



Human planted mangroves in Kiribati

ACP MEAs two and a half years along

The European Union-funded project on Capacity building related to multilateral environmental agreements in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (the “ACP MEAs” project) has passed its half-way point, having completed two and half years of implementation. Partnering with the European Union, UNEP is supporting the African Union Commission, the Caribbean Community Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, three existing regional institutions with environmental mandates. One of the project aims is to enhance these institutions as regional multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) hubs, enabling them to deliver high-quality capacity building activities to the 79 African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States. The Regional Hubs approach is supplemented by support to the implementation of specific MEAs, namely those related to climate change, desertification and the chemicals and waste cluster of MEAs and related international undertakings. This component of the project is provided through many other partners. Among those, the UNEP Risoe Centre supports ACP countries to access the global carbon market. The Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification supports countries to develop integrated financing strategies for sustainable land management. The Secretariat of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) administers the Quick Start Programme, which promotes the sound management of chemicals. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) supports countries with pesticide management.

At the inception of the project in 2009 no single institution

in Africa was providing support to all African countries to implement MEAs. The ACP MEAs project has filled this gap. The African Union Commission hosting the African Hub has now the institutional structures in place to deliver capacity building activities to support MEAs implementation and consequently improve the state of the environment in African countries. Under UNEP guidance and support the AUC has benefited from knowledge exchange and learning by doing while implementing a large-scale capacity building project. The Hub enhanced negotiating capacity related to and scientific support for MEAs; improved regional and sub-regional cooperation, increased ACP countries and Secretariat coherence as well as improved compliance with and enforcement of MEAs at the national and regional levels. Results to date opened the door to discussions within the AUC in view of the future creation of an MEA Unit within the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture’s Division for the Environment to address MEA issues broadly.

The ACP MEAs has dramatically increased CARICOM’s role as a regional MEA hub expanding its mandate focusing on regional policy articulation, development and policy implementation. In addition to institutional advances, CARICOM has strengthened the implementation of MEAs at national and regional levels to support Member States to better meet and sustain compliance with MEAs when mainstreaming MEAs into national policies and strategies.

Conversely, SPREP serving as the Pacific Hub has a long institutional history and the ACP MEAs project was integrated smoothly in SPREP’s existing structure. Recently conducted Mid-term review indicated that the Pacific

Hub has been successfully established on basis of SPREP's existing regional networks and in-house expertise. The Hub is providing an operational and outreach programme that is delivering quality capacity-building services to Pacific Island Countries, with notable achievements over the last two years.

In addition, the Regional Hubs benefited from field implementation of specific MEAs by Executing Agencies. Active into climate change mitigation, UNEP Risøe Centre (URC) builds capacity of countries to access global carbon market through the Clean Development Mechanism. To date, through the ACP MEAs project, the URC has engaged with twelve target countries (Angola, Belize, Botswana, Cuba, Fiji, Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Trinidad and Tobago and, Vanuatu). Activities include identification of national implementation teams and local project coordinators, operationalization of the Designated National Authorities (DNAs) of these countries, design of sustainable development criteria for selection of projects and the review of national project approval procedures through national and sector-focused CDM workshops as well as organization of regional events to equip countries with tools to develop and approve CDM projects. These workshops increase the knowledge of CDM among participants and help them to gain skills to identify and develop CDM projects while generally raising awareness in relation to climate change and its adverse impacts. In addition, the workshops are also used as venues for identifying project ideas and potential local CDM investors whose engagement is important in the capacity building process. In addition, publications and further tools have been prepared. The URC develops technical guidelines and guidebooks to promote awareness of the CDM.

Also the sound management of chemicals in ACP countries was boosted by the ACP MEAs project and ten Quick Start Programme projects are on-going to protect human health and the environment in CILSS States (Burkina Faso, Chad, Gambia, Mauritania, Niger), Djibouti, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Pacific States (Cook Islands, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga), Burundi and Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Senegal and Uganda.

