

Workshop Report

Mainstreaming Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) Objectives in the United Nations Country Teams to Catalyse Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Transitions

Gaborone, Botswana

4th to 6th March 2025

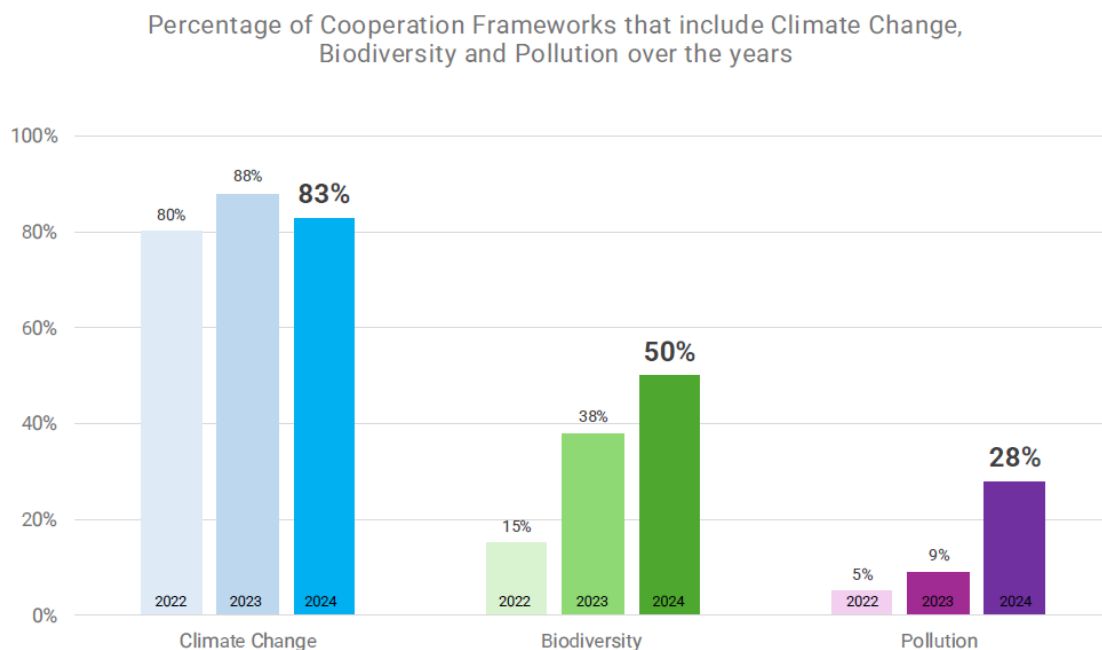


1. Background and introduction

Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) are pivotal instruments for advancing the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). MEAs provide the frameworks to address the interconnected environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation, and pollution, which threaten ecosystems, human health, economic and social stability. These crises are recognized as one the [six SDG transitions](#) that can have a catalytic and ‘multiplier’ effect across the SDGs. Therefore, it is imperative to mainstream and coherently integrate relevant MEAs’ objectives and actions, in line with their mandates and decisions or guidance from subsidiary bodies, into national sustainable development and planning processes to contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future for all.

