youth biodiversity (GYBN)voices for biodiversity intergenerational dialogues and supporting Minamata convention amendment in partnership with the Clean Lighting Coalition (CLiC).
142. In terms of internal programmatic engagement, the ACP MEAs 3 programme has been recognized and institutionalized into the structure of CARICOM by first understanding the change management processes, as well as the development of CARICOM's 2020 to 2030 Strategic plan. Undertaking follow up initiatives with Member States for the introduction of DaRT programme and have also introduced internship program where two interns received training on the recently held Minamata Convention training under the mercury added products and climate change and help support program.

Impact Created in the Region

143. Technical assistance provided to Parties to implement Articles 3, 4, 10 and 11 of the Minamata Convention on interim storage and disposal of waste in mercury-added products (MAPs) through building capacity of regional/sub-regional authorities including Minamata Convention National Focal Points, Basel Convention Competent Authorities, Solid Waste Management Authorities, large scale generators of waste, hazardous waste haulers and government and private agencies on the environmentally sound management (ESM) of waste MAPs.
144. Environmentally sound management-mercury added products training workshop, where both the pre and post assessment indicated an overall participants improvement in knowledge of the material over the course of the training session for each of the modules suggesting that the training program was very beneficial, and the technical capacity was built at the national level.
145. In terms of the utility of the training and its direct application by participants in their organisations, it was noted that there was an overwhelming indication that most of them intend to apply the training content and tools to their work place, and this serves as an opportunity for the development of future national capacity building opportunities.

Lessons Learnt

i. Chemicals and Waste Activities

146. Future training programmes should be maximum 2.5 hours; sessions held on consecutive days; simultaneous translation in Spanish, if possible
147. There are current very few centralised interim storage hazardous waste facilities in the region and no facilities recommended for upgrades based on the baseline assessment.
148. Identification of suitable centralised interim storage facilities - within the next 1-2 years possible newly identified locations for infrastructural upgrades
149. Follow up training programme to revisit environmentally sound disposal practices as there are likely to be new stakeholders involved in these activities
150. Health, safety and environment still remains as an area of operations which typically does not receive the due attention and consideration in the region. Access to regular training, possibly

delivered as a webinar or video series, is recommended for the relevant workers and management

151. Pilot projects on the development of strategic action plans to target countries at different stages of mercury wastes management (high vs low) to develop their national action plan.

ii. Caribbean CITES MAs Capacity Assessment

152. Knowledge building about the CITES Convention's legal framework and procedural mechanisms
153. Feasibility study conducted for piloting of an electronic CITES certification system.
154. Level of interest in developing e-CITES tool

Challenges Encountered

155. Budget limitations to implement e-CITES tool under the CITES Convention
156. Rescheduling of activities and delays
157. Impacts of the novel coronavirus the restricted movement and conduct of face to face training workshops

Key Expectations from Project Steering Committee

158. Considerations of COVID-19 poses to all aspects of successful project implementation in regard to the availability of technical experts, changes in the baseline and implementation timelines
159. Endorse the need for restructuring of the results framework, redesign and reallocation of resources within approved budgets
160. Promote inter-regional coordinating meetings of UNEP, CARICOM and FAO Hubs for the ACP MEAs 3 programme

Cartagena Convention on the Implementation of Specific Objective Two (SO2)

161. The activities of the UNEP Cartagena Convention Secretariat are being executed under Component 2 of the overall project which focuses on better management of coasts and oceans and effective implementation of the related Regional Seas Conventions. This Component will be achieved through the following 4 outputs.
162. Expected outputs under the Cartagena Convention are the following: 2.1: Strengthened Governance Frameworks for Regional Seas Conventions and associated protocols, 2.2: Development of regionally representative networks of Marine Protected Areas, 2.3: Measures for reducing the influx of waste and 2.4: Document best practices and lessons learnt in marine litter management at community level.

