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Sixth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical
Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol
Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and
Activities in the Wider Caribbean.

Virtual, 01 to 03 February 2023

ACP MEAS III 3rd PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT

This meeting is being convened virtually. Delegates are kindly requested to access all meeting documents electronically for download as necessary.

ACP MEAs 3

Report for 2022 Programme Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting 19-20 October 2022

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



Group photo of participants at the third Programme Steering Committee for ACP MEAs 3 held from October 19-20, 2022 in Brussels, Belgium.

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 (EU), under the Intra-ACP envelope of the 11th European Development Fund (EDF). The Programme was initiated in recognition that ACP countries have different capacity related challenges in the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), which therefore, presented an opportunity to enhance technical and institutional capacity while promoting South-South cooperation between the ACP regions. With the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as the leading implementing agencies, 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 local, national and regional levels.

Since its establishment more than a decade ago (2009), the programme has gone through three phases. The first and second phases promoted an integrated and synergistic approach to effectively implementing the relevant Conventions on biodiversity and chemicals and waste management. The current third phase of the Programme builds on the results and achievements of Phase I and II, by focusing on the enforcement of and compliance with MEAs related to biodiversity, chemicals and waste, enhanced oceans governance and the mainstreaming of biodiversity in agriculture in the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions.

The Programme Steering Committee (PSC) meeting is the main annual event of the programme that brings together all partners and stakeholders involved in the implementation of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme. After two years of virtual meeting due to the impact of COVID-19, the 2022 PSC meeting for the third phase of the programme was hosted by the Secretariat of the Organization of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (OACP Secretariat) in Brussels, Belgium on October 19-20, 2022. It involved the participation of representatives from OACPS, EU, UN Environment, FAO, representatives from the regional hubs and sea conventions, MEAs Secretariats and the European Environmental Bureau (EEB).

The overall objective of the 2022 meeting was for the PSC stakeholders to gain a stronger understanding of the programme's progress, impacts made, and lessons learned by giving an opportunity to the various implementing partners to present their work across the ACP regions and to discuss workplan and budget for 2023 from all partners and to confirm any modifications to the programme's logframe, taking into account the pandemic related restrictions and delays and approve the same, including the budgets associated; identify strategic priorities and cross-cutting issues the project focuses on and provide inputs; and discuss means of enhancing the visibility and outreach of the project. The meeting is important for the ACP MEAs programme as it provides a shared platform for all partners to engage, share experience and explore areas for synergies and cooperation in joint implementation of activities.

The meeting was structured in a number of sessions that were conducted over a period of two days as follows:

Day 1 (19 October 2022)

- *Session I: Opening Session*
- *Session II: Progress Presentation*
- *Session III: State of Play in the regions*
- *Session IV: Updates from MEAs Secretariats*

Day 2 (20 October 2022)

- *Session VI: State of Play in the regions continued*
- *Session VII: Strategic discussions*
- *Closing remarks*

Day 1: ACP MEAs Programme Steering Committee Meeting

The Meeting was chaired by the OACP Secretariat. For all presentations made during the PSC and related to the status of the Programme's activities please refer to the Annex of this report.

Session I: Opening Session

The session was chaired by the Secretariat of the Organization of African, Caribbean and the Pacific States (OACPS).

The OACPS opening remarks were delivered by **Ms. Cristalle Pratt**, the Assistant Secretary General, Environment and Climate Action Department, where she welcomed all participants and expressed the OACPS' happiness for the progress made in the implementation of the ACP MEA3 Programme and the level of strengthened cooperation with UNEP and FAO.

- Recognized several initiatives that have come out of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme especially the 18th October 2022 regional briefing meeting of the ACP Member countries to discuss relevant issues ahead of COP15 to take place in December 2022 in Montreal Canada.
- The representative informed that there shall be further meetings in the regions through the support of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme as countries prepare for COP15, where she further stressed that the organization of the regional briefing sessions was an excellent demonstration of the importance of programmes like ACP MEAs 3 in building capacities.



Ms. Cristalle Pratt, the Assistant Secretary General, Environment and Climate Action Department-2022 PSC Meeting, Brussels

This was followed by opening remarks from the EU representative, Ms. Aurelie Godefroy, the Deputy Head of Unit C2-Environment, Natural Resources and Water who expressed her pleasure on behalf of EU for meeting all the partners involved in the implementation of the third phase of the programme in person as it was not possible to meet in the past two Programme Steering Committee (PSC) meetings of the programme due to COVID-19 pandemic.

- Acknowledged the impact of the pandemic on the programme's activities while remained delighted with the fact that all partners have kept the momentum of resilience in the implementation of activities in the face of the pandemic.
- Further emphasized on the importance of the PSC meeting which has come at a time when countries across the regions are heading to Montreal to negotiate a deal for nature and people. She observed that despite the progress being made in the negotiation process thus far, the negotiations are complicated due to limited capacity which makes the ACP MEAs 3 Programme an important catalyst to build and strengthen capacity of Member States to negotiate and mobilize funding as well as strengthening local partners' knowledge to enforce MEAs on the ground.
- Informed that EU has set up an active momentum for the outcomes of the COP15 agreements with strong targets and goals including a strong monitoring and review mechanism for tracking progress. This includes commitment of double biodiversity funding to 7 Billion Euros, setting up ambitious goals for pollution, climate neutrality to reverse biodiversity loss and laws on deforestation to ensure that products such as cocoa, timber, oil and coffee do not contribute to deforestation in some countries.
- In conclusion, the representative emphasized on the need to make concrete impacts on the ground at the local levels, of which the PSC meeting presents an important opportunity to drive change at the global and local levels.



Ms. Aurelie Godefroy, EU Deputy Head of Unit C2-Environment, Natural Resources and Water-2022 PSC Meeting, Brussels.

virtually online for the great work done throughout the three phases of the programme since its first initiation in 2009.

- Highlighted some key achievements of the previous two phases of the programme on which the third phase was built with an aim to focus on issues of biodiversity, chemicals and waste, Regional Sea Conventions and mainstreaming of agriculture and biodiversity. He further commented on the global commitment to tackle planetary issues related to climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution as evident in the EU's 7 Billion Euros commitment and GEF's 36% budget commitment for biodiversity, where he suggested the need to devise priorities across the globe. Underscored UNEP's view of engagement with stakeholders as a key element for success and feedback from them to improve on its work.