Progress has also been achieved in sustainable land management and in pesticide management. The Global Mechanism has extended its SolArid programme to Caribbean and Pacific and provided national and local ACP actors with tools to improve the use of existing resources and mobilization of new and innovative financial resources for Sustainable Land Management. The FAO has supported the inventory of obsolete pesticides in all ACP project countries

and the safeguarding in several African countries (Kenya, Malawi). Capacity to manage pesticides has been improved in all ACP project countries. Awareness raising on the impact of pesticides on human health and the environment and identification, development and promotion of alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides and specifically endosulfan is on-going in Benin.

Building on partners' expertise and involvement, the ACP MEAs project contributes to address lack of enforcement of MEAs in ACP countries and progressive empowerment of this major environmental challenge by ACP States.

In the remaining period of the ACP MEAs project, efforts will concentrate on catching up the delays experienced during the first two years of implementation mainly due to the set up of institutional structures and identification of specific activities at the beginning of the project. Although the speed of implementation picked up in second and third years; after consultation with project partners, UNEP asked the European Commission to postpone the closure of the project until 31 December 2013 to ensure entire completion of project activities in certain hubs.

To date, lessons learned opened door to brainstorming on further adaptation to regional specificities and possible focus on clusters of MEAs to optimize project results. Outcomes of the upcoming European Commission's mid-term review will definitely contribute to the on-going brainstorming.

Bakary Kante, Director, Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, United Nations Environment Programme.

AUC

Nine countries (Cameroon, Comoros, Congo Brazzaville, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali and Swaziland) have embarked on the development of multi-stakeholder collaboration strategies to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of MEAs implementation at national level. The strategies are expected to be in place by first quarter of 2012. Four countries (Cameroon, Ghana, Malawi, and Seychelles) and the African Union Commission received in October 2011 publications from Earthprint-SMI Distribution. These publications on MEA-related issues will provide information to students and researchers in view of supporting better development of strategies on environmental management in Africa and research work on MEAs and MEAs related issues. The Hub delivered a successful law enforcement training in Nairobi, Kenya on 22-25 November for African personnel involved in MEAs enforcement. The manual on enforcement

and implementation of MEAs will be one of the outputs of the training and will be used to replicate the knowledge gained and to create a multiplying effect to enhance enforcement capacity of MEAs at national level. The Hub also developed a brochure in October 2011 on the Bamako Convention to sensitize policy makers and encourage all African member states to ratify the Convention. It plans to develop a policy brief in December 2011 on synergetic implementation of the three Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, UNCCD and Biodiversity Convention) to sensitize African planners on the opportunities involved in such a mechanism, such as pooling and maximizing of resources earmarked for MEAs implementation. For further information, please contact Coordinators Ms. Fatoumata Ndoye (fnjallow@yahoo.com) and Mr. Livingstone Sindayigaya (sindayigaya@yahoo.com).

CARICOM

The Hub will convene the Judicial and Customs Officers training seminars as well as a workshop on negotiation skills for the regions negotiators. The expected results of these activities in the case of the former are to increase the capacity of regional customs and judicial officials to adequately address issues before them in their day to day operation and in the case of the latter to develop negotiators' capacity to design and present interventions, caucus with other parties and conduct negotiations on draft text in contact groups. Additionally, meetings to facilitate the compilation of MEA Best Practices in the CARIFORUM Region will continue during this period. The Hub will also initiate planning to facilitate training attachments/internships for young professionals and also to support the participation of Caribbean experts in African and Pacific Hub Activities. For additional information please contact the interim Caribbean Hub Coordinator, Ms. Anya Thomas (anya@caricom.org).