2021 – Activity Snapshot

163. From 2nd – 4th February 2021, the Secretariat hosted an online training for focal points on basic principles of negotiations and environmental diplomacy in collaboration with the UNEP Law Division; The 5th Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Meeting of the Cartagena Convention’s LBS Protocol successfully convened virtually from 15th – 17th March 2019.
164. The 9th STAC of the SPAW Protocol was successfully held virtually on 17th – 19th March 2021 (session 1) and 14th and 15th April 2021 (session 2).
165. Progress made in ratification discussions by many Governments including preparation of submissions by the Governments of Suriname for ratification of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols, by Saint Kitts Nevis for the ratification of the LBS and SPAW Protocols and ratification of the SPAW Protocol by the Government of Nicaragua in May 2021.
166. Development of a paper on sustainable blue economy that was presented to the 16th COP.
167. Update of the 2020-2030 Draft Caribbean Environment Programme Regional Strategy for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean and decision to establish a working group to finalize the document (16th COP Decision IV.1).
168. Discussions held with officials of the Dominican Republic and process begun to assist with the country’s implementation of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) through hiring of a national consultant.
169. Selection of consultant to produce a video highlighting the impacts and work of the Secretariat and the benefits of ratification of the Cartagena Convention, its Protocols and related MEAs.
170. Completed publications on: An Evaluation of Connectivity Between the SPAW-Listed Protected Areas to Guide the Development of a Functional Ecological Network of Protected Areas in the Wider Caribbean; The Assessment of the Impact and Effectiveness of the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Network and Forum (CaMPAM) report;
171. Development of the Strategic Directions and Network Development Plan for the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Network and Forum report; Protected Areas Management Effectiveness (PAME) of SPAW Sites: Survey Report; How to conduct Protected Areas Management Effectiveness Assessment.
172. Graphic design of the SPAW Protected Areas of the Wider Caribbean booklet being finalized.
173. Update of the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Network and Forum (CaMPAM) database.
174. The Regional Nutrients Pollution Reduction Strategy was adopted by the 5th COP to the LBS Protocol and subsequently by the 16th COP to the Cartagena Convention in July 2021.
175. In anticipation of the commencement of activities in late 2021, discussions and preparatory work have commenced to identify Contracting Parties in which community-based interventions for wastewater management and plastics reduction can be implemented.
176. Discussions were held with Suriname and Guyana on the continuation of ecosystem-based management activities initiated under the UNDP GEF CLME+ Project.
177. Discussions were held with the Global Water Partnership-Caribbean to support community-based projects on wastewater reuse.
178. Agreement by the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) to manage community-based projects on solid waste and marine litter.
179. Finalized Compendium of Case Studies on Solid Waste Management.
180. Development of new knowledge management materials on solid waste, plastics and microplastics.

181. Research and compilation of updated information on the status of bans on single-use plastics and Styrofoam across the Wider Caribbean.
182. Development of knowledge management products through a graphic artist consultancy co-financed by the GEF IWECO Project.
183. Development and update of a project page on the Secretariat's website

Impact Created in the Region

184. Adoption of a new nutrient reduction pollution strategy for the region and a priority focus on particularly plastics. Significant collaboration with the Caribbean Tourism Organization to come up with a compendium of best practices, number of national and regional webinars on dealing with plastics as well.
185. Strengthened collaboration with the global program of action and increased the number of new knowledge management products.
186. Ratification of the Marine Biodiversity/SPAW Protocol by the Government of Nicaragua.
187. Cabinet Submissions for ratification of our Pollution Protocol prepared by Suriname and St. Kitts and Nevis.
188. MPA Managers in the Wider Caribbean in collaboration with other MPA Networks e.g. BIOPAMA, CAMPAM, MPA Connect.
189. Increased awareness of the importance of protecting the region's marine and coastal ecosystems.
190. Enhanced coordination and communication with Regional Partners, CBD Secretariat and other Regional Seas Conventions.
191. Integration through joint meetings of our marine pollution & marine biodiversity protocols – expert and decision-making levels.

Lessons Learnt

192. In terms of some of the lessons learnt, the whole aspect of integration across the four thematic areas has been highlighted as very critical for the Convention to continue to be successful in terms of the impacts.
193. Need for more South-South Exchanges e.g. Pacific Roundtable.
194. Virtual meetings can promote greater participation, inclusiveness and transboundary cooperation.
195. Identification of strategic partnerships early in the process provide opportunities for co-financing e.g. GEF Projects. While this has delayed implementation, it will result in greater impact on the ground.
196. Catalyzed several of our 2021 COP 16 Decisions: Governance, MPAs, Pollution.

Gender Actions

197. Gender sensitive language used during meetings, social media, and in general public awareness activities.
198. Selection of consultants took into consideration gender representation.
199. Gender reflected in Regional Strategies and Plans.

Challenges Encountered

- 200. Due to the pandemic, stakeholders priorities changed and decreasing national engagement in face to face training workshops
- 201. Recruitment of Consultants faced with delays in administrative processes affecting the programme
- 202. The issue of virtual meetings presents significant challenges as evident in internet connectivity issues, platform access, language interpretation and associated costs.