These remarks were then followed by that from UNEP delivered by Mr. Mamadou Kane, the Deputy Chief of the Environmental Governance and Convention Branch thanked partners attending the meeting in person or

- Moving forward, Mr. Mamadou noted that the next step of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme would involve developing new ways of working in a synergetic way, improving coordination among the three components of the programme and to increase communication with all stakeholders at both national and regional levels in the ACP region. He further informed that the spirit of collaboration has been so great within the programme and partners have interest to maximize in terms of outputs and impact the programme is making in the ACP countries.



Mr. MAMADOU Kane, the Deputy Chief of the Environmental Governance and Convention Branch-2022 PSC Meeting, Brussels.

This was followed by **remarks from Mr. Paulo de Lima**, FAO Brussels Liaison Officer, who highlighted FAO's long-standing partnership with the ACP Member States that has been boosted in recent years by a strategic engagement with EU on projects supporting food security and livelihoods.

- Highlighted that FAO's work in partnership with the EU promotes sustainable agricultural practices and contributes to building resilient agri-food systems in ACP countries.
- The partnership also helped reduce unsustainable wildlife hunting, conserve natural heritage and strengthen people's livelihoods and food security.



Mr. Paulo de Lima, FAO Brussels Liaison Officer-2022 PSC Meeting, Brussels.

- Enhanced productivity and competitiveness of fishery and aquaculture value chains, while ensuring environmental sustainability and social inclusiveness.
- Informed that the ACP MEAs 3 Programme has been instrumental in the preparation for COP15 by providing a series of information webinars focusing on agricultural biodiversity and identifying experts and resource persons to take part in the COP 15 meeting in Montreal. Meanwhile, tangible results in the form of policy analysis, identification of highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs) and mitigation plans at country level are already visible.

- In conclusion, Mr. de Lima pointed out that FAO has continued to work with regional institutions on regional HHP and biodiversity strategies, respectively. At the global level, FAO successfully organized a seminar in February 2022 to support ACP countries in strengthening regulations to protect pollinators from pesticides.

The chair then presented the meeting agenda which was adopted unanimously without amendments to the discussion items.

Session II: Programme Progress Status Report

Status of implementation of the programme, lessons learned, opportunities for synergies and challenges encountered in the first 12 months of the programme implementation since the previous PSC meeting in December 2021 were presented by UNEP and FAO.

The objective of these two presentations was to provide an opportunity to introspect over the overall achievements and lessons learnt so far to better inform the future of the programme.

Update from the UNEP Component

Status of implementation of the UNEP component was presented by Dr. Balakrishna Pisupati, the ACP MEAs 3 Global Programme Manager, who provided an overview of the Programme components specifically component 1 and 2 and highlighted that UNEP and the implementing partners are internalizing some elements of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme into their various institution. As an institutional capacity building initiative, the programme is helping by raising the voice of the ACP countries through a number of regional consultations conducted in preparation for CBD meetings of Parties.

- A number of training sessions for negotiators, media and journalists dialogue with parliamentarians were carried out. Capacity of national focal points was also built and youth across Africa and Europe engaged in several environmental topics to enhance their capacity for involvement in environmental decision-making processes.
- Enhanced south-south cooperation, where a number of interregional briefing sessions were conducted to exchange experience and expertise on joint plans and also a number of communication materials were developed.
- Supported gender action plan of the Minamata Convention since the ACP MEAs 3 Programme team at UNEP is part of the MEAs Gender Focal Points Network. Consolidated support for regional Seas conventions on issues of governance, sustainable blue economy and area management, as well as supported parties on the management of chemicals and waste.



[Dr. Balakrishna Pisupati, the ACP MEAs 3 Programme Manager- 2022 PSC Meeting, Brussels](#)

- Mapped a number of activities from the Programme in support of the implementation of the post 2020 GBF to enhance synergies.

Challenges

- Slow rate of expenditure due to the COVID-19 pandemic that impacted on the implementation of most of the activities for almost two and a half years.
- Given the nature in the design of most of the programme's activities, there is a clear sense of duplication of work as partners are implementing the same activities in different regions which require consolidation across regions to make maximum use of the programme funds.
- Asked the PSC for the enhancement of support to the African Group of Negotiators who have made a special request for support in their preparation for COP15.

Key Comments

- The EU commented on the excellent work being taken by UNEP on working with environmental journalists, parliamentarians, gender focal points, regional negotiators and the ACP Ambassadors. Further expressed appreciation for the focus of capacity on knowledge management and the networking dimension which is the heart of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme to bring together the different regions to learn from each other. Further encouraged partners to share information on best practices and solutions to deal with challenges facing the implementation of the programme.
- OACPS commented on the inter-regional work carried out by UNEP particularly in the preparation for COPs which is important for the ACP member states. Suggested the need to explore sort of initiatives under the South-South Cooperation and beyond.

Update on the FAO Component

Ms. Kim-Anh Tempelman, the ACP MEAs 3 Programme coordinator of the FAO component, presented the progress of the programme focusing on the overall implementation and specific progress made on the global activities. She highlighted major achievements across the ACP region, including:

- Strengthened institutional and cross-sectoral collaboration through various initiatives, including COP15 preparations, with several information webinars and meetings organized to stimulate interactions between national focal points from different biodiversity cluster MEAs.
- Actively engaged local communities in biodiversity restoration: restoration of endangered forest tree species through Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) on 600 ha of farmland in Niger; revegetation of riparian zones along three degraded rivers in Saint Lucia; and planting of mangrove seedlings to restore degraded mangrove ecosystems in Tanzania.



Ms. Tempelman Kim-Anh, the FAO ACP MEAs 3 Programme coordinator-2022 PSC Meeting, Brussels.

- Identified HHPs still in use in Rwanda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Data was collected in 45 ACP countries to establish a baseline on the number and type of HHPs registered. The baseline is intended to inform national planning and regional strategies on pesticide risk reduction.
- Trained 600 farmers and extension officers on the use of ecosystem-based practices, including agroforestry, environment friendly alternatives to pesticides such as Integrated Pest Management, discovery-based extension and engagement techniques, Sustainable Rice Intensification and Conservation Agriculture With Trees.
- Regional institutional processes to mainstream biodiversity across agricultural sectors were improved. FAO has been supporting the East Africa Community (EAC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) in reviewing their respective Regional Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, and reached out to the African Union and CARICOM to provide similar support. FAO also supported their preparations for high-level meetings, and raised awareness among government officials on options to protect pollinators from pesticides through legislation.

