



Encouraging sustainable development in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries

The Secretary-General of the ACP Secretariat, Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, recently delivered the opening statement on the occasion of the First Open Day of the Department of Sustainable Economic Development and Trade (SEDT) at the ACP House in Brussels (11 October 2010). He drew attention to the fact that for many years, programmes and projects have been developed and implemented with the financial support of the European Union aimed at enabling the African, Caribbean and Pacific States to derive maximum benefit from the globalization process while respecting the context of sustainable development, particularly by enhancing the capacities of the ACP countries and regional organizations.

An important example of such an initiative is the multi-year project on Capacity building for implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in ACP countries (ACP MEAs project) funded through the Ninth European Development Fund (9th EDF) Intra-ACP budget line. During the Open Day proceedings, UNEP in its role as overall coordinator and facilitator of this project, together with UNCCD Global Mechanism, presented the ACP MEAs project to ambassadors and representatives from ACP Missions in Brussels, as well as to high-level representatives from the European Commission. Their attention was especially drawn to the project's ambitious objectives, its current level of implementation and the need to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project results.

This is a special challenge when designing and implementing environmental programmes. Many environmental problems are transboundary and global in nature. Such problems can most effectively be addressed through international co-operation. For this reason, the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU states that one of the key objectives of the Union's environmental policy is to promote measures at international level to deal with regional or global environmental problems.

African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries face significant challenges to implement Multilateral

Environmental Agreements (MEA). Deforestation and desertification, for example, are further exacerbated by often inadequate land tenure systems and/or weak enforcement of existing systems. Climate change is a major development challenge for many ACP countries which, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), are among the most vulnerable as they are more likely to suffer from a rise in sea-level or an increase in disasters such as floods or droughts, for which they typically have insufficient adaptation and mitigation capacity. The loss of biodiversity due to unsustainable development or poor management of natural resources reduces the available resources for rural and urban communities, and lowers the resilience of ecosystems to climate change and other environmental disturbances. Sound chemicals management problems are often exacerbated by technical constraints such as the lack of suitable facilities for testing chemicals and destroying obsolete chemicals.

Global environmental sustainability can be fully realised only if – among other measures – key international environmental agreements are actively supported and properly implemented. In order to address such pressing issues as those noted above, the European Commission (EC) has joined forces with the ACP countries, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the FAO/UNCCD Global Mechanism and several other partners to enhance the capacity of developing countries to participate in the negotiation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and to implement them at national and regional levels.

Over the years many ACP countries have found it challenging to fulfill their obligations as signatories to MEAs, often because of inadequate human resources and skill-sets necessary to address increasingly complex scientific and technical issues. Depending on the country or region, there may be a strong need for financial support and capacity building at all institutional levels dealing with environmental issues. At the regional and international levels, environmental governance challenges are further compounded by the various MEAs that place diverse and often complex obligations on the parties. The fragmentation and specialisation of international environmental issues has further contributed to the difficulty

that many developing countries face in deciphering and implementing MEAs.

Developed from two Memoranda of Understanding signed by UNEP with the EC and the ACP Secretariat respectively, and consistent with the Cotonou Agreement principles and the 2005 EU Consensus on Development, the overall objective of the ACP MEAs project is to improve the environmental situation of the ACP countries and especially to support Millennium Development Goal (MDG) N° 7 'Ensuring environmental sustainability'. This addresses not only poverty alleviation and the adverse effects of climate change, but other threats to the environment and sustainable development as well.

The ACP MEAs project focuses on the enhancement of the beneficiary's negotiating capacity, lobbying, legislative drafting, and information dissemination and exchange skills. The activities of the project demonstrate progress through two components: 1) Strengthening three regional MEA hubs (AUC, CARICOM and SPREP) promoting regional cooperation and integration, and 2) Supporting specific MEAs through additional funding for capacity building for the Clean Development Mechanism (UNEP Risoe Centre), sound management of chemicals (SAICM Quick Start Programme), Combating Desertification (UNCCD-GM) and Obsolete Pesticides (FAO). Both components seek synergies and encourage the development of South-South cooperation and exchange of good policies and governance practices.

The added value of the ACP MEAs project to the overall achievement of the EU's sustainable environment and development policy is demonstrated by contributing to some of the key EU strategic engagements in the ACP region. The project supports the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and its thematic partnership on Climate Change (JAES first Action Plan 2008-2010). The ACP MEAs project also complements at policy level the recent review of the EU's Strategy 2011-2013 on the thematic instrument for management of energy and natural resources (ENRTP) focusing on strengthening environment and climate governance.

Needless to say, the Secretariat of the ACP Group of States plays a crucial role in all of these initiatives. The political alliance between the EU and ACP States ensures constructive contribution to debates such as the recent international summits on the Millennium Development Goals in New York (20-22 Sep. 2010) and the Climate Change Negotiations under the United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC) in Cancun (29 Nov-10 Dec 2010).

