



# Monthly Information Digest



Volume 3

Issue 3

March 2023



## Dear Reader,

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is pleased to present you the third issue of the ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) MEAs 3 Monthly Digest for March 2023. As an informative publication, the Digest provides a collection of key information from various sources, including from programme partners on issues related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), environmental governance, ocean governance, sustainable development, and South-South Cooperation relevant for the implementation of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme.

From March 2023 onwards, ACP MEAs 3 merges its monthly Youth Empowerment and Training Initiative (YETI) Alumni Digest with the ACP MEAs 3 Monthly Digest by integrating a **“Youth Corner”** section in the latter. This Youth Corner provides news, resources, learning materials and engagement possibilities for YETI Alumni, youth networks related to ACP MEA 3 partners and beyond to empower youth to engage in and lead pro-environmental change.

Happy reading!

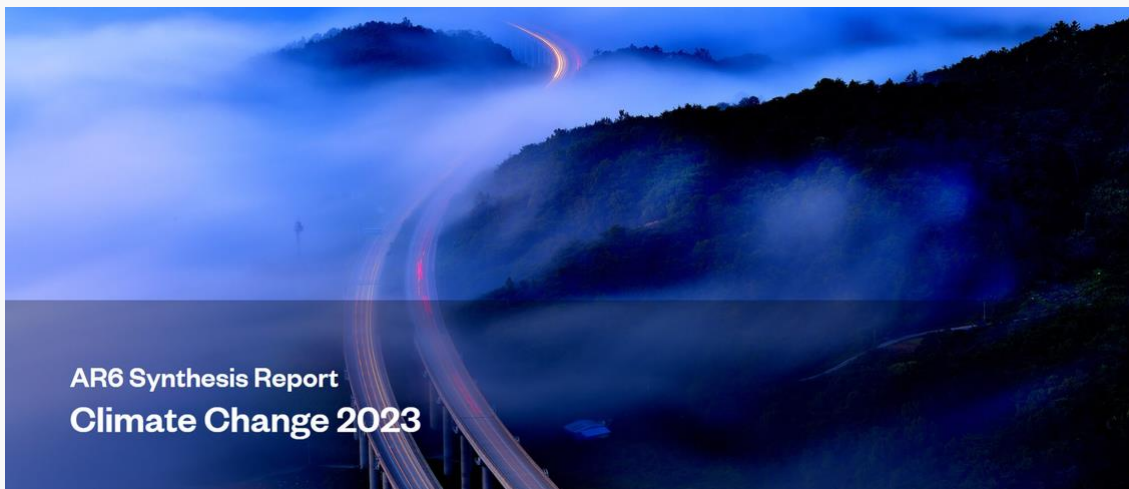
## This Month's Highlights

- Climate Change 2023: Release of the IPCC's 6th assessment report (AR6)
- Multilateral Development Bank Efforts to Mainstream Climate Adaptation
- UN 2023 Water Conference's commitments to urgently tackle the water crisis
- Assessment of a forest conservation payments project in Brazil
- New CITES trade rules come into effect for hundreds of species and celebrating 50 years of CITES
- Launch of the Freshwater Challenge initiative ever to restore rivers and wetlands
- Minamata Convention 2022 Progress Report
- Stakeholder meeting to support the implementation of the Minamata Convention in Saint Kitts
- The Asia-Pacific regional preparatory meeting for the 2023 COPs to the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions
- Workshop: Visualizing Climate Change for Impact
- Stakeholder meeting to support the implementation of the Minamata Convention in Saint Kitts

## Sustainable Development Highlights

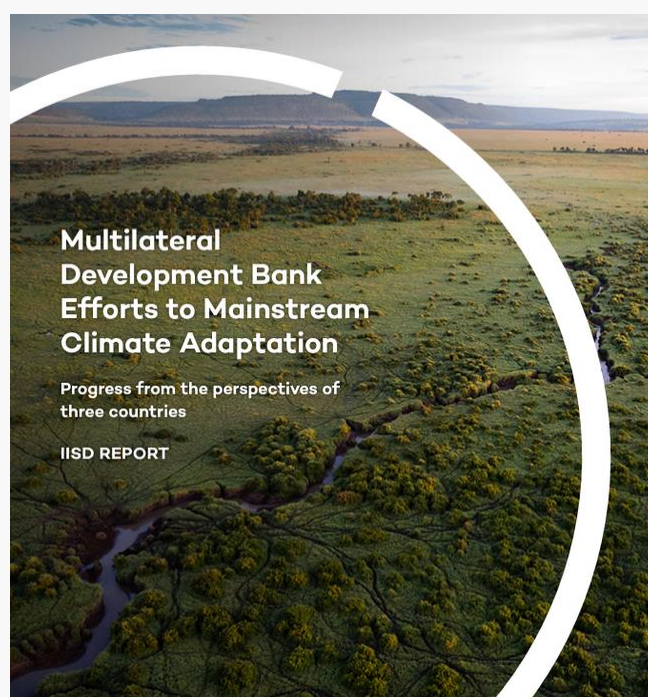
### Climate Change 2023: Release of the IPCC's 6th assessment report (AR6)