Challenges

- COVID-19 effects were felt until the second quarter of 2022. Virtual interaction was the main tool for programme implementation due to travel restrictions.
- Non-disbursement of the programme funds for the second consecutive year was challenging for activity implementation, particularly those activities with bigger budget lines.
- 'Routine thinking' and lack of knowledge among stakeholders is a hurdle to institutionalizing agricultural biodiversity into the GBF development processes.

Key Comments

- OACPS encouraged FAO and UNEP to increase the level of synergies and collaboration between themselves, particularly in terms of their joint efforts in preparation for and follow up on COP15. Further encouraged the development of a compendium of policy briefs for effective communication with member states.
- The EU commended FAO's excellent work on strengthening knowledge and capacity to drive change. Appreciation was expressed for the concrete results achieved, including in the areas of biodiversity restoration and pesticide risk reduction.
- Clarification on the management of the policy science interface to improve evidence-based decision-making, and the development of guidelines to support countries with the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, was requested.

Progress Reports from the Programme Implementation Partners

The main objective of this segment of the meeting was to give the various partners and stakeholders an opportunity to present their activities, indicate results achieved, and discuss plans for future activities.



Room Africa
PSC 2022 Meeting Participants following the proceedings of the meeting

The Africa Region

Chaired by OACPS's representative Ms. Cristelle Pratt, the presentations were made by the Nairobi Convention, the Abidjan Convention, the African Hub (AUC) and FAO.

Update from the Nairobi Convention was presented by Mr. Theuri Mwangi, a Project Officer responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the programme activities. The presentation covered key activities undertaken in 2022, impact and visibility created.

Key highlights from the Nairobi Convention.

- Increased global visibility of the Nairobi Convention at One Ocean Summit, in Paris from 9-11 February 2022, where Madagascar's Minister of Environment was supported to participate.
- Organized partnership technical dialogue on the nexus between the Western Indian Ocean marine environment and fisheries by experts from Academic and Research Institutions, and SWIOFC Scientific Committee from 26-29 September 2022.
- Established partnership with the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM) to support marine spatial planning in the Western Indian Ocean. A tool for assessing Cumulative Impact Assessment at <https://www.nairobiconvention.org/wio-symphony/>
- Strengthened partnership on management effectiveness for sustainable management of coral reef areas which are crucial to coastal livelihoods and ecosystems in Comoros.
- Launched a status report on Western Indian Ocean sharks and rays in October 2022 and initiated the development of Comoros marine litter action plan, Seychelles marine litter action plan and Zanzibar coastal water quality assessment.
- Elevated awareness of the Nairobi Convention as a key player in regional ocean governance, ecosystem-based management approaches and tools, and assessments.

- There has been an increased demand and interest for strategic partnerships for blue growth initiatives (SADC, IGAD, AU-IBAR), Marine Spatial Planning, ecosystem monitoring, fisheries assessments, capacity building e.g. for MPA and ocean health by the governments of Seychelles, Comoros, Tanzania, Zanzibar. This demonstrated government readiness to roll out Marine Spatial Planning at local and national level.
- Involvement of women in marine resource management have increased in recent years, e.g. Comoros MPA management and development of marine litter action plan. In Seychelles and Tanzania, women are actively participating in policy.
- Strategic partnerships have increased for addressing cross-cutting issues such as fisheries, pollution, ocean management and governance. There have also been emerging interests among stakeholders in co-management of marine space like Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA).
- The Nairobi Convention Secretariat asked the PSC to support the promotion of promotion of exchange visits and twinning program for learning purposes and best practices including south-south cooperation for the duration of the program

Key Comments

- OACPS commended Nairobi Convention for the development of various strategies, protocols and guidelines for ocean governance, ocean management and marine spatial planning. Further commented on the concrete work particularly in bringing together scientists in the southwest India Ocean Fisheries Commission to discuss pressing issues affecting the region in regard to ocean management.

The Abidjan Convention (ABC) was presented by Dr. Abdoulaye DIAGANA, ACP MEAs 3 Programme Coordinator at the ABC Secretariat who highlighted key activities, impact created, and lessons learned resulting from the implementation of the programme's activities in the convention area.

The key highlights include

- Formulation of two additional protocols on MPAs and Plastic pollution for the Protection, Management and Enhancement of the marine and coastal environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa region.
- Organized Side Events in the sideline of the PRCM and IUCN Forum in Saly, Senegal and Kigali, Rwanda 2022.
- The activities initiated so far have allowed the Abidjan Convention to have more consistency and legitimacy with the actors, especially the States and partners.



Dr. Abdoulaye DIAGANA, Abidjan Convention's ACP MEAs 3 Programme Coordinator-2022 PSC Meeting, Brussels

- A strong and special emphasis has been placed on gender balance, which promoted strong presence of women in workshops and working groups-where men and women have acted as group chairpersons, panelists, rapporteurs, moderators.
- Efforts have been made to support perpetual capacity building of local communities, women and youth in mangroves restoration, fighting against plastic pollution and more essentially best practices on environmental issues.
- Abidjan Convention requested the PSC to support the organization of joint side events during major international meetings to facilitate exchange of experiences between stakeholders across different regions.

Key Comments

- Both the EU and OACPS commended the Abidjan convention on its approach of small grant for parties to implement some activities which can facilitate reaching the local communities to benefit from the support even at the small scale so that they can do their work. Further encouraged the convention on synergies with other funding programmes and to prioritize strengthening capacities.

Updates from the African Union Commission (AUC)/ African Hub were presented by Ms. Linda Amornghor-Oje Etta, Director for Blue Economy. The presentation highlighted key activities undertaken in 2022, impact created, and lessons learned which included the following.