SPREP

A notable initiative on mainstreaming is taking off in Kiribati, where capacity building is starting to have an impact on the national development planning process. SPREP's Environmental Governance team assisted Kiribati in the development of a national environment policy, through a stakeholder consultation process held on 12-24 August. An over-arching policy framework was developed to strengthen the coordination of Kiribati's various environmental thematic policies, and improve the integration and mainstreaming of the environment policy priorities into the country's next Kiribati Development Plan. The regional position with reference to the upcoming UNCCD COP10 meeting was prepared at the preparatory meeting held 29 August–2 September, Fiji. Negotiation and media skills training was given and a Pacific

Islands Brief was prepared for delegates attending the COP. Three SPREP staff assisted the Pacific Island delegation at the COP10 meeting itself, held on 10–21 October in South Korea. "In the past I have not seen such active participation from the Pacific islands but more recently I have noticed our friends from the Pacific are not only engaging themselves in the contact group but also negotiating the text with our European Union and African friends." commented Chencho Norbu, Chair of the Committee of the Review of the Implementation of the Convention. The Sustainable Development Working Group organized a Rio+20 Pacific Preparatory Meeting on 20–22 July in Samoa, in which countries agreed priorities to consider in their preparation of national positions. SPREP's first Pacific Environment Forum held on 12 September in Samoa focused on identifying key messages in important regional issues to further assist countries in their preparations for Rio+20. National capacity building in negotiation skills took place in Tonga from 19–21 September, for 23 participants from six Ministries. A follow-up visit was held in Tuvalu to progress mainstreaming of MEAs through the integrated environmental assessment process, 28–30 September, for around 15



Break out group at the UNCCD COP10 regional preparatory meeting, Fiji, 29 August-2 September 2011.

participants from six government departments. Activities over the last quarter of 2012 include negotiation skills training in the Cooks Islands (27–28 October), Niue (28–30 November) and Tuvalu (November), and mainstreaming workshop in the Cook Islands (30 October – 4 November), with a follow-up visit to Kiribati (9–16 November). For further information please contact the Pacific Hub coordinator Dr Jill Key (Jillk@sprep.org).

URC

Counting the clock backwards towards December 2012, when the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol ends, project participating countries are diligently working on polishing the national regulations for CDM at the time of consolidating their CDM national project portfolios.

Fifteen Project Idea Notes (PINs) have been issued letters of endorsement from Designated National Authorities (DNAs) and two Project Design Documents (PDDs) from Cuba are currently under validation. Meanwhile, workshops have continued providing knowledge and skills on various steps of the CDM project cycle. Specifically workshops have been held for verification and validation processes of the CDM in Lagos, Nigeria on 14-15 September; in Belize on 17-18 August and in Gaborone, Botswana on 7-8 September 2011. Two regional scope workshops also were held, one on CDM Programme of Activities in the Caribbean on 8-10 November, in Port of Spain and another in Suva, Fiji, from 31 October to 3 November 2011. For further information please contact Ms. Miriam Hinojosa (milb@risoe.dtu.dk) Project Coordinator at the UNEP Risoe Centre.

SAICM

The strengthening of the capacities of civil society organizations and communities to monitor the pesticides health impacts in West African cotton growing systems project is being implemented in Mali and Senegal by the civil society organization, Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Africa. It is one of the ten Quick Start Programme projects implemented through ACP MEAs EC grants. This capacity building



Pesticide Action Network, National inception meeting in Mali, July 2011.

project will provide to local community groups effective participation in the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). As part of the activities, to fulfill the above objectives, a national inception meeting was organised in both Mali and Senegal in July 2011. This has led to increased awareness of key stakeholders about the project and their roles as well as enhanced partnership amongst those dealing with the chemical issues. A regional training session of facilitators on “Community based Monitoring of pesticides’ impacts” was also organised and six facilitators (using the train the trainer approach) were trained from the two countries. The provision of information

and awareness raising tools to the communities have led to an increase in knowledge on hazardous pesticides and its health impacts resulting in the initiation of community based pesticide monitoring action which would aim at reducing the risks related to pesticides use in agricultural and health sectors. This will have a positive impact on the 2020 goal of producing and using chemicals in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on the environment and human health. Moreover, 24 local monitors were trained on community-based monitoring of pesticides impacts and interview techniques in the cotton zone of the Velingara region in Senegal. This region constitutes the centre of cotton production with four of the 16 production unions, representing 40 percent of the national cotton production. Another training of monitors is scheduled to be held in Koutiala (Mali) in late November 2011. The project is already having an impact at the local level as well as at the national level through the dissemination and use of Community Pesticide Action Monitoring tool which was developed by PAN Asia and the Pacific (PAN AP). With all the activities, the project aims at moving into the next phase where it can influence development planning including change in international decision-making on pesticides management. For further information please contact Ms. Nora Silva (nora.silva@unep.org)