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) adopted its [6th assessment report](#) since 2015 on [20 March 2023](#) at Interlaken, Switzerland. The report reiterates human responsibility in global warming of 1.1°C above pre-industrial levels, which has resulted in more frequent and more intense extreme weather events and causing increasingly dangerous impacts on nature and people. It focuses on loss and damages and climate justice” because those who have contributed least to climate change are being disproportionately affected”. The 93 IPCC experts who contributed to this report call for urgent action to cut greenhouse gas emissions by half by 2030, to limit warming to 1.5°C and secure a liveable future for all. Clean energy and technologies and increasing finance to climate investments are highlighted as solutions to achieve climate resilient development. The report provides the main scientific input to [COP28 and the Global Stocktake](#) at the end of this year, when countries will review progress towards the Paris Agreement goals. [Watch IPCC's video](#).



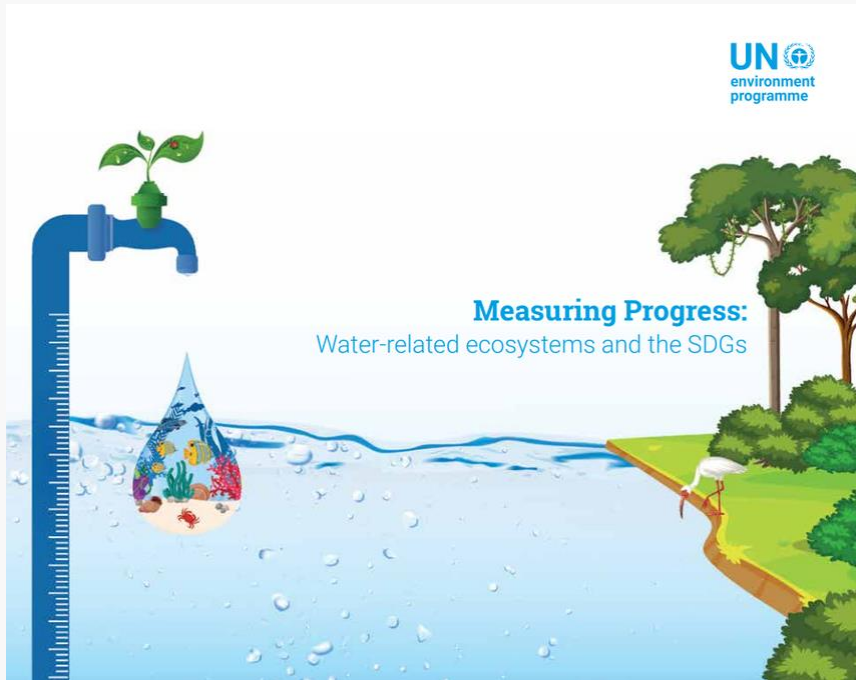
## Multilateral Development Bank Efforts to Mainstream Climate Adaptation

The International Institute for Sustainable Development - [IISD's research paper](#) explores the progress made by four Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs)—the African Development Bank (AfDB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the World Bank—on their commitments to mainstream adaptation in their developing country portfolios, specifically looking at experiences in Kenya, Nepal, and Peru. While MDBs have generally increased their financial flows for climate adaptation in their portfolios, the paper highlights that it is very difficult to discern clear trends at the country level. Challenges remain in scaling up MDB finance for adaptation, including a lack of transparency in how allocations of finance for adaptation are determined at the project level and a lack of awareness of finance ministries about the costs and benefits of investing in adaptation. MDBs are expected to play a critical role in closing climate adaptation financial gap at national level and deliver the goals of the Paris Agreement. [Read more.](#)