- Organized an expert Working Group Meeting on the development of a draft AU Circular Economy Action Plan which will include banning of plastics as well as to review and validate guidelines for accelerating the transition towards a Circular Economy in Africa.
- Organized meetings to work towards preparing for CBD COP 15 and CITES COP 19. The meeting of the AGN on biodiversity was organized back to back with the meeting of the AU experts group on wildlife in preparation for the African common position. Adoption of this new Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is particularly important for African countries. It will require new public policies to transform society to be "nature-positive" while adapting strategies and means for sustainable development.



Ms. Linda Amornghor-Oje Etta, AUC Director for Blue Economy- 2022 PSC Meeting, Brussels.

- Awareness created on the benefits of implementing the 37 measures across the residential, transport, energy, agriculture, health and waste sectors to reduce GHG emissions and air pollution and help meet Agenda 2030, Paris Agreement and Agenda 2063 targets.
- Community of Practice for knowledge generation and sharing for over 100 scientists and policy leaders for air quality and climate change created.

- Inclusion of the gender dimension in the development of the AU Circular Economy Action Plan and roadmap to address the gender gap in all policies, strategies, plans for a just transition to the circular economy for Africa.
- Virtual engagements were not as good across the continent due to inadequate infrastructure and cost of data for stakeholders to engage in programs. There is a need to better prepare for any future pandemics in order not to derail progress of programs.
- Resource constraints: Inadequate financial and human resources to fully implement projects e.g., staff retirements resulting in delayed project implementation due to the vacancy gap created and not quickly filled up due to financial constraints.
- The African Union Commission in collaboration with EEB are planning to organize regional training workshops to promote the ratification and implementation of Minamata convention on mercury.

Key Comments

- The EU expressed concern on the low implementation of the programme and took note of the fact that the AUC commission is yet to conduct recruitment of staff for the programme implementation. The OACPS encouraged the Commission to speed up the recruitment process to ensure that the implementation of the programme is on track.

In Africa, FAO's updates on work progress were presented by Ms. Ivy Saunyama, FAO MEAs Regional Project Coordinator for Africa. The presentation focused on progress at the national (Niger, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe) and regional levels (East, Southern and West Africa).

Key highlights include

- Revised Clearing House Mechanism of Niger's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) with engagement of 20 stakeholders.
- Trained more than 300 people in different areas in Niger, including on the implementation of the CBD and synergies with other Conventions, the use of bio-pesticides, the ANR approach, new alternative energy sources to firewood and alternatives to pesticides for pest management.
- Non-timber products sector enhanced in Niger by supporting the creation of small enterprises led by young rural entrepreneurs.
- Provided policy and technical assistance to the government of Rwanda to integrate



[Ms. Ivy Saunyama, FAO MEAs Regional Project Coordinator for Africa-2022 PSC Meeting, Brussels.](#)

ecosystem-based practices and measures into national agricultural policies. A consultative workshop on policy gap analysis for mainstreaming biodiversity into national agricultural policies and strategies was organized in May 2022.

- National report on registered HHPs that are in use in Rwanda validated; 30 formulations out of 189 pesticides (15.8%) were identified as HHPs in use.
- Strengthening of agricultural extension services and extension curricula in Rwanda by conducting training needs and gap assessment of current Farmer Field School (FFS) Curriculum. Review in progress to reflect biodiversity mainstreaming and sound pesticide management.
- Building the capacity of agricultural producers in Rwanda: 12 FFS established in 6 districts, 180 Farmers trained (100 female and 80 male) in agroecosystem practices including IPM and 30 graduated as facilitators in February 2022.
- Two Project Technical Unit (PTU) meetings were organized in Tanzania and the PTU members participated in a field backstopping and monitoring mission, fostering cross sectoral collaboration and strengthening the implementation of target MEAs.
- Capacity building to promote adoption of agroecosystem-based practices through 9 pre-existing Farmer Fields Schools in Zimbabwe.
- Policy support to mainstream biodiversity and promote sound pesticide management in agriculture in Zimbabwe. A policy issue paper on mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture developed; and biodiversity mainstreamed into Provincial Agriculture Investment Plans (PAIPs) to be consolidated into an agricultural biodiversity sensitive Zimbabwe Agriculture Investment Plan.
- Supported the development of a Regional Strategy on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) for the EAC and SADC, in collaboration with the Centre for Pesticide Suicide Prevention (CPSP) and established HHP Technical Working Groups.
- Multi and cross-sectoral collaboration enhanced for mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors (e.g., Ministries of Agriculture, Environment, Civil Society Organizations, academia)
- Capacity built among pesticide regulators for sound pesticide management and HHP risk reduction.
- Strengthened synergies and collaborations among the various MEAs.
- Increased knowledge and capacity developed on sustainable biodiversity management and climate-smart agriculture.

Key Comments

- The OACPS commended FAO's role on building partnerships that are important for the programme, bringing together communities of practice with the environment-agriculture nexus approach and fostering exchanges between the various MEAs so that people can realize synergies among them.
- The EU commended the work on supporting the revision of countries' [National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans \(NBSAPs\)](#) which is a top priority for the European Commission in light of the post 2020- GBF and expressed its readiness to support investment opportunities on building capacities.

The Caribbean Region.

Chaired by the EU's representative Ms. Aurelie Godefroy, the presentations were made by the Caribbean Hub (CARICOM), the Cartagena Convention, and FAO.

The progress report of CARICOM (Caribbean Hub) was presented by Ms. Teshia Jn Baptiste, the ACP MEAs 3 Programme Coordinator in the Caribbean Hub, the presentation highlighted key programme activities undertaken in 2022, impact created, and challenges encountered. These included:

- Organized webinar series that brought together technical experts from UNEP, FAO and OECS to support parties in preparation for and during the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and synthesized a report on capacity needs and priorities for CBD and Ministerial Statement.
- Conducted regional consultations for data collection and register development to support the establishment of a national inventories and register for hazardous and other wastes (POPs and mercury).
- Improved on the communication strategy for targeted audiences on chemicals and waste management in the Caribbean (private & public sector focus). Three audio-visual materials for targeted audiences on environmentally sound disposal, and alternatives for mercury products and waste as well as a practitioner handbook on technical guidelines on the management of plastic waste and best practices were developed.
- Built synergies with other projects e.g. GEF Islands, GIZ-CARICOM Biodiversity project, support for national DaRT Tool implementation.
- Identified gaps related to lack of gender responsiveness in chemicals and waste management policies and strategies, gender mainstreaming and data on gender roles in the sector.
- Recognized the importance of continuous inter-agency engagement to facilitate strategic planning and synergies/execution of activities, sharing of resources (higher than budgeted expenditure for workshop logistics). Collaboration on joint activities/workshops in the Caribbean region, regular sharing of information, lessons learnt, risk management considerations is key in achieving success.
- A Caribbean Biodiversity Strategy update is scheduled to occur during the 1st and 2nd quarters of 2023 and for the first time, Cuba and the Dominican Republic were invited to the COP capacity building initiative that was held within the region.