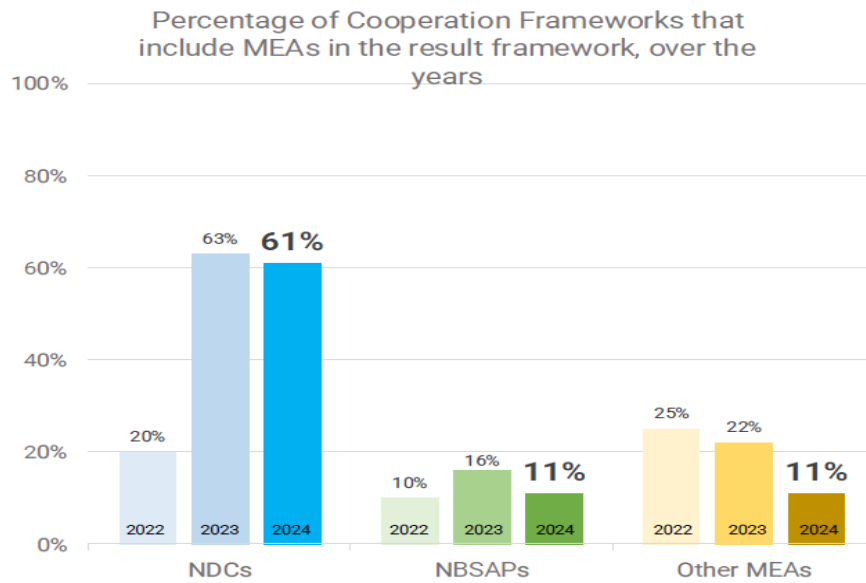
Since its inception in 2009, the [African, Caribbean and Pacific \(ACP\) MEA Programme](#) has supported **49 African countries to domesticate and implement MEAs**, contributing to national sustainable development aspirations. The programme has incrementally addressed the systemic challenges that impair MEAs implementation in Africa, including: lack of adequate technical capacities; weak utilization and uptake of tools to advance whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to implementation; incoherent policies hindering cross-sectoral and interinstitutional collaborations; and weak environmental rule of law that undermines enforcement efforts, amongst others.

A recent analysis by UNEP on the integration of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution in United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs) has revealed that, compared to climate change, although the uptake of biodiversity issues has tripled and that of pollution has risen sixfold in recent years, the overall uptake of biodiversity loss and pollution issues still remains low (see figure below).



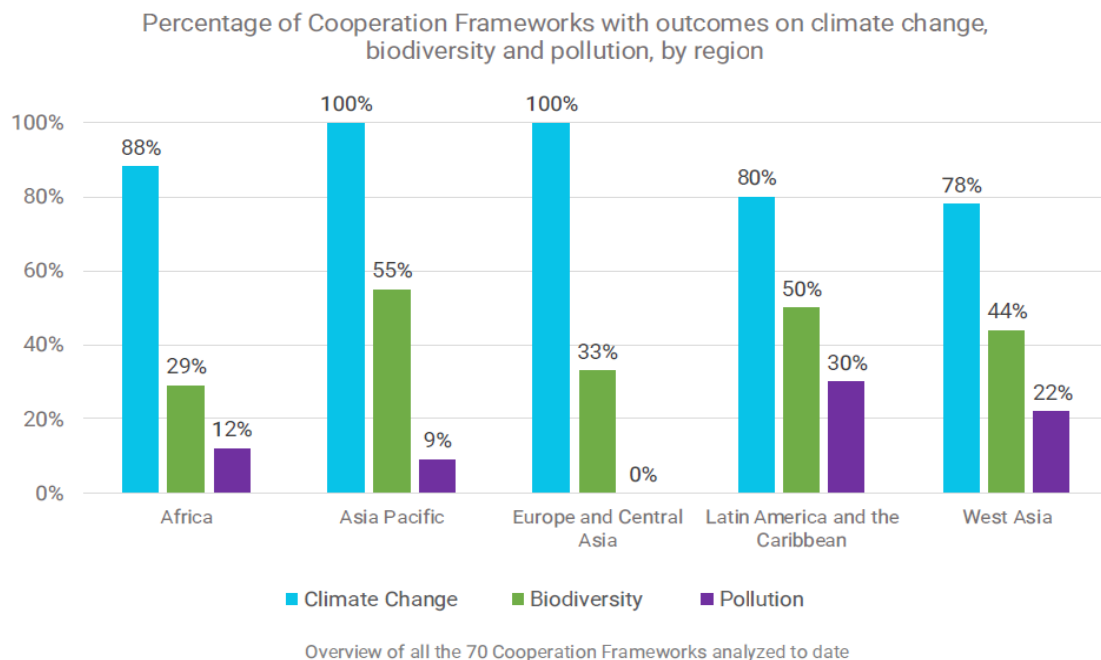
Source: UNEP review of Cooperation Frameworks (CFs) developed in 2023

The same conclusion also applies to the inclusion of biodiversity and pollution-related MEAs commitments and actions in UNSDCF results frameworks, with Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) being vastly present (61%), as opposed to National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) (11%) or other MEAs strategies and action plans (11%) (see figure below).