## UN 2023 Water Conference's commitments to urgently tackle the water crisis

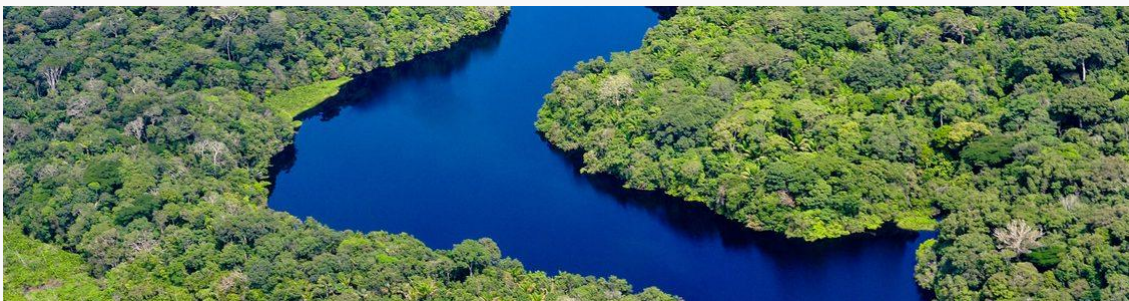
The UN Water Conference was held in New York, on 22-24 March 2023, for the adoption of the [Water Action Agenda](#), representing voluntary commitments of nations and stakeholders to accomplish the [Sustainable Development Goal 6 – On Clean Water and Sanitation](#). The conference provided a [breakthrough response](#) with the agreement to establish a UN Special Envoy for Water and commitments from members states (US, Japan, Vietnam, Switzerland, Niger Basin Authority, Mozambique, EU, AU), multilateral development banks (the Asian Development Bank), the private sector (Starbucks, Ecolab, Gap Inc., Reckitt, DuPont, Danone, Xylem, World Benchmarking Alliance) and NGOs (World Vision). Some 2 billion people around the world still lack access to safe drinking water and 40% of the world's population are affected by water scarcity. [Find more resources.](#)



## Biodiversity Conservation highlights

### Assessment of a forest conservation payments project in Brazil

A publication by researchers from the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), finds that conservation payments known as Payment for Environmental Services (PES) were effective at reducing deforestation, but only while they were going. The study focused on the Sustainable Settlements in the Amazon (SSA), a REDD+ project implemented by the Brazilian NGO *Instituto de Pesquisa Ambiental da Amazônia* (IPAM), started in 2012 and was suspended in 2017. The REDD+ project that paid smallholders to reduce deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon was successful in significantly reducing deforestation. However, deforestation resumed once the payments ended, but not at a rate that eliminated previous forest conservation outcomes. The main lessons for conservation donors and implementers are that permanently changing the logic of livelihoods at the forest frontier is a complex undertaking and thus long-term PES interventions are preferable. [Read more.](#)



## New CITES trade rules come into effect for hundreds of species and celebrating 50 years of CITES

The [new CITES trade rules](#) came into effect on 23 February 2023, 90 days following their adoption at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (COP19). New control measures apply to most of the 562 species of wild animals and plants that have entered the Convention's Appendix II, while 5 new resolutions also came into force. This entry into force came just ahead of the [celebration of CITES' 50th anniversary, on 3 March 2023](#). CITES was opened to the world's governments for signature on 3 March 1973 in Washington DC and has grown from 10 original Parties to 184 Parties in 2023. The Convention aims to ensure that the world's animals and plants will not be driven to extinction in the wild and that the trade in these species would remain legal, sustainable, and traceable, and contribute to their long-term conservation. [Read more](#).



## Launch of the Freshwater Challenge initiative ever to restore rivers and wetlands

During [UN 2023 Water Conference](#) in New York, a coalition of governments launched the Freshwater Challenge to restore 300,000 km of degraded rivers and 350 million hectares of wetlands – an area larger than India – by 2030. This coalition, led by Colombia, RD Congo, Ecuador, Gabon, Mexico, and Zambia, is the largest initiative ever to restore degraded rivers, lakes, and wetlands, which are central to tackling the world's worsening water, climate, and nature crises. The Freshwater Challenge calls on all governments to commit to clear targets in their updated National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, National Determined Contributions and National Implementation Plan for the SDGs to urgently restore healthy freshwater ecosystems. [Read more](#).



## Chemicals and Wastes Highlights: News from Partners & Associates

### Minamata Convention 2022 Progress Report

The Minamata Convention Progress Report 2022 is [now available](#). It provides a comprehensive overview of the progress made in implementing the Minamata Convention on Mercury in 2022, while identifying the challenges that need to be addressed to #MakeMercuryHistory. The report provides an update on the achievements of COP-4, such as the amendment of the Convention to ban eight additional mercury-added products, reducing mercury demand, exposure, and waste. The report also highlights the creation of a scientific group that will provide data on the presence and movement of mercury in the environment. It also includes useful information on how new countries can join the Minamata Convention – 140 parties and growing. [Read more](#).