Ms. Teshia Jn Baptiste, the ACP MEAs 3 Programme Coordinator in the Caribbean Hub-2022 PSC Meeting, Brussels

- The CARICOM Hub requested the PSC to support more inter-agency collaborations between the MEAs Secretariats and the Hubs particularly for the chemicals and waste cluster of MEAs through critical strategic planning and synergistic execution of activities being undertaken in other larger Projects. Further asked for the review of the programme financial budgets as the current travel budgets require shifting to facilitate additional expenditure to ensure logistics for face-to-face training workshops.

Key Comments

- The EU and OACPS commended CARICOM on its work on building synergies with other programmes and between programmes which are good ideas that can be replicated and for its involvement in preparing other countries in the region for COP 15. Further acknowledged and congratulated the Secretariat on the inclusion of Cuba and Dominican Republic in the COP 15 processes although the two countries are not members of CARICOM.

The Cartagena Convention's updates were presented by Ms. Sarah Wollring, an Associate Programme Officer in charge for Marine Pollution and Communications (AMEP and CETA) and Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Convention's Secretariat. The presentation highlighted key items including:

- Development of two nutrient reduction and valuation case studies for Barbados and Jamaica (co-financed with GEF CReW+ Project) as well as six (6) knowledge management products on seagrasses and the purpose and recommendations of the Regional Nutrients Pollution Reduction Strategy.
- Design/Update of a SPAW booklet on marine protected areas, and a SPAW report on developing a functional ecological network in the Caribbean.
- Cabinet Briefs submitted by the governments of Suriname, Saint Kitts and Nevis and St. Vincent and the Grenadines to support ratification of the Convention and its Protocols, the Marine Biodiversity and Land Based Sources of Marine Pollution Protocol and the LBS Protocol respectively.
- Country focal points and representatives from our Regional Activity Centres from Trinidad and Tobago trained on the Index of Coastal Eutrophication and Harmful Algal Blooms. The development of a regional microplastics training course with Association of Caribbean States and Institute of Marine Affairs was supported and now scheduled for October 31, 2022 to November 4, 2022
- Integration through joint Meetings of Marine Pollution and Marine Biodiversity Protocols and enhanced coordination and communication with Regional Partners, such as CBD Secretariat and other Regional Seas Conventions.
- Improved cooperation with other Regional Sea Conventions to advance regional blue economy experiences and the involvement of Regional Seas in the UNEA 5/14 resolution negotiations. Further increased awareness on the importance of protecting the region's marine and coastal ecosystems.
- Gender sensitive language used during meetings, social media, and in general public awareness activities and publications. In Suriname, plans for a pilot on gender-based climate change is ongoing.

- The inclusion of the importance of synergies and working across the four thematic areas – governance, pollution, marine biodiversity and communications has been further emphasized coupled with south-south exchange of experience.
- The identification of strategic partnerships early in the process provide opportunities for co-financing, for e.g., through Global Environment Facility-funded projects: CReW+ on water and wastewater management and Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (IWEco), Global Water Partnership Caribbean, Caribbean Node on Marine Litter and the BASEL Convention.

Key Comments

- The EU encouraged partners in general to note a few elements that could be useful in increasing effectiveness of implementation and informed that the PSC can be flexible in postponing or modifying some activities in order to achieve positive results.
- The OACPS acknowledged the repeated concern from partners on inter-partner collaboration and encouraged partners particularly the regional seas programme to extensively discuss potential areas of synergies and cooperation among themselves.
- There was acknowledgement from the chairs of the mutual challenges being faced by the regions in sourcing experts for various consultancies and on the need to improve synergies between the various offices. Suggestions were also made to consider how the issue of sargassum may be addressed as a region.

The work of FAO in the Caribbean Region was presented by Ms. Thérèse N. Yarde, FAO ACP MEAs Regional Project Coordinator for the Caribbean. The update focused on the 2022 programme activities related to strengthening the capacity of stakeholders across agricultural sectors at the national level (Saint Lucia) and in the Caribbean region. The key highlights of the presentation included.

- Organized information-gathering mission to Saint Lucia to guide the review of pesticide import licensing and registration regulatory framework.
- Updated Saint Lucia's national Farmer Field School (FFS) manual, which was originally prepared in 2006, to reflect current FFS good practice, with attention to ecosystem-friendly practices, climate resilience, and gender consideration in FFS delivery
- Held stakeholder consultations for the preparation of Saint Lucia's national report on the state of the country's plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.
- Built capacity and carried out consultations for community-based ecosystem rehabilitation. 20 officers were trained in participatory forest management and community meetings were held in 5 villages.
- Supported upgrade of the national Forestry nursery in Saint Lucia to provide planting materials for rehabilitation of riverbank ecosystems.
- Facilitated collaboration between national agencies responsible for water resources management in Saint Lucia; as a result, these agencies have been able to directly address some of the river management issues raised by stakeholders and beneficiaries in target communities.

- Forestry activities in Saint Lucia responded to community and livelihood needs, making them more sustainable. The country's Forestry Department has committed its own resources to expand the reach of the project in ecosystem rehabilitation.
- Collaborated with national and regional experts for sharing of good practices to strengthen the capacity of cocoa producers and processors.
- Consistent emphasis put onto the importance of women and youth inclusion in the programme activities. As such, the participatory forest training beneficiaries consisted of 50:50% women to men ratio; and design of capacity-building approaches in the cocoa sector took into account the gendered divisions of labour.
- Paired, where possible, international experts with local technical personnel for two-way knowledge transfer and capacity development.

