



Environmental Change through Capacity Building:

Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific

Capacity-building related to multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries



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Director of Publication: Mamadou Kane, ACP MEAs Programme Manager

Editors: Anjana Varma, Francisco Rilla, Raphaelle Vignol, Mamadou Kane (UN Environment, Law Division)

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Foreword



In order to address some of the world's most complex environmental challenges, countries have built an architecture of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and environmental laws over the past few decades. These international treaties have played and continue to play a critical role in mobilising global efforts to tackle protracted environmental issues that affect us all.

The Montreal Protocol, for example, has been crucial in phasing out 98 percent – about 2.5 million metric tonnes – of ozone depleting substances, which has resulted in the contraction of the Antarctic ozone hole. Such positive news is not only an endorsement of the work of UN Environment but also an example of what can be achieved at the global scale when countries unite to pursue a common goal.

However, the sheer number of MEAs (around 500), with their varying mandates, obligations and expected outcomes presents a challenge to implementing Parties. Despite the ratification and support from countries in taking action to impede environmental degradation, developing countries – especially small island developing states – face considerable challenges in the implementation of these MEAs due to lack of human, institutional, and technical capacity. To address this, UN Environment joined forces with the European Commission and the Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States and initiated a four year project in 2009 to assist 79 countries to enhance their capacities in implementing certain MEAs at the national and regional level.

The ACP MEAs programme – now in its second phase – aims to build on the successes of its first phase where it formulated successful partnerships with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UN Environment DTU Partnership, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification - Global Mechanism, African Union Commission, Caribbean Community Secretariat, and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme – reflecting the far-reaching mandate of the programme. We hope that this publication not only illustrates some of the success stories and lessons learnt during the first phase but can also serve as a critical resource for policy makers, development practitioners and those involved in capacity building in the environmental field.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Maruma Mrema'.

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema
Director, Law Division
UN Environment



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