# MINAMATA CONVENTION IN 2022

*Progress Report on activities*



## **The Asia-Pacific regional preparatory meeting for the 2023 COPs to the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions**

The regional preparatory meetings to the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention (BC COP-16), the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention (RC COP-11) and the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (SC COP-11) have started. The first regional meeting took place from 14 to 16 March 2023 at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) in Bangkok, Thailand, thanks to the generous financial support provided by the Governments of Germany and Switzerland. The objective of the 3-day meetings was give Parties within the Asia-Pacific region the possibility to consult each other in advance of the 2023 COPs, consider meeting documents, discuss substantive matters, identify regional priorities and challenges, and facilitate the preparation of regional positions. The programme for the meeting was developed in consultation with members of the bureaus of the conferences of the Parties to the three conventions from the Asia-Pacific region. 29 Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions, as well as 4 Basel and Stockholm conventions regional centers and 10 observer organizations attended the meeting. The following regional preparatory meeting took place from 21 to 23 March 2023 in Dakar, Senegal. [Read more.](#)



## ACP MEAs 3 News

### Workshop: Visualizing Climate Change for Impact

"Your visual stories can speak louder than words to inspire local pro-environmental change" Balakrishna Pisupati, UNEP. The ACP MEAs 3 organized a virtual workshop in collaboration with GRULAC Junior on March 7, 2023, enhancing the storytelling and visualization skills of youth to take effective action on the environment from across the world. [Our People Our Climate](#), a groundbreaking documentary film initiative, presented their remarkable work aiming to develop the storytelling skills of indigenous youth and young adults.

Join the [Climate Change Visualization Challenge](#) – the best 10 photos will be broadcast!

Watch the full workshop on [YouTube](#) and access the workshop material [here](#).





## Stakeholder meeting to support the implementation of the Minamata Convention in Saint Kitts

The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) – Zero-Mercury Working Group (ZMWG) supported the organization and participated in a [mercury stakeholder meeting in March 2023 in Saint Kitts](#) (Caribbean Island). The meeting focused on the draft Resolution in Support of Transitioning to Mercury-free Lamps for General Purpose Lighting and a Mercury-free Health Care Resolution, developed with EEB-ZMWG support under the ACP MEAs 3 programme and shared with the national mercury focal point and relevant stakeholders. In September 2021, the EEB/ZMWG entered into an agreement with the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis to assist in developing a draft 'roadmap' towards phasing out mercury added products, consistent with Article 4 on Mercury-added products of the Minamata Convention. [Read more](#).



## Youth Corner

News and Resources Empowering Youth

In this Youth Corner **you(th) can find a variety of** news, resources, learning materials and engagement possibilities empowering YETI Alumni and ACP MEAs 3 partner related youth networks to engage in and lead pro-environmental change.

Most of the resources and information listed in this Digest are also stored and made accessible on the [YETI Alumni Network Knowledge Management Platform](#) (KMP).

## News & Resources Related to the Youth

### Youth2030 Guiding UNEP's Youth Engagement and Actions

[Youth2030](#) is the first-ever UN system-wide strategy on youth guiding UNEP's action for and with young people globally. In line with the Youth2030 Strategy, ACP MEAs uses a youth development strategy in support of the implementation of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) globally, to increase youth engagement and empower youth by long-term mentoring and capacity building initiatives especially through the [Youth Empowerment and Training Initiative \(YETI\)](#). In February, ACP MEAs 3 provided inputs to UNEP's contributions to the report to the Secretary-General's Youth 2030 Progress Report, that can be found [here](#).

Informative Resources (for ACP MEAs 3 partners) around Youth Engagement:

- [Turning the Tide on Youth Washing](#) (UNEP)
- [Toolkit on Pro-Environmental Youth Engagement](#) (ACP MEAs 3 YETI)
- [UN Office of the Secretary Generals Envoy on Youth](#) - Toolkits and Key Resources
- [UNEP Youth Website](#)

## Courses & Training

### UNEP's Law and Environmental Law Platform (LEAP) – E-Learning Courses

LEAP provides you free access to numerous environment-related courses. You can start with a foundation course (e.g., [Our Planet Our Rights](#) Course) or strengthen your knowledge with more advanced courses (e.g., [Mercury and Gender](#)). Find all courses [here](#).

