



Monthly Information Digest



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Dear Reader,

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is pleased to present you the fourth issue of the ACP (African, Caribbean, and Pacific) MEAs 3 Monthly Digest for May 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.

Happy reading!

This Month's Highlights

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Sustainable Development Highlights

UNFF18 highlights the role of forests in achieving the Paris agreements, SDGs and GBF

The 18th UN Forum on Forests convened from 8-12 May 2023 in New York highlighted the interlinkages and synergies with other global efforts on forests, land degradation, biodiversity, climate change and other aspects of sustainable development. Technical discussions on the implementation of the UN Strategic Programme on Forest (UNSFP) focused on thematic priorities including enhancing forest-based economic, social, and environmental benefits, increasing the areas of protected forests worldwide and mobilizing financing resources and scientific and technical cooperation. Forests play a significant role in mitigating climate change, combating soil erosion, and protecting watersheds, biodiversity, and key ecosystems, while the forest sector is a significant source of jobs and income. Yet, an estimated [10 million hectares per year were lost between 2015-2020, and only 6.5 years are left to achieve the GFG target of increasing forest area by 3% worldwide from 2017 by 2030.](#) [Read more.](#)



Partnerships for SDGs: UN fora on Evidence-based Policymaking and Science-Policy Interface

Three recent UN fora and meeting, the ECOSOC [Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science Technology and Innovation for SDGs](#) (STI Forum), the [Fourth UN World Data Forum](#), and the [17th Meeting of the UNCCD Science-Policy Interface](#) (SPI), highlighted the importance of data sharing and STI, integrating data into policy and program development, and bridging the gap between science and policy. While the ECOSOC forum, held from 3-4 May 2023 in New York, was an opportunity to boost science-and evidence-based policymaking to achieve Agenda 2030 sustainable development goals, the [Data to Policy Navigator](#) (Data4Policy Initiative) was launched during the World Data Forum from 24-27 April 2023 in Hangzhou. The latter provides step-by-step actionable recommendations on how to integrate data into policy and program development. The SPI Forum on 1 May 2023 in Bonn also looked at SPI to effectively conduct scientific assessments a bridge between science and policy in global efforts to address land degradation, desertification, and drought. [Read more.](#)



Photo Credit: ©FAO

Mid-point review of SDG 7 on clean energy and cooking

[A global group of experts](#) – from the UN, governments, the private sector, academia, and civil society – met on 11-12 May 2023 in New York, to prepare for the SG7 (clean energy and cooking) review at the [High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development \(HLPF\)](#), scheduled to take place from 10-19 July 2023. Commenting on the “[Tracking SDG7: The Energy Progress Report](#)” published in June 2022, the experts highlighted that while electricity access rate has increased from 84% to 91% of the world’s population between 2000 and 2021, about 1.9 billion of people will still lack access to clean cooking by 2030. They called for a specific focus on clean cooking in Sud-Saharan Africa where the access deficit has increased by 50% between 2000 and 2020, reaching a total of 923 million people in 2020. SDG 7 is one of five Goals – alongside Goals 6 (clean water and sanitation), 9 (industry, innovation, and infrastructure), 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and 17 (partnerships for the Goals) – undergoing in-depth review at the July session of the HLPF, organized by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). [Read more.](#)



Biodiversity Conservation highlights

Guidance material on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

On 26 May 2023, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity released [guidance material on each of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework \(KM-GBF\)](#). A note from the Secretariat indicates that the guidance material “provides an overview of the target by briefly introducing key terms, highlighting some of the implications for national target setting, and providing key points and guiding questions for consideration as part of national target-setting exercises.” The Secretariat further notes that relevant adopted indicators to monitor progress are identified, and resources shared to assist with national target setting and implementation. The guidance material will be regularly updated based on feedback from experience. [Read more.](#)



World Migratory Bird Day highlights the need for international cooperation to protect migratory birds and their habitats

This year, the World Migratory Bird Day, marked on 13 May and 14 October, focuses on Water and its importance to migratory birds. The global campaign aims to raise awareness on migratory birds and the need for international cooperation to conserve them. Migratory birds rely on water and its associated habitats—lakes, rivers, streams, ponds, swamps, marshes, and coastal wetlands—for breeding, resting, refueling during migration, and wintering. Yet increasing human demand for water, along with climate change, pollution, and other factors, are threatening these precious aquatic ecosystems, with an estimated [73% of its listed species in decline](#). The [Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals \(CMS\)](#) is the only global convention specializing in the conservation of migratory animals, their habitats and migration routes. [Read more](#).



Roll-out of a pilot scheme for human-wildlife conflict insurance in Kenya

The Kenyan government has announced [the roll-out of a pilot human-wildlife conflict insurance scheme](#) to reduce losses and damage due to human elephant conflict in Kenya, starting from July 2023. The insurance scheme is a new product developed with insurers and consultants, that will compensate farmers who are affected by conflict with wildlife, notably with elephants, protecting both wildlife and local farmers. The decision follows [recommendations](#) from the International Institute for Environment and Development – IIED’s [Livelihoods Insurance from Elephant in Kenya and Sri Lanka \(LIFE\) project](#), implemented from April 2018 to September 2022 in both countries. The announcement was welcomed at the [International Conference on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence, which took place in Oxford in March 2023. Read more.](#)