Work plan for the next period (2022)

- 203. *Refer to annex 2 (PSC presentation-Cartagena)*

Key Expectations from Project Steering Committee

- 204. Consideration for a greater flexibility in conditions for disbursement of funds
- 205. Simplified reporting format for easy reporting of activities
- 206. Greater flexibility in reallocation of funds especially for travel that has been difficult to forecast
- 207. Additional preparation time needed especially given COVID 19 – No Cost Extension would be needed
- 208. Increased focus on South-South cooperation and sharing of experiences especially among Regional Seas

FAO in the Caribbean

Focus and Scale-Out Countries

- 209. In the Caribbean region, FAO's focus under the ACP MEAs 3 programme is on one country St. Lucia. However, other countries that are Members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States including Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines have been identified to scale out the programme.

2021 – Activity Snapshot

- 210. Although there had been a challenge in the implementation of the programme activities in the region in general and Saint Lucia in particular, FAO has managed to successfully complete an inception phase where a series of virtual national inception workshops with various stakeholders in Saint Lucia and in the Caribbean were held resulting in finalizing the work plan which was endorsed by the Government of Saint Lucia and a cooperative programme agreement was signed with FAO.

211. National multisectoral projects steering committee was formed and one meeting was held in the reporting period and the second meeting was held just last month, and the plan is for regular meetings of the steering committee to be held on a quarterly basis.
212. Virtual meetings with the EU delegation in the Eastern Caribbean and the representative will be participating as an observer on subsequent steering committee meetings.
213. In St. Lucia, there are four focal areas for the ACP MEAs 3 programme including: (i) **forestry** where a letter of agreement with the Forestry Department in Saint Lucia has been negotiated for a community-based reforestation of riverbanks and important watersheds to enhance riverine ecosystems management. (ii) the enhancement of the **cocoa sector** in Saint Lucia and the establishment of good practices and lessons learned that could be shared with other Eastern Caribbean countries, where compiling of national data for a gender sensitive value chain assessment of the cocoa sector and development of an operational strategy for delivering capacity building to stakeholders in the sector to improve the sustainability both environmentally and economically of the sector. (iii) **agrobiodiversity** to focus on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and national consultant is being recruited to carry out a baseline assessment for developing a national strategy for the management of plant genetic resources for Food and Agriculture. (iv) **pesticides management and control** where discussions with the Agricultural Extension Unit for the delivery of a series of farmer field schools to improve farmers who are responsible for the management of pesticides and to facilitate the adoption of ecosystem based and ecosystem friendly approaches to climate resilient agriculture have been initiated.

Impact Created in the Region

214. In terms of the impacts that have been created in the region as a result of the programme has been an excellent means of fostering cross sectoral information sharing and collaboration via the inception workshops and meetings of the national Project Steering Committee.
215. The programme has done a lot to raise awareness of threats to ecosystems and sustainable production via presentations and working groups for regional pesticides regulators. One of these relates to the sound management and control of highly hazardous pesticides and their potential impacts on both ecosystems and trade in the region.
216. There has also been an excellent opportunity to leverage the support and expertise of regional institutions such as with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute on PGRFA, Cocoa Research Institute for cocoa sector enhancement and the coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards in the Caribbean.
217. Developed joint actions with regional ACP MEAs partners and in 2022, FAO and CARICOM will deliver a series of regional webinars on the post 2020 biodiversity framework.

Gender Actions

218. In relation to gender actions a specific effort was made during the inception phased by including women in agriculture groups in national consultations. For example, representatives of the Saint Lucia branch of the rural network of women producers of the Caribbean project Steering Committee includes 50% female representation.
219. Activities have been designed with gender imperatives in mind.

220. Incorporation of specific reference for inclusion of women farmers and producers in agreements with government agents to ensure that gender representation and gender inclusion in the partnership activities that they deliver.

Workplan for the next period (2022)

221. **Forestry:** Training for forestry officers in participatory methods for forest management and community-based revegetation of riverbanks
222. **Cocoa:** Completion of value chain assessment and upgrading strategy for the cocoa sector and liaison with Government to identify training priorities for producers and processors
223. **Agrobiodiversity:** Submission of Saint Lucia's 3rd PGRFA country report and development of a draft national PGRFA conservation and management strategy and action plan
224. **Pesticides:** Letter of Agreement signed with Ministry of Agriculture and delivery of a series of Farmer Field Schools focused on climate-resilient ecosystem-based approaches to agriculture
225. **Regional:** Joint webinars with CARICOM Secretariat on the post-2020 biodiversity framework
226. **Communications:** Baseline video interviews with stakeholders, project overview video

The Pacific Region

The Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

Overview

227. SPREP is a treaty-based organization consisting of 26 Member countries aiming to promote cooperation in the Pacific islands region and to provide assistance to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations
228. SPREP Strategic Key Priorities between 2017 and 2026 include: climate change resilience, island and ocean ecosystem, waste management and pollution, environmental monitoring and governance and oceans as a cross cutting issue.

