



Capacity Building Related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries

The ACP-MEAs Project – the Caribbean Hub

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat is the Caribbean Hub for the project for **Capacity Building Related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries**, known as the ACP MEAs project. The project is funded by the European Union (EU). The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the overall global project coordinator and facilitator. The project is being implemented in the Caribbean through the CARICOM Secretariat's Sustainable Development and Environment Programme.

Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

Multilateral Environmental Agreements are treaties or agreements between countries that establish commitments to work towards mutually agreed environmental objectives. MEAs are designed to address environmental matters and problems that have an international nature, scope or impact. MEAs are important mechanisms for global environmental governance, management and protection.

Caribbean MEAs Challenges

Caribbean countries are parties to and strong supporters of many MEAs. However, like many developing states, Caribbean countries face a number of challenges that hinder their ability to effectively implement MEAs to which they are party. Countries in the region face a number of serious obstacles to MEA implementation, including a lack of adequate human, technical and financial resources.

Often, provisions of MEAs are not incorporated into national law and countries have not developed plans and strategies to meet their MEA obligations. Environmental concerns and MEA issues are not prioritized and mainstreamed into national and regional sustainable development policies and plans. To overcome these constraints, Caribbean ACP countries require technical support in areas related to MEA implementation, such as legal drafting, environmental mainstreaming, negotiations, monitoring and evaluation, and policy analysis and development.



Caribbean Hub Actions

As the Caribbean Hub for the ACP MEAs project, the CARICOM Secretariat is focused on building and strengthening national and regional capacities for compliance with, and implementation and enforcement of MEAs in the Caribbean. It is achieving these goals by providing countries with technical assistance, training, policy support, and advisory services. Some of the Hub's major achievements and successes are highlighted below.

Caribbean Hub Capacity Building Objectives

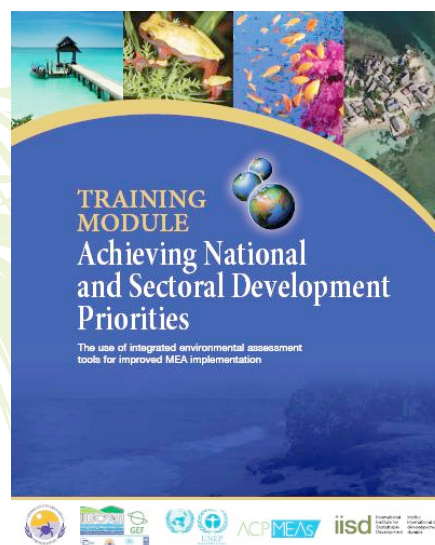
The objective of the ACP MEAs project is to enhance countries' capacity to implement MEAs and, in so doing, to contribute to sound management of the environment and natural resources in ACP countries.

In the Caribbean the project's objective is to strengthen the capacity of Caribbean ACP countries to effectively implement and comply with MEAs. This will help improve these countries' ability to address development challenges associated with threats to the environment, and will contribute to national and regional sustainable development. The project also aims to enhance the capacity of the CARICOM Secretariat to support MEA implementation in the region by serving as an environmental and MEA Hub for Caribbean ACP countries.

MEAs Mainstreaming

In collaboration with the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNEP-ROLAC), the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) and the International Institute for Sustainable Development

(IISD), the Caribbean Hub has produced an MEA mainstreaming training module. The module, titled *Achieving National and Sectoral Development Priorities – The Use of Integrated Environmental Assessment Tools for Improved MEA Implementation*, was developed based on consultation with experts and key officials from across the Caribbean. It provides guidance on using integrated environmental assessment tools to improve MEA implementation and to integrate MEAs in national development planning. The first mainstreaming workshop was held in Suriname with subsequent workshops scheduled to take place in St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.



Negotiation Skills Training

The Caribbean Hub has delivered two very successful regional negotiation skill training workshops. The first was held in Guyana in 2010 and the second in St. Kitts and Nevis in 2012. Over 44 junior environmental negotiators from 17 Caribbean countries have benefited from this training. Special focal areas for negotiations skills training have included MEAs related to climate change, biological diversity, and oceans governance. Participants have indicated that they have been able to put the skills acquired during the workshops to good use, and that the training has increased their ability to represent and advocate for national and regional priorities and positions in international environmental negotiations.



Legal Advisory and Training Services

The Caribbean Hub in 2011 in Guyana, environmental and legal officers from 10 Caribbean countries were trained to draft legislation that would domesticate the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing into national law. In 2012 the Caribbean Hub is providing further legal advisory and training services to support implementation and domestication of the Nagoya Protocol in the Caribbean.

Action in this regard will be carried out at the national level, with Dominica being the first beneficiary. The Hub is also working with the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Caribbean, in Trinidad and Tobago, to deliver legal training and advisory services related to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Other activities carried out by the Hub include training in project design and management, capacity building related to data and information management, training for officials involved in MEA enforcement, action to harmonize and streamline MEA reporting, compiling Caribbean MEA implementation best practices and success stories, and increasing public awareness of and knowledge about MEAs.





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The Caribbean Hub website

http://caricom.org/jsp/community_organ/sustainable_development/capacity_building_meas_acp_caribbean_hub.jsp

The ACP MEAs website

<http://www.acpmeas.info/>