Key Comments

- The EU particularly commended FAO's work in the Caribbean on community-based actions in terms of forestry and water resources management and support provided to cocoa producers and processors. OACPS suggested that for the purpose of sustainability it is important to match external expertise with national counterparts, particularly where there are constraints in terms of capacity at the national or local levels.

Session IV: MEA Secretariats

The Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions was represented by Ms. Marylene Beau, Programme Officer who provided overview of the status of the BRS Conventions in the ACP regions, capacity building needs of Parties to the BRS Conventions in the ACP region, BRS engagement in the ACP MEAs 3 Programme and the current activities of the Conventions relevant to the ACP Programme.

Key highlights included the following:

- Most of the ACP countries have ratified all the three conventions except Haiti, Fiji and Niue (Basel Convention); Angola, Comoros, Seychelles, Bahamas, Haiti, Saint Lucia, Fiji, Kiribati, Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, Niue, PNG and Solomon Islands (Rotterdam Convention); and Haiti (Stockholm Convention).
- Technical assistance priorities for the ACP regions covering three top priorities for each of the conventions, such as waste prevention and minimization, monitoring/reporting poisoning incidents related to SHPFs and legal and institutional frameworks among others (*refer to the presentation for details*).
- Promoted the conventions' work through the enhancement of complementarity of action and avoidance of overlaps as well as sharing of lessons learned and experience across the ACP regions.
- Regional preparatory meetings conducted in the three ACP regions for the 2022 face-to-face segment of the BRS COPs.
- Enhanced capacity, processes and infrastructure in the ACP regions to enforce/ comply with selected chemicals and waste MEAs which included Inventories NIP, NAP, Reporting, Trade, Control system and Illegal traffic, etc.

- Improved national frameworks, legislations and mechanisms for the effective implementation of selected MEAs, including legal framework and Management plans and strategies, Regional workshops on legal frameworks and international trade control measures under the BRS conventions and national follow-up activities, sustainable development goals (SDGs) mainstreaming, ratification of the Conventions, Negotiators' training and knowledge sharing. Etc.
- Measures to reduce the influx of waste entering the ACP's marine environment through technical guidelines on plastic wastes, guidance on inventorying plastic wastes, [plastic waste Partnership](#)– and ongoing technical assistance jointly delivered by Secretariat and the regional centers.

Presentation by Minamata Convention on Mercury was delivered by Ms. Marianne Bailey, Programme Management Officer, who provided an update on the fourth meeting of the conference of parties to the convention (COP4) and the related outcomes and decisions adopted during the meeting.

Key highlights included:

- National Reporting: COP clarified the reporting format and called on Parties to provide the secretariat with copies or reports on consent forms received and further requested Parties to continue their ongoing efforts to identify stocks and sources.
- Effectiveness Evaluation: First evaluation launched, and Open-ended Scientific Group established and enhanced Cooperation between Minamata/BRS COP requested continuation and report at COP-5.
- International cooperation and coordination linked to UNEA outcomes: UNEA-5/7 & UNEA-5/8 to contribute to post-2020 biodiversity framework and gathering of knowledge on triple planetary crisis.
- Highlighted several amendments which have been made to the Convention and their Annexes and also informed of some gaps in the effectiveness evaluation of the Conventions' activities.
- St. Lucia to share areas where technical assistance is needed in preparation for becoming a party to the Rotterdam Convention.
- The Convention pays specific attention to the needs of vulnerable populations, especially women and children, in several parts of its text and the COP-4 decision MC-4/10 on gender mainstreaming invited Parties to support the secretariat in its efforts to mainstream gender into all activities to be undertaken by the secretariat as well as by parties and other stakeholders, including through the development of a gender action plan for the Convention during the biennium 2022–2023.

The presentation of the Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was delivered by Mr. Erie Tamale, Senior Programme Management Officer focusing on the arrangements that the CBD Secretariat was putting together to ensure a successful COP15 in Montreal Canada. The representative informed that, there will be consultations from December 3-5, 2022 on the OEWG that was held in Nairobi and those consultations were expected to form the basis of negotiations for the next framework.

The draft document to be available to OEWG is being finalized to include suggestions previously made.

The Secretariat for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) of Wild Fauna and Flora was represented by its Chief of Section, Ms. Haruko Okusu, who presented on the ongoing arrangement for the convention's COP19 to be held in Panama (after Climate COP27 and before CBD COP15) where about 20000 participants are expected to attend.

- Informed that the Secretariat has given briefing for Francophone and Anglophone parties on strengthening law enforcement work for illicit trading and consideration to be given to post COP implementation.
- Encouraged the attendees to engage in the CITES COP to facilitate agreement on the importance of a post COP discussion to reconcile fisheries interest with implementation measures.
- Note that listings of marine species as endangered species should be very consultative because it is difficult to remove marine species even if their conservation status has improved.

Day 2

The Pacific Region.

Chaired by the OACP's Assistant Secretary Ms. Cristelle, the presentations were made by the Pacific Hub (SPREP), the Noumea Convention, FAO-Pacific and the European Environmental Bureau (EEB).

The programme's updates for Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP) and Noumea Convention were presented by Mr. Jope Davetanivalu, Director for Environmental Monitoring and Governance. The presentation highlighted key activities carried out in 2022 under the SPREP and Noumea components of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme. The main highlights included:

- Developed a national environmental management Strategy (NEMS) 2022-2026 for [Tuvalu](#) and a new Pacific Islands Regional Marine Species Action Programme [2022-2026](#).
- Launched regional guidelines on access and benefit sharing during a traditional knowledge workshop held in Fiji in May 2022.
- Organized Pacific Learning Partnership (PLP) on Environmental Social Sustainability (ESS) Mentoring and workshop on EIA Coastal Tourism Guidelines (Samoa).
- Organized preparatory meetings for a number of MEAs and programmes including CBD COP15, BRS and BBNJ to improve on member states' negotiation skills at the various meetings.



Mr. Jope Davetanivalu, Director for Environmental Monitoring and Governance-2022 PSC Meeting Brussels

- Completed three regional training modules that increased membership and subscription to both Noumea convention and SPREP and also created partnership with the World Bank, NZAIA, EIANZ and Griffith University.
- Launched Pacific electronic Regional Marine Species Action Plan (2022-2026) and regional guidelines on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS).
- Strengthen SIDS collaboration in MEAs negotiations as well as engagement of youth, media and members of Parliament.
- Inclusion, Mr. Jope requested the PSC to approve the full disbursement of programme fund for activities **1.4.1.3, 2.1.4.1 and 2.2.3.1** as the need to implement them has changed from the previous planning.

