



UNEP in Latin America and the Caribbean

NEWSLETTER

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Agriculture, vulnerable to climate change

The agriculture sector in Latin America and the Caribbean is being affected by climate change, with varying degrees of intensity. This has been the conclusion from vulnerability analyses conducted in the region with support from UNEP, through the Regional Gateway for Technology Transfer and Climate Change Action (REGATTA) project. Among the various strategies for adapting to climate change, the ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approach has been emphasized in a number of exercises aimed at identifying adaptation methods. On February 26-27, in Costa Rica, UNEP, along with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), held the *Mesoamerican Workshop on EbA and Agriculture*.

During that event, attended by representatives of the ministries of agriculture and other experts from the Mesoamerican region, as well as representatives from Spain's Office of Climate Change, experiences working with EbA were shared. The importance of promoting pilot experiments to provide increased learning on applying the EbA approach in the agriculture sector was also emphasised.

Financing climate change in the region

On 19 February, in Panama, a preparatory meeting of the Organizing Committee of the Third Regional Dialogue on Climate Finance was held, with participation of representatives from the Governments of Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama and Peru, as well as representatives from cooperation agencies such as UNDP, UNEP and the European Climate Initiative.

The third edition of the Regional Dialogue was held on May 29-30, 2014, in Buenos Aires, under the leadership of the Government of Argentina. The purpose of these meetings is to share experiences and exchange knowledge and innovations on financial instruments, inter-institutional coordination, and collaboration with the private sector. This year's gathering is expected to serve as a key forum on the issue of financing climate change for the countries, on their path to the 20th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP).

Online transfer of knowledge on climate change

During the month of February, through the REGATTA project, an information session and two virtual seminars were offered, drawing on the participation of 150 climate change professionals:

- On 12 February, Angelo Francesco Sartori, Chief of the Climate Change Unit of the National Forest Corporation (CONAF), presented Chile's National Strategy for Forestry and Climate Change, which included a platform for generating and trading carbon credits. [Link: recording](#)
- On 13 February, UNEP's climate change team answered questions on the call for ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) [pilot projects](#), initiated through UNEP's REGATTA project.
- On 14 February, Muhammad Ibrahim, Manager of IICA's Innovation Programme, explained how silvopastoral systems can contribute to adapting livestock systems to climate change, while at the same time reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the sector.



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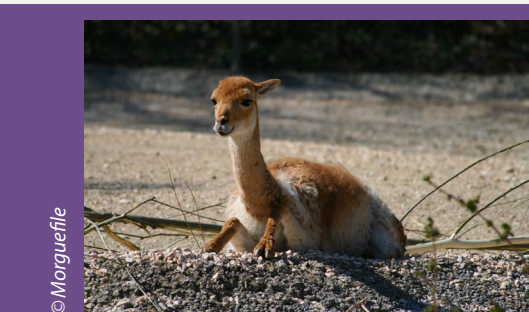
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Developing Haiti's core capacity for implementing MEAs

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) approved a project concept for developing Haiti's core capacity for implementing MEAs. A workshop took place in Port-au-Prince on 12-13 February which convened a significant number of the project's key stakeholders with the aim to discuss the specific needs in the country and the possible actions to be taken. The project, to be implemented by UNEP, is focused on two main components: strengthening capacities for policy and legislation development for achieving global environmental benefits; and, generating, accessing and using information and knowledge. The main partner is the Ministry of Environment of Haiti. The results of the discussion will help draft a full project document to be presented to the GEF in the coming months.



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The role of vicuñas in Ecosystem based Adaptation (EbA) in Peru

The National Steering Committee of the Ecosystem based Adaptation (EbA) project in Peru met in Huancayo, Peru, on 4 February. The committee is composed of representatives of the national and regional governments and of the implementing organizations: UNEP, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The final results of the climate change vulnerability and impact assessment study on the pilot area, commissioned by UNEP, were presented. Based on the conclusions of the assessment, the key EbA activities for 2014 were identified and formulated: the sustainable use of vicuñas for their fleeces and sustainable pasture and livestock management. These activities will improve water and pasture availability as part of the struggle against climate change in the area.



