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EC ACP MEAs PROGRAMME NEWSLETTER



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A new approach to MEA implementation

The EC ACP MEAs Programme presents a unique opportunity as well as a unique challenge for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). This European Union (EU) funded 21 million euro four-year capacity enhancement programme aims to address one of the central issues currently facing the international environmental community: the implementation of multi-lateral environmental agreements (MEAs). Having entered into a multitude of MEAs, many African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries face the enormous challenge of implementing their obligations.

MEAs are negotiated to address various environmental concerns but often this negotiation process does not fully take into consideration the constraints related to implementation which ensue for many non-industrialised countries. Although most major MEAs include provisions for common and differentiated responsibilities in addition to technical assistance and technology transfer, many ACP countries face formidable human, financial and technical obstacles to implementation. Environment ministries and other relevant authorities lack the necessary personnel and equipment, staff lacks the detailed technical training to deal with increasingly complex environmental issues and offices are burdened with reporting to MEAs. In addition, MEAs are often implemented in a piecemeal manner, not taking into consideration the possible synergies of implementation and available complementarities inherent in a clustered approach.



To assist ACP countries to implement their obligations under environmental agreements, the United Nations Environment Programme has partnered with the European Union to engage several key regional and sectoral actors in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. UNEP and the EU are supporting and strengthening three existing regional institutions with environmental mandates to deliver high quality capacity enhancement activities to countries in those regions. The African Union Commission, based in Addis Ababa, will house the African Hub of the EC ACP MEAs Programme. The Caribbean Hub will be hosted by the Caribbean Community Secretariat. The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme will host the Pacific Hub.

These three Regional Hubs will focus on strengthening and enhancing the capacities of national governments and stakeholders as well as regional and sub-regional organizations and related institutions. Activities will include training for negotiation and lobbying skills; project design and management; harmonized and streamlined national reporting to MEAs; improved information manage-

ment and utilization; and development, testing and dissemination of normative tools. Through the delivery of these activities the Regional Hubs will strengthen their position as regional centres of environmental excellence and will support countries with regional and national approaches to MEA implementation. Sustainability beyond the term of the EC ACP MEAs Programme is essential, and the Hubs will be supported by UNEP to develop strategies to continue their work after the first phase of the Programme.

The three Regional Hubs will be supplemented by support to the implementation of specific MEAs. UNEP is coordinating and facilitating the work of four partner institutions: the UNEP Risoe Centre on Energy Climate and Sustainable Development, the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Secretariat of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

UNEP Risoe Centre will build capacity of African countries, in particular, to access Clean Development Mechanism funds and will also run activities in the Caribbean and the Pacific. The Global Mechanism will extend its successful SolArid programme to Caribbean and Pacific countries and will focus on developing integrated financing strategies for sustainable land management.



The sound management of chemicals in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries will be boosted through additional funds being made

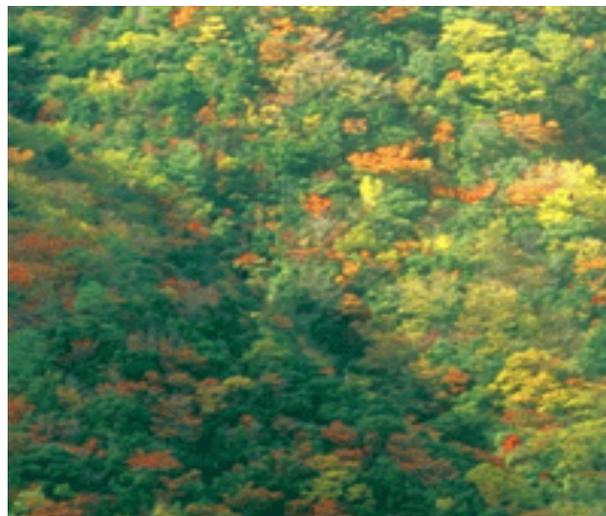
available to the SAICM Quick Start Programme. The FAO will undertake activities to promote the clean-up of obsolete pesticides and pesticides management.

Traditionally, these seven sub-components would have been considered as separate projects. The challenge for UNEP will be to coordinate these projects and the various partners to ensure complementarity among the activities and to avoid overlap. Therein lies the opportunity as well: by working closely with its partners UNEP will be able to identify and support coordinated national and regional approaches to MEA implementation. Much remains to be done to ensure the success of the EC ACP MEAs Programme, but with hard work, coordination, cooperation and information and experience-sharing, the partners will be able to improve MEA implementation and the state of the environment at the national, regional and global levels. This is an interesting time for UNEP and its partners, and we look forward to the challenge.

