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UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.44/INF.12a
20 December 2022

Original: ENGLISH

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

Virtual, 01 February 2023 – 03 February 2023

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ACP MEAS III 3RD PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

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



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.

Progress Report from The Cartagena Convention

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.

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.