Key Comments

- The OACPS congratulated SPREP on the Pacific Learning Partnership with the World Bank, Agencies from Australia and New Zealand, as well as with the private sector, all of which are in line with the objectives of ACP MEA 3 programme. Further endorsed SPREP's outlined synergies with other programmes such as BIOPAMA and other MEA Secretariats, particularly with the BRS Secretariat.
- In agreement with SPREP's recommendation for the need to strengthen capacities and collaboration of SIDS regarding their engagement in MEA negotiation processes and encouraged all partners to engage in further discussions on South-South Cooperation in the Working Group session.
- The European Union informed all programme partners about the new approach on Communication: In future, the programme will implement a more centralized approach meaning that funds for communication to partners will be decreased whereas funds for centralized communication will be increased. Also informed about the launching of a Global Gateway, which represents a big EU-Strategy with an Investment Offer to support Infrastructure in key sectors (Energy, Transport, Digitalization) to drive change. The Global Gateway comprises a financial package to support investments across the world, targeting to mobilize 300 billion Euros until 2023.
- On Data Information Management and Governance, EU highlighted that data management is a key issue for MEAs and encouraged partners to discuss in depth during the Working Group Sessions of the meeting. The EU is working with UNEP on compiling all available data on Environment-related issues and is supporting the creation of country fiches, which are interactive overviews of available environmental information and in future, there will be opportunities to support regional centers or data platforms.
- SPREP is encouraged to engage in close collaboration with other existing programmes in the Pacific Region: There is a new project titled the "Support Programme for SIDS and Coastal Countries" with opportunities to obtain grants for actual work on the ground.

FAO work in the Pacific Region was presented by Ms. Kim-Anh Tempelman, FAO ACP MEAs 3 Programme Coordinator on behalf of the Regional Project Coordinator for the Pacific. The update focused on the 2022 programme activities in the focus country, Solomon Islands, and in the Pacific region. The key highlights of the presentation included.

- Provision of technical support to the FAO Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands in the development of *The Pacific region action plan to mainstream biodiversity across agriculture*.
- Initiation of institutional arrangements for establishment and operationalization of a regional pesticide registration scheme.
- Preparation ongoing of participatory action research on sustainable cocoa production and on-farm research on soil health management practices to devise ways on ecosystem-based practices and approaches
- Identification ongoing of capacity building needs among extension officers for sustainable biodiversity management in agriculture to review and update training material of government advisory services.
- Took gendered divisions of labour into account in capacity-building activities to ensure gendered and age balanced programme implementation.
- Several other activities have also been planned for 2023, which include among others, Solomon Islands NBSAP revision, on-farm research trials to promote ecosystem-based practices, enhancement of the cocoa sector and reaching out to SPREP to support the Pacific Islands Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas 2021-2025.

Key Comments

- OACPS encouraged the implementation of FAO's component in Samoa as an option, as well as stronger collaboration between UNEP and FAO and at regional level with SPREP and the Pacific Community (SPC).
- The EU encouraged all programme partners to actively work together with EU delegations on the ground, given that the programme is at a stage where partners are delivering concrete impacts. EU delegations could integrate some of the activities that partners are doing into future EU Programming. Further added that agro-ecology activities are very interesting for the EU, who is also active in this sector especially considering the impacts of the recent developments in the Ukraine. Also informed that the EU has deployed additional funds to support food security and FAOs expertise will be useful on how to combine food security issues with sustainable development of natural resources.
- Recognizing FAO's efforts on deforestation, the EU emphasized that a **new EU-regulation** will be passed soon, banning the import of products to the European market if they are linked to deforestation. Thus, the partner countries will be important to scale up good practices with experience working on e.g. Cocoa Value Chains.

Updates from the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) were co-presented by Ms. Elena Lymberidi-Settimo, Policy Manager for Zero Mercury Campaign and **Ms. Rina Guadagnini**, Mercury Officer. The presentation focused on work undertaken in Africa and the Caribbean regions as part of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme implementation.

- Initiation of discussion to develop a roadmap towards phasing out mercury added products in Antigua and Barbuda, St Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago.
- Finalized an investigative report on the production and trade in illegal mercury-added skin lightening cosmetics in Kenya, and also trained women organizations and communities in Uganda and Sierra-Leone towards reducing mercury use in ASGM.



R-L: Ms. Elena Lymberidi-Settimo, Policy Manager for Zero Mercury Campaign and Ms. Rina Guadagnini, Mercury Officer-2022 PSC Meeting Brussels.

- Capacity building of Antigua and Barbuda, St Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago and increasing awareness in the Caribbean, on mercury and phasing out as well as capacity building of ASGM miners in Uganda and Sierra Leone.
- Facilitated wider policy discussions on environmentally sound management of waste, prioritizing high MAPs and preparing some elements of the programme with CARICOM and the BCRC Caribbean.
- Support for Governments is needed regarding implementation of Article 4 provisions of the Minamata Convention.
- Awareness raised towards strengthening enforcement on the control of illegal skin cream trade in Kenya and Uganda. EEB/ZMWG successfully supported the African region at COP4, and facilitated more MAPs banned from manufacturing, import, export under Minamata Convention.
- Facilitated synergies and wider policy discussions on environmentally sound management of waste, prioritizing high MAPs and preparing elements of the project, with CARICOM (and the BCRC Caribbean).
- Communication, coordination and collaboration between international projects is necessary; NGOs can assist, to avoid overlaps, reinventing the wheel, and better use of resources.
- Request the PSC on budget revision to account for the difference in exchange rates and the current expenditure.

Key Comments

- OACPS inquired from EEB why the Pacific Region was not involved in similar workshops on mercury phasing out like those held in the Caribbean. In response, the EEB explained that their budget was cut at the beginning of implementation and those funds were taken from the Pacific. She however concurred with the recommendation to extend workshop invitations to the SPREP and other Pacific partners in the region.
- The EU also asked how the private sector was being engaged on issues of mercury pollution prevention. The EEB clarified that private sectors are at times reluctant to provide information, or they are not aware where to obtain relevant data. In the Caribbean, sometimes Hotel Chains are direct importers of goods. To address this, consultants work with ministries to try to push the private sector.