With such collaborations, the European Union remains a leading proponent of international environmental action and co-operation, committed to promoting the concept of sustainable development worldwide, and fully integrating environmental responsibility as a cross-cutting issue in its policy and development processes.

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Africa Hub (AUC)

The Africa Hub (AUC) is reviewing the needs of Kenya, Tanzania, Comoros and Madagascar and will subsequently develop guidance manual for the ratification and implementation of the Protocol on Land-based Sources of Pollution to the Nairobi Convention. The manual will be presented at validation meeting/workshop scheduled for end of year 2010. The Africa Hub (AUC) is also developing two regional framework harmonized legislations for implementing a cluster of MEAs. A study was carried out in Central Africa to identify areas of environment and natural resources management. A sub-regional validation workshop is planned for end 2010 / beginning 2011. AUC is in the process of identifying a partner to jointly develop the content of two workshops aiming at environmental law enforcement training. The Africa Hub (AUC) will also develop a training manual for journalists in early 2011, and is seeking to partner with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Association of Network of Environmental Journalists (ANEJ) to conduct two awareness raising workshops in Africa on their role in MEA implementation and enforcement. The Africa Hub is also defining the methodology to develop a video on MEAs to be broadcasted on national televisions to improve public awareness on the main MEAs and to promote public participation in their implementation through access to information. For further information please contact the Africa Hub coordinators Ms. Fatoumata Ndoye (NDOYEF@afrika-union.org, fnjallow@yahoo.com) and Mr. Livingstone Sindayigaya (sindayigaya@yahoo.com).

Caribbean Hub (CARICOM)

The Caribbean Hub convened a regional negotiation skills training workshop geared towards supporting the process of succession planning at the national and regional levels through building the capacity of a new core of negotiators to represent national and regional interests in the international fora from November 10-12 in Guyana. Other activities being planned for implementation towards the end of 2010 into early 2011 are the development of guidelines for mainstreaming MEAs into National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), the development

of the centralized database on MEAs, National Training and Legal Advisory Services and the reproduction of memorabilia/ paraphernalia to increase public awareness and access to knowledge of MEAs. For further information please contact the Caribbean Hub Coordinator Ms. Anya Thomas (*anya@caricom.org*).

Pacific Hub (SPREP)

Positive feedback was received following the CBD COP-10 meeting (18 - 29 October 2010) in Nagoya (Japan); the Pacific was very vocal with a strong, coordinated presence, demonstrating the effectiveness of the preparatory meeting 'Valuing Island Biodiversity – Making conservation happen in the Pacific islands region' held on 22 October 2010 in Nagoya.



Samoa delegate and one of SPREP's partners at CBD COP10 Side Event, 'Valuing Island Biodiversity'. Photo courtesy of SPREP

A series of biodiversity conservation efforts from the Pacific islands region, highlighting successful models and exploring opportunities for up-scaling and sustainability as well as challenges and lessons learned were brought up and shared. Further activities in Sep – Dec 2010 include the piloting of the MEA clearinghouse mechanism in the Cook Islands in a one-day workshop, with very positive feedback on the value of the content and format of the clearinghouse mechanism. Mainstreaming of MEAs in national planning and budgeting processes has also begun, with the first national workshop on integrated environmental assessment held in Kiribati in October. The next Integrated Environmental Assessment (IEA) workshop is planned for Samoa in December. For further information please contact the Pacific Hub Coordinator Dr Jill Key (*Jillk@sprep.org*).

UNEP Risoe Centre

First national workshops presenting the current global state of CDM projects are scheduled to take place in end 2010 in Trinidad and Tobago, Angola, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire,

Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tome and Principe, Fiji and Vanuatu. Second national workshops, aimed at providing more technical and procedural details to participants will take place in Cuba from 9-12 November and in Belize in early February 2011. URC coordinated and successfully organized the Latin American and Caribbean Carbon Forum in cooperation with the World Bank, the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE), the International Emission Trading Association (IETA) and the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB). This leading conference and trade fair for the CDM and carbon finance in the region was held in Dominican Republic on 13-15 October 2010. Presentations and further information on the Forum can be found at www.latincarbon.com. An African Bankers' Carbon Forum took place in Johannesburg on 4-5 November 2010. The event sought to deepen the engagement of local banks and financial institutions in the African carbon market, to enhance local capacities for appraising and financing development projects, and to facilitate the financing of previously identified activities in Africa. On September 28-29, a Legal and Regulatory Workshop for Carbon Trading & CDM Investment was also organized in Nairobi. The event allowed legal advisors working within Designated National Authorities (DNAs) from MEA ACP countries in Africa to share experiences and lessons on building effective institutional and policy frameworks that support CDM investment. In addition, commercial lawyers from across Africa will be trained on legal and contractual issues integral to CDM project implementation success. Proceedings from this Regional workshop are available at ww.acp-cd4cdm.org. For further information please contact the UNEP Risoe Centre Coordinator Ms. Miriam Hinojosa (*milh@risoe.dtu.dk*).