Chemicals and Wastes Highlights: News from Partners & Associates

BRS COPs' strong decisions for the sound management of chemicals

The meetings of the conference of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions were held from 1 to 12 May 2023 in Geneva, with the participation of over 2,000 delegates from 180 countries. Parties to the Stockholm Convention adopted a decision for the listing for elimination of three new chemicals, as well as a compliance mechanism of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). Under the Rotterdam convention, an additional pesticide has become subject to the Prior Inform Consent procedure for imports and exports under the Rotterdam Convention. Finally, technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of wastes were adopted, for persistent organic pollutants waste and e-waste under the Basel Convention. The three COPs called for the strengthening of BRS cooperation with the Minamata Convention on mercury, with UNEP for the development of a new internationally legally binding agreement to end plastic pollution, and with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. [Read more.](#)



Minamata Convention: New study on the impacts of mercury pollution on fisheries and livelihoods

The Minamata Convention on mercury's study on "[The socio-economic impacts of mercury pollution on fisheries and livelihoods: Exploring how a natural capital approach may support the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury](#)", published in May 2023, highlights the urgent need for action to combat the release of mercury into the environment. As the consumption of contaminated fish is one of the primary pathways for human exposure to mercury pollution, the study shows that mercury also reduces the supply of fish due to smaller fish populations and restrictions on fishing practices to prevent mercury intake by consumers. On the demand side, a decrease in fish consumption is observed due to increased awareness and perceived health risks by consumers. Acknowledging the existing knowledge gaps on the impacts of mercury on aquatic ecosystems and its related socioeconomic effects, the study recommends using economic tools such as the [System of Environmental Economic Accounting \(SEEA\)](#). The tool can indeed value the impact of mercury pollution on natural capital assets and effects on fisheries and livelihoods and help guide public and private investments to reduce emissions and releases of mercury. Mercury is a highly hazardous and toxic substance that disrupts essential ecosystem functions, such as food provision, air filtration and water purification, with repercussions on the livelihoods and health of millions of people. [Read more.](#)

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF MERCURY POLLUTION ON FISHERIES AND LIVELIHOODS

Exploring how a natural capital approach
may support the implementation of the
Minamata Convention on Mercury



Scientific and
technical series

UN 
environment
programme



MINAMATA
CONVENTION
ON MERCURY

ACP MEAs 3 News

Regional conference on phasing out mercury-added products in the

Caribbean

Under the [ACP MEAs III programme](#), the European Environmental Bureau / Zero Mercury Working Group (EEB/ZMWG) and CARICOM-Caribbean Community are organizing a [two-day regional conference](#) on 6 and 7 June 2023, to share experiences on implementing the Minamata convention and to disseminate lessons learned and best practices to the broader Caribbean region. The regional conference will also seek to underline once more the importance of the Minamata Convention to addressing the global mercury crisis and to encourage non-signatory Caribbean states to consider joining the Minamata family. The objective is to support the implementation of MEAs, through the identification of gaps and building capacity to close these gaps in the chemicals and waste clusters at the national and regional levels, in ACP countries, through the development of stronger compliance and enforcement measures, focusing specifically on the Minamata Convention. This will support ACP countries in addressing the challenges associated with mercury and the sound management of mercury waste. [Read more.](#)



CARICOM Secretariat's message to mark International Day for Biological Diversity

Mr. Joseph Cox, Assistant Secretary-General, and Ms. Tehsia Jn Baptiste, Project Coordinator of the ACP MEAs III project, shared a [message from the CARICOM Secretariat](#) to mark the International Day for Biological Diversity, on 22 May 2023. Recalling the adoption of landmark Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in December 2022, they underline the importance translating the agreement into action "[From Agreement to Action: Building Back Biodiversity](#)", in line with the Secretariat of Biological Diversity's social media campaign. While there is a growing recognition that biological diversity is a valuable global asset for future generations, the number of species is being significantly reduced due to human activity. Ms. Tehsia Jn Baptiste notes that the CARICOM Secretariat joined the regional and international celebrations of the International Biological Diversity and acknowledges the part it must play in halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity. While Caribbean governments have committed to implement national and sub-national policies to align with the K-M GBF's targets and goals, she further indicates that businesses also have a role to assess impacts and implement sustainable practices, and that society will need to change consumption

habits. [Watch more.](#)



Save the Date

MAY 29 & JUNE 2: [Second session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment \(INC-2\)](#) **Paris, France**

MAY 29- JUNE 2: [Climate and Clean Air Conference 2023: Air Quality Action Week](#), **Bangkok, Thailand**

MAY 30- JUNE 2: [Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Conference on the implementation of the outcomes of the CBD COP15 and CITES CoP19](#), **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

JUNE 5: [World Environment Day with a focus on Plastic pollution Day](#), **Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire**

JUNE 5-9: [Sustainable Ocean Initiative Workshop on Ocean-related Capacity-building Needs for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#), **CBD, online**

JUNE 5-9: [Twenty-sixth meeting of the CITES Plants Committee](#), **Switzerland**

JUNE 5 - 15: [Fifty-Eight Sessions of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies](#), **Bonn, Germany**

JUNE 6-7: [Phasing out mercury added products in the Caribbean - Regional Conference](#), **online**

JUNE 17: [Desertification and Drought Day 2023](#), **worldwide**

JUNE 21-26: [WG2020-3/3, the fourth meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#), **CBD, Nairobi, Kenya**

JUNE 26-30: [64th GEF Council Meeting](#), **Brasilia, Brazil**

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.

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