Snapshot of 2021 activities

229. *Refer to Annex 2 (PSC presentations-SPREP)*

Impact created in the Region

230. Systematic/structured management and coordination of the Noumea Convention within SPREP, Partners and Parties
231. Effective engagement of Pacific technical officials in the SBSTTA-24, SBI-3 meetings.
232. Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) and Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) contributions to EIA/SEA, MGR, ABMT, capacity building
233. Legislative review and consultancy: Vanuatu CITES legislation, Samoa draft CITES Bill, Kiribati Environment Management Act review, Cook Islands Environment Management Act review
234. Pacific Learning Partnership - Environmental Social Safeguards to assist capacity building
235. Strengthening and development of Environmental Assessment and Planning Guidelines
236. Pacific Network of Environment Assessment (PNEA)
237. Regional Webinar on Soil Biodiversity session

238. Regional State of the Environment and Conservation Report 2021
239. Better management of data (INFORM-ACP MEAs Programme). It was recognized by the PSC the interaction of the ACP/MEA Phase 3 programme with other existing projects at SPREP such as the GEF Inform Projects, the BIOPAMA Project and also other partnership programs. The Pacific Learning Partnership on Environmental Social Sustainability that deals with Environment Impact Assessments and Social Safeguards in the region was recognized and requested for a special presentation in a future meeting.

Lessons Learnt

240. Importance of establishing genuine relationships with member countries
241. Consultancy contract extensions due to the pandemic, causing delays with responses and feedback on requests for information
242. Review timelines, activities and modality of delivery
243. Need for projects of this magnitude to have specialised communications person
244. Support requirement for Virtual meetings for member countries to cover costs
245. Need to strengthen South-South cooperation (e.g., Cleaner Pacific Strategy 2020-2025)

Gender Actions

246. SPREP has gender policy and ACP MEAs 3 Programme is a strong advocate of the SPREP Gender Policy through the implementation of activities (e.g. Third Pacific Clean Roundtable focused on how effective the roles of women, youth and communities are, in the implementation of MEAs addressing waste)
247. Launch of ACP MEAs 3 Gender Operational Note to support the International Women's Day
248. ACP MEAs 3 Project webpage hosted on the SPREP website
249. Promoting local women's businesses through national events

Challenges Encountered

250. COVID-19: impact on implementation of activities and on national priorities
251. High costs of internet charges and unstable connections
252. Mainstreaming the ACP MEAs Programme
253. Need for specialized communications person

Workplan for the next period (2022)

254. *Refer to annex 2 (PSC presentation-SPREP)*

Key Expectations from Project Steering Committee

255. Flexibility to divert remaining funds above or below the 25% threshold within the components. In circumstances where activities are one-off and not required to be spread out during the project term.
256. Approve revised log frame activities and budget revisions.

- 257. Recruitment of a communications specialist for campaigns relating to the ACP MEAs Programme and the regional seas convention
- 258. Support the proposed sustainable financing strategy of the Noumea Convention
- 259. Support for existing youth network
- 260. Technical support to deal with cross cutting issues

The Convention for the Protection of Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region (1986) Noumea Convention

Overview

- 261. SPREP is the Secretariat of the Noumea Convention which is an umbrella agreement for the protection, management and development of the marine and coastal environment of the South Pacific Region. Noumea Convention + 2 Protocols: (i) Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution of the South Pacific Region by Dumping; (ii) Protocol concerning cooperation in combating pollution emergencies in the South Pacific Region. There are 12 Pacific Island Countries that are Parties to the Convention.
- 262. The key highlight from SPREP is the strengthening of the Secretariat of the Noumea Convention. The ACP/MEA Phase 3 Coordinating team is assigned the role to act at the Secretariat of the Noumea Convention that will allow SPREP to improve its governance work on the convention within SPREP as an organisation and also for its Parties.

Activities of the Noumea Convention under ACP MEAs 3 Programme

- 263. *Refer to Annex 2 (PSC presentations-Noumea Convention)*

The Review of the Noumea Convention

- 264. Has direct linkage to the Noumea Component of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme.

Objectives of the review

- 265. Governance and operation of the Noumea Convention – considered the membership of the Noumea Convention, effectiveness of the Convention, effectiveness of the Secretariat in its role and functions to service the Parties, effectiveness of existing governance arrangements (administrative and procedural matters).
- 266. Implementation of the Noumea Convention – whether the purpose of the Convention is achieved, whether purpose remains relevant to the current regional environmental challenges and whether there is a need to expand the scope of the Convention.