Source: UNEP review of Cooperation Frameworks (CFs) developed in 2023

Furthermore, an overview of the 70 UNSDCFs analysed by UNEP between 2022-2024 revealed that, to date, biodiversity and pollution issues continue to be severely underrepresented (29% and 12%, respectively) in the Africa region, compared to climate change (88%) (see figure below).



Source: UNEP review of Cooperation Frameworks (CFs) developed in 2023

1.1 Catalysing MEAs implementation support from the UN Development System

Concerted efforts are required by the UN Development System (UNDS) to progressively support the continued mainstreaming of MEAs in UN country programming processes, through the UN Country Analyses¹ (UN CAs) and the UNSDCFs. To help countries deliver on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, UN Country Teams (UNCTs) can leverage the synergies and comparative advantages of MEAs, *inter alia*, to:

- Support the inclusion of MEAs implementation across national sustainable development planning and policy processes, linking these with relevant sectoral or thematic policy tools and strategies (e.g. NBSAPs, chemicals and waste management and pollution prevention strategies and plans, such as National Implementation Plans - NIPs).
- Help break siloes across government departments working on different MEAs and sustainable development issues; and
- Create and engage in regional peer learning opportunities to encourage countries to learn from one another to advance on their national priorities, especially in geographical contexts with similar needs (including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation).

To support these aspirations, it is crucial to advance coherent narratives at country level, which can account for a system-wide perspective that can deliver the best country support, connecting various strategic areas of work (e.g. “pillars” or “result groups”) of the UNCT. In this regard, the [UN Common Approach to Biodiversity](#) and the [UN Common Approach towards a Pollution-free Planet](#) can help address these important needs, representing a “One-UN” voice that can promote the strategic and coherent inclusion of biodiversity and pollution issues across the work of UNCTs, whilst influencing horizontal policymaking processes at country level.

In response to these overarching needs, resolutions 6/4 and 6/6 of the sixth UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) tasked the UN Environment Programme with: promoting synergies, cooperation or collaboration for the national implementation of MEAs ([UNEA 6/4](#)); facilitating the coherent and effective implementation of the MEAs at the regional and national levels, on a Member State-driven basis, including through UNEP’s flagship [Fifth Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law](#) (hereinafter Montevideo Programme) and in cooperation with UNCTs, while encouraging them to mainstream the objectives of multilateral environmental agreements into their work ([UNEA 6/6](#)).

1.2 The need for a SADC sub-regional technical workshop and workshop objectives

In the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, the countries of Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and South Africa (hereinafter the ‘selected SADC countries’) requested assistance from UNEP to strengthen their capacity to adequately reflect the environmental dimension into national sustainable development planning. Particular attention was requested with regards to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS) and the Global

¹ The UN Country Analysis (UN CA) has succeeded the Common Country Analysis (CCA).

Framework on Chemicals (GFC). From a UNCT perspective, Eswatini and South Africa are currently rolling out their new UNSDCFs for the years 2026-2030, while Botswana and Lesotho are reviewing both their UN CAs with a view to strengthening their current UNSDCFs.

In response to the above requests, UNEP facilitated a technical workshop in line with the existing memorandum of understanding (MoU) between UNEP and the SADC Secretariat. The aim of the workshop was to support the selected SADC countries to align MEAs with SDGs implementation, fostering national synergies to accelerate progress toward sustainable development at national level. The workshop was organized under the recognition that environmental sustainability is foundational to the realization of the 2030 Agenda, and that MEAs can serve as powerful instruments towards achieving multiple SDG targets.

The workshop brought together UNCT Focal Points from the Planet Pillar Results Groups, National Focal Points of the Montevideo Programme, CBD and BRS National Focal Points from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and South Africa. Its overall objective was to improve their capacity to incorporate relevant objectives and actions to support the implementation of the CBD, GBF, BRS and GFC into sustainable development planning and policy processes, while also promoting greater mainstreaming and uptake across UN CAs/ CCAs and UNSDCFs, and more generally in the work of the four invited UNCTs.

