



COMMUNIQUÉ

Launch of InforMEA - The United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environment Agreement (MEAs)

Geneva, 14 June 2011 – The *Multilateral Environmental Agreements Information and Knowledge Management Initiative* (MEA IKM) develops harmonized MEA information systems to assist Parties and the environment community at large. Supported by UNEP, the initiative currently includes 17 MEAs from 12 Secretariats hosted by three UN organizations and IUCN. It is open to observers involved in MEA information and data management.

The first project – *InforMEA, the United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements* – is launched on 14 June at the occasion of the initiative’s 2nd Steering Committee Meeting, attended by Ms. Maria Louisa Silva, Executive Secretary of the Barcelona Convention, Mr. John Scanlon, Secretary General of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and Mr. Jim Willis, Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.

“With the launch of InforMEA the global environmental community has taken a major stride forward in making information transparent and easier to apply for solving the complex challenges we face in the Information Age”, Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) said.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), added: “From now on, InforMEA will be a key hub in the global clearing-house mechanism network of information services contributing to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.”

The InforMEA Portal presents COP decisions and resolutions, news, calendars, events, country specific MEA membership, national focal points, as well as in the near future national reports and implementation plans organized against a set of 200 hierarchical terms taken from MEA Conference of the Parties (COP) agendas.

In contrast to similar external endeavors this project harvests and displays information directly from MEA Secretariats, who remain the custodians of their data. This allows for accurate and timely data availability in a cost effective manner. MEA secretariats individually implement the technical solution identified.

Harmonization of information standards and formats will facilitate the development of many other knowledge tools among conventions. For example, the Convention on Migratory Species and CITES could display the species listed on both of their respective appendices or the Stockholm Convention may feature decisions related to endangered migratory species threatened by persistent organic pollutants (POPs). Once such an application is developed, the tool is maintained at minimal cost.

www.informe.org - Making key MEA information “speak to one another”

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