Launching ACP MEAs' Strategy on South-South Cooperation

The ACP MEAs 3 Programme launched an operational plan document on South-South Cooperation whose main aim is to reposition the ACP MEAs Programme in the context of enhancing South-South Cooperation. **Ms. Mary Kanyua** presented the launching which highlighted the importance of advancing South-South cooperation for learning, development of technical cooperation partnership, capacity building and technology transfer. Other key plans highlighted in the presentation included:

- Ongoing discussions to enhance regional cooperation among the partners will contribute to operationalizing the SSC plan developed.
- Initiation of discussions to support regional knowledge management and technology transfer options have been initiated with the 3 regions, focusing on biodiversity issues.
- Technology Transfer through training the Pacific and the Caribbean regions on appropriate digital technologies and tools for SIDS' climate change and disaster management as well as transition to a green economy.

Key Discussion Points

- The main discussion following the launching of the ACP MEAs 3 Programme's operational note on South-South cooperation (SSC) evolved around technology Transfer as an important tool for collaborations.
- Responding to discussion queries on the Technology Transfer under the SSC Operational Note, Dr Balakrishna explained that the focus of the operational note will be on all 3 regions, focusing more on database and data platforms, with an aim to expand the platforms beyond the scope of Digitalization. He informed that the GBF has a target related to Climate Change and the aim is to explore how elements from different platforms can be consolidated.

Group Discussions

Enhancing South-South Cooperation (SSC) through ACP MEAs for enhanced impacts (Group 1)

The aim of this discussion was to identify ways on how the ACP MEAs 3 Programme can contribute to enhancing impacts and outreach through South-South Cooperation.

Key discussion points included:

- Develop a South-South Cooperation and Engagement Strategy to achieve SSC – that could be translated into actionable and keeping up the momentum of engagement with all ACP MEAs 3 Programme partners. UNEP to take lead in the coordination of the engagement efforts.
- Organize more face-face exchange meetings to showcase specific initiatives/activities of partners to understand what is happening on the ground and send regular reminders to PSC from time to time on events happening in other regions.
- Continue and encourage collaborative work among the PSC members and create informal working group to develop the SSC Engagement Strategy
- Develop a pool of consultants or network of national and regional consultants among the ACP regions to build local capacity.
- Allow for sending relevant information, guidance documents, upcoming events and engagement in COPs of the various MEAs.

- Establish a community of practice involving people from different regions coming together on different topics such as, for example, sustainable production practices, cluster of MEAs.
- Identify common issues for collaboration and proposed carrying out quarterly online virtual meeting chaired by the partners on a rotating basis- CARICOM to facilitate the first Talanoa Dialogue end of January 2023
- Proposed to map youth networks throughout the different regions and host webinar for the ACP MEAs 3 programme on use of social media using the toolkit available on ACP MEAs website to increase visibility.
- Established young fellows programme linking them to national and regional networks to incorporate into ongoing/existing leadership and decision-making activities.

Strengthening the implementation of MEAs, including regional Sea Conventions through ACP MEAs (Group 2).

The aim of this discussion was to identify specific actions by all partners to strengthen the synergistic implementation of MEAs from biodiversity cluster, chemicals cluster, regional seas conventions for enhanced environmental governance and management.

The discussion mainly concentrated on creating synergies across sectors. Key points that emerged from the discussion included the following:

- Synergies across MEAs rests with partner countries – Secretariats can only assist parties, but not necessarily initiate synergetic implementation in member states.
- Understanding of the provisions among Conventions/Agreement are crucial to make people have the same level of understanding and speak the same language at the negotiations tables.
- Necessity to create synergies within and across clusters: Different MEAs have different negotiation modalities so it would be key to work on a tool that bring different MEAs together when speaking about negotiations
- When speaking with a regional perspective, it's important to move to the national level and respect the sovereignty of the countries. Currently, there is political willingness in place on national and regional level on relevant MEAs issues.
- There is visible evidence for a lack of understanding of how to engage synergistically. Thus, understanding how synergies work at national level and creating enabling conditions at national level is important to facilitate sustainability.
- Need to develop relevant capacities at national level are in place to make sure people engage and unlock synergies while also being aware on how to incorporate sustainability into capacity building; integrate processes under the ACP MEAs 3 Programme to mainstream synergies in activities; connect to UNEP programmes; Regional Seas Conventions are contributing to biodiversity and chemicals on sidelines for global agreements.
- Recognized NBSAPs as great vehicles in the implementation of GBF but they lack time, resources, capacities. Hence, new NBSAPs should be different this time and issues from other Agreements should be included in drafting.
- Given that some governments are not interested in synergies, there is a need to incentivize governance approaches through a meaningful engagement between ministries.
- On national reporting to various Conventions, a good analytical exercise could find and map out synergies; good use of funding and engagement of analysts at national/regional level to see where the synergies could take place at national level by bringing people from government together to act on them.

- Suggestions made on how to utilize Behavioral Science, to not only tackle issues from the “usual” angles, but also to look into how we can motivate, incentivize people and institutions to engage and make the decisions.
- Focus on the use of webinar to facilitate synergies and cross-sectional exchange. Additionally, partners should get involved in stocktaking after COP on what the new GBF means for all the parties and clearly elaborate on how MEAs like BRS contribute to the new GBF.

Concluding Session

After hearing to the outcomes of the group discussions, the meeting focused on concluding session. Dr. Balakrishna Pisupati, UNEP made a synoptic presentation of key discussions and follow up needs. The PSC identified

- * Institutionalizing the ACP MEAs
- * Streamlining actions and focal area, including mainstreaming
- * Focusing on co-benefits
- * Alignment of actions using emerging opportunities
- * Learning from each other
- * Maximizing returns of investments

as key opportunities.

It was also suggested that given the requests from partners for adjustments to work plan and budget needs, UNEP will consolidate the requests and send to the EU and OACPS Secretariat for approval and any decision related to adjustments of work plans and budgets in 2023 can be take electronically during the first quarter of 2023 to save time.

The Co-chairs of the meeting concluded the meeting with a word of appreciation to all the partners for expediting the implementation.