The workshop responded to the following specific objectives:

1. **Strengthen the skills and capacities of the four target countries to advance MEAs implementation across national sustainable development planning and policy processes.** This can lead to more effective implementation strategies and approaches that contribute to updated NBSAPs, chemicals and waste management and pollution prevention strategies and plans, such as NIPs.
2. **Support increased cooperation and collaboration within and across government departments from the selected SADC countries working on MEAs and sustainable development issues.** This can foster interministerial and multi-stakeholder perspectives necessary to advance a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach towards MEAs implementation and ensure greater policy coherence.
3. **Strengthen the capacities of the selected SADC countries to develop and implement national legal frameworks and advance environmental rule of law.** This can ensure effective MEAs implementation at the national level, which benefits from increased cooperation and collaboration between the national MEA focal points and the National Montevideo Focal Points.
4. **Promote regional peer learning and cooperation among national MEA Focal Points and among UNCTs, as well as enhance nationals collaboration between MEA focal points and UNCT Focal Points.** This can drive joint ownership and ensure cohesive efforts in mainstreaming MEAs in CAs and UNSDCF, including through the UN Common Approaches to Biodiversity and Pollution.

2. Summary of key discussion points and main findings

2.1 On the integration of biodiversity loss and pollution in UN Country Analyses/Common Country Analyses

Participants highlighted their experience with MEAs mainstreaming in UN CAs/CCAs. They discussed how UN CAs/CCAs should better recognize biodiversity loss, land degradation and pollution as critical issues for social and economic development; and how biodiversity loss, land degradation and pollution issues should better inform the country's governance and political analysis. The main discussion points and findings include:

- a) **Knowledge and expertise gaps in relation to biodiversity loss and pollution issues prevent their meaningful integration in the UN CAs/CCAs of the selected SADC countries.** Biodiversity loss and pollution issues, including in relation to the implementation of MEAs, the GBF and the GFC, are not systematically discussed within the UNCTs in a coordinated manner. This leads to knowledge gaps as well as missed opportunities for raising the profile of biodiversity and pollution issues with the SADC governments and establishing shared ownership over these important agendas. The Result Groups working on environmental issues at country level may wish to consider discussing biodiversity loss, land degradation and pollution issues with more systematic attention. One such way for raising their profile could be holding informative sessions within the UNCT in the lead up to and/or after the relevant Conferences of the Parties (COPs) for CBD, BRS, or Open-Ended Working Groups (OEWGs) or similar intergovernmental meetings for other frameworks. UNEP and respective MEA Secretariats could be well placed to support these conversations.
- b) **Although biodiversity loss and pollution may be mentioned in the context of poverty and inequality issues in the UN CAs/ CCAs of the selected SADC countries, lack of deeper analysis and available data prevents developing a comprehensive picture, especially with regards to how they support national development agendas. Promoting Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) through UN CAs/ CCAs could be a helpful way to support the selected SADC countries with accounting for biodiversity loss/pollution considerations across development and policymaking processes.** The UNCT could benefit from greater guidance on how to promote the incorporation of biodiversity loss and pollution considerations as part of EIAs and SEAs analysis. Similarly, dedicated resources (e.g. documentary and digital platforms) to access relevant country-level data could be helpful to fill knowledge and expertise gaps. Dedicated trainings on policy relevant EIAs and SEAs, including how to operationalize these across national legal frameworks, could be equally useful for the government as well as UNCTs.
- c) **Though the preparation of the UN CAs/CCAs and the UNSDCF of the selected SADC countries uses participatory approaches that involve many national stakeholders, the national MEA Focal Points have traditionally not been part of the process.** The UNCTs are encouraged to engage with and involve the national MEA Focal Points in the preparation of the UN CA/CCA and in the design of the UNSDCFs to enrich the analysis with their perspectives. Furthermore, the UN CAs/CCAs should consider the diverse circumstances and perspectives of various groups, including

stakeholders such as local communities, youth organizations, women's organizations, indigenous peoples, the private sector, and academic research institutions, wherever possible. This is crucial to create a common narrative that can speak to multiple stakeholders in the country and encourage participation and buy-in for implementation beyond traditional government stakeholders and counterparts.