Review recommendations

- 267. List of 20 Recommendations that will guide the project in consultations with the Parties and will be shared with the Senior Leadership of SPREP and the Parties.
- 268. Per COP16 decision, an intersessional meeting will convene for the Parties to discuss the review recommendations

Key recommendations

- 269. Increased linkage of Noumea Convention with key regional frameworks
- 270. Targeting profile and awareness of the Noumea Convention more through increased communications and awareness campaigns
- 271. Development of sustainable financing strategy for the Noumea Convention
- 272. Establishment of permanent staff position for the Noumea Convention Secretariat within SPREP

FAO presentation for the Pacific

Overview

- 273. The implementation of the ACP MEAs 3 activities in the Pacific region were carried out with support from the Secretariats of SPREP and the Pacific Community (SPC). The focus country has been Solomon Islands, however, other scale up countries have been identified including Fiji, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Achievements of Activity 2021

Solomon Islands (outputs 1 and 2)

- 274. Inception workshop was held in Honiara to refine workplan with a full participation of national stakeholders such as government agencies including Ministries of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, and Ministry of Forestry, regional organisations and four well established grassroots NGOs and the private sector.
- 275. ACP MEAs 3 activities integrated into the Solomon Islands Agricultural Policy framework for 2020-2030 and the Agriculture Sector Growth and Investment Plan (ASGIP) 2021-2030
- 276. In collaborations with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of the Solomon Islands established an integrated Land Management committee under the Integrated Forest Management Program, which is implemented by FAO.
- 277. Recruitment of one regional and local consultants to strengthen curricula of extension and advisory services and institutionalize the adoption of climate smart and ecosystem-based agricultural practices.

Regional level activities (output 3)

- 278. Inputs provided to the framework for nature conservation and protected areas in the Pacific Island region 2021-2025 which was adopted at the 10th Pacific Islands Conference for Nature Conservation and protected areas that was held virtually in November 2020.
- 279. Established an informal tripartite collaboration with SPREP and SPC and joint activities agreed upon. E.g., Technical Session on Soil Biodiversity organized with SPREP and SPC ahead of session of SBSTTA-24 (13 Pacific Islands/50 participants)

280. Start-up meetings for the establishment of the Pacific Regional Advisory Scheme on pest and pesticide management and conducted capacity building activities for the Scheme's Secretariat and Board (LoA with SPC). The importance of this scheme is that it will help to strengthen the capacity and the Pacific region to make informed decisions on pesticide registration and management by pooling together available expertise on pesticides.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and youth

281. Gender and youth perspectives integrated at different stages of work planning (e.g., national consultations, design and implementation of activities) and stakeholder analysis to produce gender- and youth differentiated data and information that is critical to evidence-based policy development.

Challenges

282. Solomon Islands is a challenging country to operate due to limited qualified expertise in the country and persistent civil unrest.
283. Complete border closure to non-residents due to COVID 19. Since the start of the programme, no mission could be undertaken, neither could regional and/or international experts be deployed
284. The departure of the regional coordinator without rehiring possibilities due to financial situation which slowed down activities' implementation

Workplan 2022 for Solomon Islands

285. *Refer to annex 2 (PSC presentation-FAO-Pacific)*

Updates from MEAs

286. This session will focus on key activities and plans from the biodiversity and chemicals and waste clusters of MEAs represented at the meeting

The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS)

287. BRS are global legally binding instruments that contribute to protect the human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals and wastes.

Areas of Focus

288. BRS focuses in preparing ACP countries to participate in the 2021 meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

Achievement of activities

289. The ACP MEAs 3 Programme is funding the participation of representatives from Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific in the face-to-face regional preparatory meetings to the Conference of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, to take place in 2022.
290. The regional preparatory meetings will take place from March to May 2022 and there will be 3 days face to face meeting.

Challenges

291. COVID-19 pandemic will result to the regional preparatory meetings to be held in two parts.

Synergies

292. The presentation for the Basel hotter Damage Token Convention: They have this technical assistance plan that is approved by the BRS secretariat. There is a financial mechanism for the Stockholm Convention and the countries are party to traditional convention which work with Minamata to develop projects and national implementation plans to reduce emissions of persistent organic pollutants.
293. BRS informed all parties to the partners of the COP that a request can be sent to the secretariat for cooperation.

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

Areas of focus

294. The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of wild animals is a global convention which aims to protect them and also to promote international cooperation for the conservation of species that migrate across national borders.