## (Soft) Skills Learning Materials

### How to write a successful application email (for a PhD)?

Find hands-on suggestions in [this article](#), where Professor Melissa Hart shares some key tips based on having received and assessed numerous of such applications by students for the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence.

### Where to apply for funding as a young influencer of change?

There are several fellowship and scholarship opportunities aiming to empower and support young environmental activists, researchers, and project leaders. You can find a selection of different available funds or informative websites related to funding for (youth-led or youth related) projects in [this list](#).

## Open Application & Engagement Possibilities

## **New UNEP Young Talent Pipeline: Applications Now Open!**

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has launched the Young Talent Pipeline, in partnership with the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme and is looking for the first cohort of young, skilled and passionate talents from less represented regions of the world to join UNEP.

Applications are now open until 15 May 2023 for 12 new international UN Volunteer specialist assignments. Find more information and apply [here](#).



## **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum**

The ECOSOC Youth Forum will take place from 25 to 27 April 2023 in a hybrid format providing a platform for young people to discuss with Member States and other actors about their views, concerns, and imperative actions to transform the world into a fairer and more sustainable place guided by the SDGs. The Youth Forum will focus on the theme of [ECOSOC](#) and the 2023 UN High-level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF): “Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at levels”. It will particularly address progress in the areas of clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), industry, innovation, and infrastructure (SDG 9), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), and partnerships for the goals (SDG17). [Read more](#).

## **Provide your inputs on what role you(th) should play in driving the 2030 Agenda and achieving the SDGs!**

Until April 6 [this global public consultation](#) is open in the lead up to ECOSOC Youth Forum 2023. The idea is to collect inputs, reflections, aspirations and recommendations by youth in the lead up to the Youth & SDG Summit session at the ECOSOC Youth Forum and the SDG Summit (September 2030). [Read more](#).

## Join the Tide Turner Plastic Challenge

The [Tide Turners Plastic Challenge](#) is a youth movement to fight plastic pollution globally. This challenge is designed to inspire youth to reflect upon their plastic consumption, discover solutions to decrease this consumption, and lead change in their homes, communities, offices, and institutions.

Join the challenge [today](#) and become part of an entire generation of young leaders who are changing the world, one action at a time!

## Save the Date

**APR 3:** [Briefing session for the media in preparation for the upcoming meetings of the meetings of the Conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions](#) **Basel Convention, Workshop**

**APR 10 -21:** [Open-ended Online Forum on Risk Assessment, Cartagena Protocol](#), **online**

**APR 12:** [Mercury in Southern Hemisphere](#), **Minamata Convention, online**

**APR 18- 20:** [Briefing on the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention and the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention](#), **BRS online**

**APR 19 - 21:** [Second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Escazú Agreement \(COP2\)](#), **Buenos Aires, Argentina**

**APR 24 -28:** [Youth in Evaluation Week – Decade of Evaluation for Action](#), **Online**

**APR 24 - 28:** [2023 Latin America and the Caribbean \(LAC\) Regional Forum on Sustainable Development](#), **Santiago, Chile**

**APR 25 - 27:** [Economic and Social Council \(ECOSOC\) Youth Forum](#), **Hybrid**

**MAY 1 - 12:** [Meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in 2023](#), **Geneva, Switzerland**

For more events, please check [InforMEA's Calendar of Events](#).



---

**The ACP MEAs is a joint UNEP- EU-FAO-OACPS partnership programme.** It aims to build the capacity of 79 countries in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific to fulfill their obligations to multilateral environmental agreements. Phase III (ACP MEAs 3) of this programme is being implemented in Africa by the African Union Commission (AUC), Abidjan Convention and Nairobi Convention, in the Caribbean by the Secretariat of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Cartagena Convention, in the Pacific by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) is the civil society partner.

This Digest has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views, policies or official opinion of the European Commission, UNEP or contributory organizations.

---

This digest is made for you and by you. Share your activities, information and stories of your organization/department by the 20th of the month with Emilie Vauchel ([emilie.vauchel@un.org](mailto:emilie.vauchel@un.org)) and help build a more transparent and engaged ACP MEAs 3 Programme!  
[Browse all Monthly Digest here](#)

Contact Details:  
[balakrishna.pisupati@un.org](mailto:balakrishna.pisupati@un.org), [emilie.vauchel@un.org](mailto:emilie.vauchel@un.org), [louise.dorner@un.org](mailto:louise.dorner@un.org)

---