- d) **UNCTs of the selected SADC countries experience difficulty in gathering information on the country-level progress in implementation of the MEAs, the GBF and GFC targets and reflecting these meaningfully in the Cas/CCAs.** Although relevant information on the level of progress with implementation can be found in the national reports submitted to the MEAs as well as NBSAPs, chemicals and waste management and pollution prevention strategies and plans, including NIPs the gathering and synthesizing of this information for the purpose the UN CA/CCA development remains a challenge. This is compounded by lack of dedicated expertise on environmental governance issues across the UNCTs. Occasionally, the status of ratification or accession of a particular MEA may be found in an annex to the UN CA/CCA, but without deeper analysis of the implementation status. A template or guidance on how to expand and standardize this information and what resources to use for this purpose may be helpful for UNCTs.
- e) **Leveraging UN CAs/CCAs (and UNSDCFs) to raise awareness of the importance of MEAs and help 'make the case' to fast-track implementation and mobilize resources at country level.** Including data on the status of MEAs implementation in the UN CAs/CCAs should inform the governance and political analysis in such a way that it can provide evidence of how biodiversity and pollution action can support national economic and social development. Whilst this is already happening for the climate agenda, whose perception has evolved into an economic and social issue, the same cannot be equally observed for biodiversity loss and pollution. MEAs implementation should also inform the financial landscape analysis of the UN CA/CCA, clearly stating the related capacity-building needs as well as the existing public and private financing resources and opportunities that can support biodiversity and pollution action at national level. This could help build an appropriate resource mobilization strategy at country level that can be supported by the UNCT.
- f) **The annual review of the UN CA/CCA process can be an opportunity to advance biodiversity and pollution policy implementation review at country level.** To be effective, this process should focus on reviewing and identifying key implementation gaps in selected national strategies and action plans (e.g. NBSAPs, pollution strategies and action plans), which should be subject to prior agreement and a prioritization exercise jointly undertaken by the government and the UNCT. This is key to agree on concerted priorities and to enable the UNCT to provide the best evidence-based country support.

2.2 On the integration of biodiversity loss and pollution in United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks

Participants highlighted their experience with MEA mainstreaming in UNSDCFs. They discussed how UNSDCFs can better deliver against global targets under the MEAs, the GBF and GFC, and lift biodiversity loss, land degradation and pollution issues as particular strategic priorities at the results

level. Furthermore, they discussed how UNCTs could fill existing capacity gaps and needs to advance the implementation of MEAs and the achievement of the SDGs and help facilitate coordinated reporting. The main discussion points and findings include:

- g) **UNCTs of the selected SADC countries are encouraged to involve National MEA Focal Points early on in the process of developing the UNSDCF.** Late involvement in the process does not allow for a meaningful consultation that can inform the development of appropriate or realistic strategic priorities or outcomes revolving around MEAs, the GBF or GFC. As a result, MEA mainstreaming may often happen only “on paper”, but without a proper infrastructure within the UNSDCF that can foster measurable impact at country level. The UNCTs can also rely on guidance on mainstreaming MEAs into UNSDCF developed under the MEAs bodies, such as the Basel Convention’s Implementation and Compliance Committee’s guidance.
- h) **Moving towards integrated approaches in MEAs implementation that leverage the whole-of-government and whole-of-society. Relevant targets of the GBF and GFC can guide the development of integrated strategic priorities or outcomes in the UNSDCFs of the selected SADC countries.** The GBF and GFC recognize that enhanced collaboration, cooperation and synergies at all levels can contribute to and promote their implementation in a more effective manner.² The GBF and GFC provide ample opportunity to support the implementation of the CBD and BRS Conventions, amongst others, in an integrated manner that fosters cross-sectoral coordination and inclusive participation at all levels. GBF and GFC targets can inform the development of strategic priority areas/outcomes as well as the Results Framework of the UNSDCFs of the selected SADC countries in such a way that can drive national development agendas and advance the SDGs in a mutually supportive manner. There are related reference and guidance materials within MEAs to help inform integrated approaches in MEAs implementation.
- i) **MEAs, the GBF and GFC can help promote the alignment between UNSDCFs, National Development Strategies (NDS), NBSAPs, chemicals and waste management and pollution prevention strategies and plans.** The processes for developing UNSDCFs, NDS, NBSAPs, NIPs and pollution strategies and plans often run according to different timeframes and involving different stakeholders that do not necessarily engage in a coordinated manner. UNCTs of the selected SADC countries are encouraged to promote the mainstreaming of MEA obligations and related national strategies and action plans into National Development Strategies, in coordination with relevant national focal points and MEA Focal Points. The objectives and targets of the GBF and GFC can provide useful entry points to support this, using straightforward and result-oriented language that has been intergovernmentally agreed. Subsequently, reinforcing this approach in the UNSDCFs can enable UNCTs to provide the required integrated policy advice and capacity building support to the countries whilst responding to national development priorities in a mutually reinforcing manner.