Achievement of activities

295. A number of regional or global treaties, have been established to conserve species. The project directly supports the implementation of the Convention and its instruments across these regions
296. The project also supports the implementation of CMS, for instance through enhancing effectiveness of institutions and legal frameworks and national legislation program, to assist countries in complying with MEAs mainly related to migratory species,
297. Successful fourth meeting of the signatories of the Pacific Islands Cetacean Memorandum of understanding which approved the regional Wayland Dolphin Action plan for 2022 and 2026, also endorsed by SPREP.

Challenges

298. Lack of membership in certain regions such as eight countries in Africa, twelve in Caribbean and eleven in Pacific that haven't joined the Convention

Synergies

299. So far nine countries have joined the MEAs program in the Caribbean. Engagement of countries in the program which will assist them in improving their legal frameworks.
300. Reached out to the African Union to join forces to look at impacts of aquatic and terrestrial.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

301. CITES is a legally binding instrument that regulates import, export, re-export and introduction from the high seas of specimens of 38,000 species with the aim to ensure that such trade is sustainable, legal and traceable.
302. All trade must be in accordance with the Convention – otherwise it is illegal

Achievement of activities

303. In Caribbean, workshops took place in collaboration with CARICOM and with participation of UNCTAD as well as CITES capacity-building needs assessment
304. Repeated reporting of illegal trade
305. In the Pacific, a workshop took place in collaboration with FAO and SPREP.
306. There has also been a National Legislation Project – progress in 2020-2021
307. Development and adoption of national legislation in several Parties in Caribbean states.
308. Increased coherence and collaboration between CITES authorities and fisheries agencies.
309. CITES works a lot on sharks and rays and aims to understand how parties can be supported in implementing the Convention with respect to those pieces that are only recently being added to the Convention over the past two COPs. There are a lot of general work in providing guidance on the non-detriment findings and other types of information that is needed.

Synergies

310. Workshop in the Caribbean on CITES implementation and fisheries, in collaboration with FAO and other partners
311. Further targeted compliance assistance to selected Parties in Africa and the Pacific
312. Significant capacity-building support for strengthened CITES implementation and enforcement in West and Central Africa, based on requests by the Parties
313. They are closely links with what CITES is doing and what this program is doing on ocean governance, particularly on the work that is in the Pacific. I believe it can extend to other regions in Africa and the Caribbean, given that quite a number of species of interest to CITES. These are continually being listed, especially for the Sharks. and it would be important for some close collaboration to build up to improve on this work.

Convention on Biodiversity (CBD)

Areas of focus

314. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is the international legal instrument for "the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

Achievement of activities

315. CBD and its implementation, and support to the preparation of the global biodiversity framework.
316. Negotiations and preparation of the GBF towards COP 15.

Challenges

317. Postponement of a series of subsidiary body meetings and the Open-ended Working Group on the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity framework that were earlier scheduled for January.

Synergies

318. Regional organizations SPREP, CARICOM and AU Commission, are regional implementing partners of the CBD, supporting their Member States in the implementation of the Convention and its protocols. Regional conventions will play an important part in the implementation of the post 2020 Global biodiversity framework.
319. CBD has a universal participation bar where all members or Member States of ACP are parties to the CBD.
320. The key points that can be supported by the program at the regional levels in line with our regional engagement and minorities include the continuing negotiations of the global biodiversity framework and preparations for COP 15.
321. Capacity building and technical and scientific cooperation on the GBF, provided by the national biodiversity strategies and action plans.
322. Youth are important stakeholder towards the planning for the review and monitoring at the Convention and its protocols, and in particular, the Global biodiversity framework. For instance, delegates from the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (a network of hundreds of youth organisations composed of 46 chapters), including national chapters and affiliated groups are in many of the ACP countries.
323. Access and benefit sharing and digital sequence information as an important element related to the negotiation of the GBF.
324. Capacity building and technical and scientific cooperation. Human and institutional capacity building and development are very important to the GBF as well as technical and scientific cooperation, such as South, South cooperation and the exchange of knowledge, tools and technologies.

325. CBD has a bio bridge initiative promoting technical cooperation through practical projects with small grant funding, hence aiming to assist the ACP project to establish partnership with SPREP CARICOM, and African Union Commission as regional implementing hubs, hence extending this initiative on biodiversity.
326. Alignment of existing national biodiversity strategies and action plans with related conventions, will be essential to the implementation of the post 2020 global by diversity framework, as well as an enhanced monitoring and reporting framework to which the project can also contribute.
327. Need to look into what is envisaged for 2022 and it is important to plan accordingly and enhance synergies with UNEP, FAO and other regional implementing hubs.