Saint Lucia increases its capacity to monitor MEA implementation and sustainable development

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) approved a project under its cross-cutting capacity development (CCCD) portfolio focused on strengthening the coordinated management and use of environmental information in support of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and sustainable development policy in Saint Lucia. A workshop was organized in Castries on 22-23 January as a key event aimed at drawing wide participation from different government units in the initiative. During the workshop, suggestions were made by participants in order to further align the project concept to the present needs and reality of the country, and they also discussed possible actions to meet the expected results. The need for better coordination among government institutions in relation to sharing environmental information was highlighted as a limiting factor for St. Lucia's capacity to monitor MEA implementation, and the project, to be implemented by UNEP, should help overcome this barrier. Based on inputs from participants a full project proposal will be developed to be submitted to the GEF in the coming months.



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Alternative livelihoods in the Dominican Republic

During the practical phase of the *Introductory Course on Apiculture*, held in January in Comendador, Dominican Republic, the first four hives of the pilot project *Establishing and Managing Aviaries in the Municipal District of Guayabo* were installed. This is one of three pilot projects developed in the framework of the *Delimitation and Establishment of the Caribbean Biological Corridor Project* (CBC UNEP/EU Project), in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of the Dominican Republic and the Centre for Agriculture and Forestry Development (CEDAF).

The purpose of the pilot projects is to reduce the pressure that settlers are exerting on natural resources, and to improve their living conditions and incomes, providing them with alternative livelihoods that respect the environment, while improving their current techniques and enhancing their means of earning a living. In addition to the apiculture project, a project on managing garbage disposal sites in the Municipality of Pedro Santana is being developed, along with a project on alternatives for the sustainable use of guano palm in Comendador.

More information: www.cbcpnuma.org

Development scenarios for Ecuador emphasizing land use

On 10-12 February, in Quito, Ecuador, the *Workshop on Building Economic Development Scenarios for Ecuador to 2035, with an emphasis on their repercussions on land use and land cover*, was held. The purpose of the event, co-organised by the Secretariat for Development and Planning (SENPLADES) and the Ministry of Environment (MAE), was to develop a conceptual framework and establish three possible future multidimensional development scenarios for Ecuador, involving the identification of tools to support the medium and long-term development process.

The three possible scenarios identified the various dimensions regarding future patterns of land use and land cover in the country. These scenarios were used by the MAE as a tool to identify priority areas for the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) programme in Ecuador, as well as by SENPLADES in its work to plan for Ecuador's development to 2035.



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Brazil and Colombia enter third phase of biodiversity information mentoring project

Under the scope of the Biodiversity Information Management project, the staff of the Brazilian Biodiversity Information System (SiBBr) gathered with colleagues from the SiB Colombia, from 10 to 14 February, for the third phase of a mentoring project involving both systems. Planned to be launched in mid-2014, SiBBr will simplify the access to biodiversity information listing data from hundreds of biological collections in Brazil and overseas on a single online platform. The cooperation with SiB Colombia was established to exchange experiences on the implementation of biodiversity information systems and to promote the development of common initiatives. The mentoring project is sponsored by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with additional funding by the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF).

Capacity Building on POPs and mercury facilitated by UNEP in Brazil

In line with UNEP's efforts to encourage and support the sound management of chemicals and waste, UNEP invited experts from different regions of Brazil to the III International Programme for Intensive Capacity Building on Environmental Management of Chemicals and Waste, particularly persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and mercury, held in São Paulo from mid-January to late February. Empowerment is a necessary step for the development of a national implementation plan for the Stockholm Convention, ratified by Brazil in 2004, and it is also the main goal of an ongoing UNEP project on chemicals in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment.

The course is promoted by Cetesb, the environmental agency of São Paulo, and the regional centre for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention. In addition to the Brazilian representatives, participants from 21 other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa also followed the training sessions.

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