² [UNEP/EA.6/INF/6](#) - Background note to support the discussions on agenda item " Cooperation with Multilateral Environment Agreements" - Note by the Secretariat.

- j) **Move away from project-based MEAs implementation to MEA mainstreaming across strategy and programming. Meaningful MEA, GBF and GFC integration in the UNSDCFs must inform equally meaningful and integrated programming and project support for national implementation.** Mainstreaming of MEAs across the selected SADC countries may often occur only at project level through individual/bilateral support provided by certain UNCT members in a siloed manner. Ideally, MEAs implementation in UNSDCFs should be included first in the Theory of Change (TOC) and subsequently translated into joint programmes that respond to specific indicators, results and impact (in the Results Framework), thus enabling an integrated support from multiple (two or more) UNCT member organizations. This can enable greater coordination and partnerships in programming and project portfolio management, for greater impact.

2.3 On the cooperation, collaboration and synergies across national MEA and Montevideo Focal Points and UNCTs

Participants highlighted their experience with regards to engaging national MEA and Montevideo Focal Points jointly for better results. Discussions focused on how to strengthen synergies and cooperation, including through increased data sharing, institutional cooperation and more responsive support, and advancing policy coherence. The main discussion points and findings include:

- k) **Strengthen regular communication lines between UNCT Focal Points, UNEP country focal points, MEA focal points and Montevideo focal points from the selected SADC countries.** These important stakeholders should engage in more systematic communication, exchanges of views and ideas (formally and informally) beyond single capacity building initiatives (e.g. occasional workshops, conferences etc). From the UNCT side, the development process of the UN CAs/CCAs and UNSDCFs, as well as their periodic reviews and/or monitoring and evaluation represent important opportunities to engage MEA and Montevideo Focal Points. This can help ensuring their views, suggestions and ideas are collected and reflected. From the government side, the development process for National Development Strategies, NBSAPs, chemicals and waste management and pollution prevention strategies and plans represent important opportunities to involve the UNCTs and foster synergies with UN programming processes. In both instances, regular/quarterly meetings could be organized to facilitate this process.
- l) **The establishment of national MEA coordinating committees, units or equivalent bodies is a useful way to encourage national cooperation and synergies in MEAs implementation across the selected SADC countries. National Montevideo Focal Points are encouraged to actively engage in the workings of these MEA coordinating bodies.** Some SADC countries already account for such coordination mechanisms in their institutional settings, but capacity and funding challenges prevent their effective operationalization. These coordinating institutions should be properly enabled and equipped to influence the prioritization process of national development strategies and identify substantive priorities for implementation. Greater engagement of National Montevideo Focal Points in national MEA coordination matters can positively influence the development process of NBSAPs, chemicals and waste management and pollution prevention strategies and plans, as well as the periodic implementation reports submitted by the countries to the MEA Secretariats. It could also enhance the workings of any national MEA coordinating

bodies by promoting the greater inclusion of environmental rule of law aspects into policy processes and the resulting strategic documents and reports. It could also foster greater policy coherence, ensuring that rights-based approaches are respected and upheld across the national policymaking cycles for biodiversity and pollution action. Reference on enhancing coordination mechanisms can be found within, among others, relevant guidance or recommendations under respective MEAs.