Minamata Convention on Mercury

Overview

328. The convention has 136 parties. The framework logic of the convention is a life cycle approach on curtailing mercury mining as well as reducing the presence of mercury in the economy, industry and society (which is currently widespread through a number of industrial processes and products in trade and from other supply sources)

Achievements of Activities

329. Minamata initial assessments and national action plans that have been completed and posted on our website.
330. The first segment of our COP 4 was held in November 2021, with the in-person session planned for March 2022 in Bali, Indonesia. Intersessional work on products and processes, on waste thresholds, on releases, and on tailings management, among others, has been ongoing and information is available on the website.
331. Also available on the website are recordings and presentations of all Minamata Online information sessions, which we encourage partners to use and adapt for trainings and awareness raising with partners. In particular, the Implementation Review and Support set of Minamata Online sessions will be of use in explaining Convention requirements.
332. Minamata's financial mechanism supports eligible parties in implementing the Convention is made up of the Global Environment Facility and the Specific International Programme. In addition, we work closely with the multi-stakeholder Global Mercury Partnership, and encourage countries to join the Partnership as it has a wealth of information, tools and experts.

Challenges

333. Parties face a number of timebound obligation deadlines as well as ongoing obligations. These include those requirements related to emissions of mercury from a number of sources (waste incineration, coal combustion in the power sector, non-ferrous metals production, and cement production), releases to land and water, mercury use and emissions from artisanal and small scale gold mining, mercury use in products and industrial processes, mercury trade, storage and waste management.

Synergies

334. National reports by our parties, due at the end of this year, will provide important information on what is happening at the national level and identifying specific actions that needs to be taken going forward. Our capacity building program within the Secretariat will evolve based on this information, and we hope to coordinate with efforts of ACP partners ensuring that we leverage not duplicate efforts.

European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Area of Focus

335. The focus of EEB and the Zero Mercury Working group is on mercury in line with Minamata Convention. in the ACP MEAs 3 programme, it focuses on the formulation of specific strategies in selected ACP countries for addressing the mercury-added products (MAPs) phase-out provisions of the Minamata Convention; and technical assistance to selected countries contributing to reducing mercury in Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) as per the Minamata Convention.

Snapshot of 2021 Activities

336. *Refer to annex 2 (PSC presentations-EEB)*

Impact created

337. Laying the groundwork for increasing awareness in the Caribbean through CARICOM, Basel Convention Regional Centre for the Caribbean (BCRC), UNEP (GEF ISLANDS)
338. Providing Information and assisting coordination on relevant mercury events. (ACP MEAs 3, Minamata Convention, GEF ISLANDS, CLIC)
339. Facilitating wider policy discussions on environmentally sound management of waste, prioritising and financing i.e. contribution/follow up to the Training Action Plan on Waste Mercury Products developed by CARICOM
340. Capacity building support to the three countries in the Caribbean (Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda and St. Kitts and Nevis) towards developing strategies to phase out elemental mercury and mercury added products.
341. The convention will promote the gravity methods which are not using mercury, depending on the type of ground available.
342. Artisanal Small-Scale Gold Mining support through call for proposal and exchange meetings with 2 Guyana's (women) NGOs.

Lessons Learnt

- 343. Support for Governments is needed regarding implementation of Article 4 provisions of the Minamata Convention.
- 344. Situation in developed countries cannot always be applied on the ground activities in developing countries (i.e. lack of hazardous waste infrastructure, resources, regulations)
- 345. Governments welcome NGO support, though sometimes it can take some time until agreements can be made.
- 346. Studies, advice and examples from other regions (i.e. Africa) are appreciated by Governments because they help them to plan upcoming policies
- 347. Capacity of NGOs working on MAPs and ASGM in the Caribbean is lacking.
- 348. Coordination between international projects is necessary; NGOs can assist this coordination to avoid overlaps, reinventing the wheel, better use of resources, etc.

Gender Actions

- 349. During the call for tenders/proposals on ASGM for African and the Caribbean, the gender perspective was included to guide all processes.
- 350. EEB's ongoing work on skin lightening creams is particularly aimed at women as they are the main users of this kind of products.
- 351. The EEB published recently a [gender related report](#) which was circulated to the ACP family and had previously provided input and participated to the UNEP gender meeting and video for the launch of its gender operational note.

Challenges

- 352. Some elements of work could not advance as foreseen due to delayed AUC signature with UNEP. Governments welcome NGO support, though sometimes it can take some time until agreements can be made between governments and NGOs.
- 353. Situation in developed countries cannot always be applied to on the ground activities in developing countries (i.e., lack of hazardous waste infrastructure, resources, regulations)
- 354. Capacity of NGOs working on MAPs and ASGM in the Caribbean is lacking.
- 355. The COVID-19 pandemic has an impact on organization of planned in-person meetings. Travel, meetings shifting to coming years.
- 356. Initial budget did not correspond to real timing, and this requires an urgent revision.