FAO

In Africa, Environmental Management Plans for obsolete stocks have been completed in Kenya and Malawi. The stocks are safeguarded and disposal is expected in early 2012. In Benin, FAO is assisting the Government in addressing the problem of the elimination of endosulfan stocks. The pesticide



Awareness campaign on the risk associated with the use of Endosulfan and the need for alternatives, Alibori and Borgou, Benin, 24-30 October 2011.

was recently added to the Stockholm Convention. A national team was trained and equipped to carry out inventories. Stocks, estimated at about 354 tonnes, were inspected in centralized stores in Cotonou, Paracou, Agbangnizoun and in Togo. Additional funds to dispose the stocks and to develop and promote alternatives were secured from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). During the last week of October, awareness campaigns were conducted in l'Alibori

and du Borgou for nearly 700 farmers, and several extension agents and local policy-makers. In the Pacific, a pesticide regulators meeting took place in Wellington, New Zealand on 23-28 May 2011 to discuss the design of a regional system for pesticide registration. The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) is providing technical advice to this process and hosted a follow up meeting in Canberra early September. Work on assessment of contaminated sites is on-going in Samoa. For further information, please contact Coordinator Mr Mark Davis (mark.davis@fao.org).

UNCCD-GM

During the Tenth session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP10) in Shangwon, Korea, 6 October 2011, the GM organised a meeting with the three regional hubs in order to share their experience and achievements under the scope-acp sub-component of the ACP MEAs project, as well as discussing how to build South-South partnerships between the three regions. Regarding Africa, the strategic partnership



GM-SPREP meeting on MEA integration and mainstreaming in Pacific, Korea, October 2011.

between the GM, FAO and the African Union Commission in the context of the Great Green Wall (GGWSSI) was highlighted while the Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD) presented the Initiative on Sustainable Land Management (PISLM) as per the Caribbean's response in combating land degradation in Caribbean SIDS. SPREP shared the MEA integration and mainstreaming Pacific experience and provided an overview of its work in the Pacific on UNCCD and Sustainable Land. Common fields of cooperation were identified for the global scope-acp platform such as climate change/adaptation and the role of women and youth in UNCCD implementation. For further information, please contact Coordinator Mr. Youssef Brahimi (y.brahimi@global-mechanism.org).

Second Open Day of the Department of Sustainable Economic Development and Trade of the ACP Secretariat (11 October 2011, Brussels)



ACP MEAs Stand

Department of Sustainable Economic Development and Trade of ACP Secretariat organized its Second Open Day in October with a focus on Climate Change gathering ACP Ambassadors and European Commission representatives. The Open Day had two objectives aimed at deepening the understanding of the impact of climate change issues on vital economic sectors among the ACP countries and familiarizing the ACP representatives with the Global Climate Change Alliance. UNEP made a presentation of the ACP MEAs project focusing on the on the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) sub-component implemented by UNEP Risoe Centre. For further information, please contact Ms Sandrine Marquès (sandrine.marques@unep.org).

United Nations Day (23 October 2011, Brussels)

The UN Day was celebrated on Brussels Grand Place in October emphasizing the European Union-United Nations partnership in development cooperation. Most of the Brussels-based UN agencies set up stands. UNEP presented an overview of the ACP MEAs project's objective and explained relevance of MEAs implementation in ACP countries to a large public while distributing project's flyers.

For further information, please contact Sandrine Marquès (sandrine.marques@unep.org).

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:

Mr. Mamadou Kane (mamadou.kane@unep.org) or visit us at www.acpmeas.info



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