2.4 On the enabling conditions and tools to improve MEA mainstreaming across UN country programming process

Participants highlighted their experience with regards to integrated mainstreaming of MEAs implementation across UN country programming, spanning the environmental, governance, rule of law, human rights and other related agendas at country level, and how to improve this. The main discussion points and findings include:

- m) Improve availability and dissemination of information on country-level MEAs implementation, including through the [InforMEA](#) platform and the resources available from MEA Secretariats.**
The InforMEA platform can be a useful tool to ease access to critical, centralised information related to MEA, GBF and GFC implementation for both governments and UNCTs of the selected SADC countries. However, it would benefit from greater awareness and further tailoring to respond to the specific needs of different user groups. Holding informative sessions on InforMEA for the UNCTs may be appreciated for further awareness raising. Furthermore, the MEA courses available on InforMEA could be considered as part of the induction package for UNCT members. Similarly, the resources available from MEA Secretariats (statistical data, qualitative and quantitative information and reports) can also offer useful guidance, particularly to inform the UN CA/CCA development process, cascading global information down to national level.
- n) The need for tailored guidance on how to select and include information on the status of MEA, GBF and GFC implementation across UN CAs/CCAs.** Occasionally, the status of ratification or accession of a particular MEA may be found in an annex to the UN CA/CCA, but without deeper analysis of the implementation status. A template or guidance on how to expand and standardize this information and what resources to use for this purpose may be helpful for UNCTs. InforMEA could also provide additional data and guidance in support of this.
- o) The need for tailored guidance on how MEAs implementation could be addressed through other strategic priority areas (e.g. “pillars”), outcomes or results that relate to cross-cutting areas, such as gender and safeguards, human rights and rule of law in the development of UNSDCF.**
The UN Common Approach to Biodiversity and the Common Approach to Pollution include useful narratives and entry points that can support UNCTs to consider MEAs implementation beyond the traditional ‘Environment’ or ‘Planet’ pillar of the UNSDCFs. Another useful entry point is the operationalization of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, recognized by [UNGA resolution 76/300](#), which is an integral element of both Common Approaches. Similarly, the UNEP Montevideo Programme offers significant capacity building opportunities for the selected SADC countries to link MEAs with the implementation of human rights obligations and standards. This support could be reflected through specific outcomes or results of the UNSDCFs.

- p) **Improve dissemination of knowledge, tools and resources developed under the Montevideo Programme's [Law and Environment Assistance Platform \(LEAP\)](#) to support MEA implementation.** The LEAP platform serves as UNEP's digital repository of information under the Montevideo Programme and allows users to access environmental legislation, knowledge products and publications, legislative toolkits, and meeting documents and information related to the Programme's intergovernmental meetings. For example, the LEAP platform houses the [Law and Climate Change Toolkit](#), an online tool aimed to support countries in developing and improving national climate change laws. The database enables users to access a range of national climate change legislation from around the world, searchable according to key areas of climate change governance. Via the LEAP platform, Member States can also directly request technical legal assistance on MEA implementation from UNEP.
- q) **Establish common regional positions on biodiversity loss and pollution issues.** Regional organizations like the SADC Secretariat can facilitate the development of common regional positions on biodiversity loss and pollution issues. Compared to biodiversity, participants found the pollution cluster to require even greater attention and coordination in the SADC region. The SADC Secretariat has developed a reporting template to support countries in collecting information on environmental issues at the national and regional levels. This, in turn, could facilitate greater inclusion of common regional narratives in the CAs and UNSDCF's, as applicable. In turn, UNCTs of the selected SADC countries could seek engagement from the SADC Secretariat in the review of UN CAs/ CCAs and the UNSDCF's. Furthermore, through the Resident Coordinators and in partnership with the SADC Secretariat, UNCTs could facilitate the advancement of common narratives that could inform the work of regional bodies, such as the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment ([AMCEN](#)) or international fora, such as the G20. Regional common positions could also facilitate SADC countries negotiations at the relevant COPs and other intergovernmental meetings.