SAICM Secretariat

The results of the Ninth application round, closed on 27 August 2010 are now available. Around 40 applications were submitted to the SAICM secretariat for funding seeking €7 049 510. The QSP Trust Fund Implementation Committee at its Tenth meeting held from 18 to 20 October 2010 in Rome decided to approve six projects and conditionally approved 13 projects with a combined value of €3 292 489. Out of these 19 approved and conditionally approved projects, five will be financed through the ACP MEAs funding. Of these five three were submitted by Governments (Mozambique, Saint Lucia and Ethiopia) and two were submitted by civil society organizations (Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Africa and Pro-biodiversity Conservationists in Uganda (PROBICOU)). For further information please contact the SAICM Secretariat Coordinator Ms. Nora Silva (*Nora.Silva@unep.org*).

FAO

In the Africa Region, support to Botswana, Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Swaziland and Comité Inter-Etats pour la Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel (CILSS) countries has continued securing additional funding from the FAO Technical Cooperative Programme (TCP) in combination with ACP MEAs funding. The activities will also link with the on-going CropLife International initiative to safeguard all obsolete pesticides stocks in these countries by the end of 2011 with the disposal of the most high risk materials soon after. In the Caribbean Region, a regional training workshop for use of the Pesticide Stock Management System (PSMS) was held in June. The system is now deployed for 11 countries in the region and data entry on the common list of registered pesticides is underway. A survey of pesticide legislation and registration systems and needs in the Caribbean region is underway; highlighted needs will be addressed in 2011. In the Pacific Region implementation of activities related to pesticide regulation, promotion of lower risk alternatives and development of communications and awareness strategies have progressed well. At the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Heads of Agriculture and Forestry meeting in September, it was agreed that SPC and FAO would formulate 3 Regional TCP projects in support of these focal areas. In addition, the completion of activities related to contaminated site assessment and container management have advanced significantly with support from SPREP. An initial assessment of container management needs is planned in Samoa and Fiji by the end of 2010 with assessment of contaminated sites identified by SPREP to follow in early 2011. The outputs from these assessments may result in additional TCP submission and are already linked to the joint UNEP/FAO project on POPs in the Pacific. For further information please contact the FAO Coordinator Mr. Mark Davis (mark.davis@fao.org).

UNCCD GM

In Mauritania, the Country Strategic Investment Framework on Sustainable Land Management (CSIF-SLM), conceived under the TerrAfrica initiative was launched during a workshop held in Mauritania on first week of November. Being part of the SLM National Committee of Mauritania, the GM participated in this validation and operationalisation workshop of the CSIF led by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The workshop centred around three

main topics of discussion, namely the integration of SLM in policies at all levels, knowledge management on SLM and integrated financing strategies for SLM which was facilitated by the GM. During the GEF component on Sustainable Oasis Development Project workshop, which was held back to back to CSIF validation, the GM took the opportunity to share the successful experience of the Boutlimit and Mbalal villages in Mauritania to seek support for the up-scaling of this cropping initiative at national level. The GM is also in the process of elaborating a co-financing agreement with FAO in the context of the Great Green Wall for the Sahel and the Sahara Initiative (GGWSSI) in support of the African Union and financed by the European Commission. The African component of scope/acp (South to South Cooperation on Land and Environment) will contribute to the GGWSSI, with the establishment of a financing partnership platform for peri-Saharan countries to support the implementation of the GGW programmes. For more information please contact the UNCCD GM Coordinator Ms. Ines Chaalala (i.chaalala@global-mechanism.org).

United Nations Day (24 October 2010, Brussels)

The UN Day was celebrated at Brussels Grand Place on 24/10/10 with a particular focus on the European Union-United Nations partnership. A Millennium Development Goal focused UN Village was set up. The ACP MEAs project was presented at the joint UNEP/UNICEF stand and visibility materials (i.e. flyers, newsletters) were distributed to raise project's awareness to a large public (EU citizens, students, EC staff) demonstrating strong interest for mainstreaming of environment into development cooperation in ACP countries. For further information, please contact Sandrine Marquès (sandrine.marques@unep.org).



ACP MEAs flyers and newsletter Sep. 2010
Photo courtesy of UNEP

This newsletter is published quarterly and includes opinion pieces by the programme partners as well as an update of latest developments. For more information on ACP MEAs please contact:

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