Bakary Kante

Director DELC/UNEP

EC ACP MEAs Programme Co-ordinator



Recent developments under the EC ACP MEAs Programme

The EC ACP MEAs Programme entered its six-month inception phase on 1 March 2009. During this period the programme partners, under UNEP's overall coordination, will develop their framework activities into a detailed costed work plan and start rolling out substantive capacity enhancement activities.

1) African Hub

The African Hub has initiated recruitment of project staff, which is now in the final stages. In the interim, a consultant is on board as an acting project manager. With UNEP support and input from MEA Secretariats the African Hub has undertaken a review of existing capacity needs and will hold African sub-regional needs assessment and prioritisation workshops in July. UNEP is working closely with the African Union Commission (AUC) to develop the agenda, select the participating countries, and organise the logistics for these first workshops which will discuss and endorse identified needs and priority capacity building activities for the African region. For more information contact Ms. Fatoumata Ndoye (fnjallow@yahoo.com).

2) Caribbean Hub

The Caribbean Hub is undertaking a needs assessment and prioritisation study which will form the basis of their needs assessment and prioritisation workshop scheduled for August. UNEP undertook a mission to CARICOM on 15-16 June to discuss pending issues with the Caribbean Hub and initiate activities. The Caribbean Hub inception phase work plan was finalised and UNEP provided technical support with regard to the needs assessment work. For more information contact Mr. Garfield Barnwell (gbarnwell@caricom.org).

3) Pacific Hub

SPREP has initiated a number of activities, including synthesising MEA-related needs of Pacific ACP countries on the basis of information available in national capacity self assessments and received during SPREP and other regional meetings. On the basis of these findings and a consultative process SPREP will develop their detailed activities for the duration of the EC ACP MEAs Programme. For more information contact Mr Frank Wickham (frankw@sprep.org).

4) UNEP Risoe Centre (URC)

URC has requested nine preselected African countries (Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Malawi, Mauritania, Nigeria and Rwanda) to give input on their participation in the Clean Development Mechanism sub-component and to provide further information on their current CDM capacity. URC will analyze the information received and, where necessary, conduct additional in-country scoping missions. Caribbean and Pacific regional and national level activities are also planned. For more information contact Ms. Miriam Hinostroza (Miriam.Hinostroza@risoe.dk).

5) Global Mechanism

The Global Mechanism has started rolling out its activities related to developing integrated financing strategies for sustainable land management in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Three workshops have already been held in Africa (Gabon, Seychelles and Burkina Faso). One workshop is planned for the Pacific in July and another is planned for the Caribbean in August-September. For more information contact Mr. Youssef Brahimy (y.brahimi@global-mechanism.org).

6) SAICM

In April 2009, the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund Implementation Committee approved a USD 250,000 Basel Convention-related project which will benefit from EC ACP MEAs Programme funding. The next QSP funding window closes in August 2009. To promote the EC ACP MEAs Programme and raise awareness of countries concerning the QSP and the existence of additional funds under the EC ACP MEAs Programme, the SAICM Secretariat has undertaken various outreach activities at global, regional and sub-regional meetings. For more information contact Mr. Matthew Gubb (mgubb@chemicals.unep.ch).

7)FAO

The FAO undertook a scoping mission to the Pacific in May 2009 to liaise with the Pacific Regional Hub (SPREP) and other sub-regional offices to prioritise activities related to obsolete pesticides and pesticides management in the Pacific. FAO undertook a mission to the Caribbean in June 2009 to identify the region's priority countries and needs. In Africa, FAO is planning to roll out Phase II of its successful African Stockpiles Programme (ASP). For more information contact Mr. Mark Davis (Mark.Davis@fao.org).

EC ACP MEAs Programme UNEP Nairobi Team



From Left: Halae Fuller, Marko Berglund, Bakary Kante, Elizabeth Mrema, Sally Mkok and Kelly Kabiru

The EC ACP MEAs Programme Newsletter

The EC ACP MEAs Programme Newsletter will be published quarterly during the EC ACP MEAs Programme. It will include opinion pieces by the programme partners as well as an update of the latest developments under the EC ACP MEAs Programme. For more information on the EC ACP MEAs Programme please contact:

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