Workplan for the next period (2022)

- 357. *Refer to annex 2 (PSC presentations-EEB)*

Key Expectations from Project Steering Committee

- 358. Note the need for flexibility to best adapt activities due to COVID-19's travel and meetings shift, government focus.
- 359. Approve shifting of activities and budget revision (below 25%) within approved overall budget.
- 360. Approve potential shifting of ASGM activity from Caribbean to Africa, if no other solution possible.
- 361. Assist African region to come on board as soon as possible as it has important contributions for the strengthening of the Minamata Convention and has a leading role to play.
- 362. Approve assisting the Pacific region while waiting for Africa.
- 363. Promote better communication between partners; offer an information exchange platform e.g., a mailing list server.

Further areas to strengthen synergies and collaboration between the various Conventions and the program

- 364. Colleagues from the OACPS Secretariat highlighted on the need for enhancing cooperation and promoting synergies between the various MEA secretariats.
- 365. Options to explore different mechanisms through which assistance can be provided was suggested. This is through the national legislation process, where small grants are given to help parties develop their national legislation. In addition, there are international consortiums that focuses on combat illegal wildlife crime, such as World Bank, ODC and others through which support can be provided to individual countries.
- 366. European Commission (INTPA) mentioned that it has been encouraging the cooperation between the regional organization unit, FAO and the Conventions as well more regional and national collaborations with EU delegations. This is extremely important to create synergies and strengthen the respective added value. Cooperation is encouraged so as to utilize material resources and expertise available in each institution, for the benefits of actions at national level and regional levels.

Closing Remarks

- 367. Recognizing that the Conventions have a lot of expertise, tools, hence lot of knowledge and trainings is available, it was suggested that the conventions should aim at cooperating further with regional hubs and with the project partners. The secretariats of these various multilateral environmental agreements were requested to work very closely together with regional Agencies i.e., UNEP and FAO. It was also suggested that the MEAs and the conventions Secretariats need to get more involved in synergies and coordination with the regions and states parties, because there are many synergies to be achieved and improve coordination and reduce the competitive burdens since we are all trying to achieve the same objective of promoting environmental integrity and environmental sustainability.
- 368. Neil Pratt from CBD Secretariat suggested that it is important for the CBD secretariat to plan joint work with UNEP and FAO and with the regional implementing hubs to achieve more benefits of working together and it would be far better to do that together.

369. Marianne Bailey commented on artisanal and small-scale gold mining that the Minamata Convention doesn't ban mercury use in gold mining but uses a country and mining community driven strategies to both eliminate worst practices and implement best practices. She highlighted the ongoing work in this regard, noting that a lot of experience could be drawn from as well as the the global Mercury Partnership, which has a wealth of information in addition to the Planet Gold program and the national reporting which is also a very important source of information.
370. The ACP MEAs 3 programme partners were urged to to internalize some elements of the program within their institutions for an effective knowledge management and capacity development.
371. Partners agreed to identify activities that would benefit from partnerships synergies and strategically assess opportunities for the synergized implementation of MEAs and proactively share networks with UNEP and FAO in particular those of relevance to policy work, to ensure a more coherent implementation of the program and strengthening cross regional cooperation through south-south cooperation.
372. Ms. Cristelle PRATT of the OACPS noted that, the year 2022 will be an important year for not only for the implementation of this particular Programme, the MEAs 3 programme, but it also provides opportunity for how the OACPS, the European Union and partners can work together. She concluded that the biodiversity resolution that was adopted by the OACPS Council of Ministers is intended to be a basis for preparations for COP15 and other related multilateral processes. This means that there is a huge scope for us to work together particularly with the regional hubs, UNEP and FAO. This will bring together our various negotiators and negotiating groups, 79 Member States of the OACPS, six regions of the OACPS and the OACPS-European Union partnership in terms of our international cooperation and advocacy on important issues to allow us to really be able to raise our voices and visibility on thing that are important for our people and our planet.
373. The MEAs Secretariat's, and in particular the CBD secretariat was recommended to find modalities on how the convention can support the OACPS Member States to engage in a very strong and constructive way that addresses and meets their needs.
374. The ACP MEAs 3 Programme partners have provided written submissions to the PSC for consideration on workplan and related budget modifications and urged the Steering Committee to can make a decision in terms of appropriate recommendations for some of the elements that have been compiled and presented.

Annex 1: Meeting Agenda

Annex 2: PSC Presentations

Annex 3: List of Participants