3. Final recommendations and conclusions

Participants highlighted their final recommendations and conclusions as follows:

1. **MEAs, the GBF and GFC are key enablers to advance and fast-track SDGs implementation. In the context of the UNCTs of the SADC region, they should be increasingly appreciated beyond the environmental dimension of sustainable development and also in relation to social and economic development.** MEAs implementation provides countries with unique national policy and legislative frameworks that can be directly linked to and support their national SDG implementation strategies or National Development Strategies and plans, advancing one of the six SDG transitions. NBSAPs, chemicals and waste management and pollution prevention strategies and plans are mutually supportive of National Development Plans and strategies. In the selected SADC countries, the two processes would benefit from a more integrated approach, which could lead to more effective implementation strategies that account for all three dimensions of sustainable development. This should be encouraged by the UNCTs and government representatives alike throughout the entire policy cycle, from design to development, implementation, review, monitoring and reporting.

2. **More cooperation and collaboration across National MEA and Montevideo Focal Points is essential to advance national synergies in MEAs implementation across the selected SADC countries. Similarly, promoting a more systematic and structured engagement between UNCTs, National MEA and Montevideo Focal Points can advance greater synergies in the work of the UNCT.** From the government side, it can strengthen the country's environmental governance conditions through advancing integrated approaches, informed by greater policy coherence, that can secure interlinkages in the implementation of the CBD and BRS Conventions, as well as the GBF and GFC. From the UNCT side, it can enable better integration of MEAs implementation across UN CAs/CCAs and UNSCDFs. This is a precondition for the delivery of more integrated support and policy advice to improve the environmental governance conditions (policies, laws and institutional arrangements) of the SADC countries.
3. **There exists a wealth of data, knowledge, resources and enabling platforms from the United Nations and MEA Secretariats alike, which are available to National MEA, Montevideo Focal points and UNCTs to support MEAs implementation. Whilst these resources can be instrumental in closing data gaps and building knowledge and expertise, navigating through them can be a difficult task.** Simplification and contextualization of the information is key. The InforMEA platform, complemented by the many resources produced by the MEA Secretariats, is a one-of-a-kind tool that leverages digital transformations in support of environmental governance. However, it merits more awareness and greater tailoring to the needs of different user groups, particularly UNCTs, to be effectively and more widely used in the SADC region.
4. **The UN Common Approaches on Biodiversity and on Pollution, are useful guidance documents to advance common narratives at country level and help positioning MEAs implementation at the nexus of environmental governance, rule of law and human rights. However, to be meaningfully operationalized across the UNCTs and the selected SADC countries alike, they require greater awareness and investment.** This could include producing more practical guidance and promoting the sharing of success stories amongst countries and UNCTs from the Africa region with regards to: i) how the Common Approaches can successfully inform UN programming processes on the ground (e.g. UN CAs/CCAs and UNSCDFs), leading to greater inclusion and uptake of biodiversity and pollution issues at country level and greater presence of MEAs in outcome or results frameworks; and ii) how the Common Approaches can shift national policy paradigms and boost the mobilization of financial resources and partnerships to advance the synergetic implementation of both MEAs and SDGs.
5. **The SADC Secretariat is uniquely positioned to take an active role in enhancing regional coordination and collaboration on biodiversity and pollution issues and fast-track MEAs, GBF and GFC implementation across the SADC region.** The SADC Secretariat can act as an important political convener and facilitator for SADC countries. It can enable them to speak with 'one voice' on biodiversity loss and pollution issues, advancing common narratives and positions that can not only inform UN CAs/CCAs and UNSCDFs, but also the work of regional platforms and bodies, as well as COPs. It can also inform more coherent and evidence-based conversations with UNCTs and donor countries to influence support and resource allocation towards MEAs implementation. The SADC Secretariat is encouraged to facilitate and maintain regular cooperation and collaboration

with National MEA and Montevideo Focal Points from SADC countries. This can enable greater information sharing, best practice and peer learning, as well as enhance dedicated project delivery opportunities.

- 6. UNEP should continue to create regular opportunities for collaboration and exchange between National MEA and Montevideo Focal Points and UNCTs.** The advancement of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach for the implementation of MEAs, the GBF and GFC, requires dedicated interagency and intergovernmental support, which UNEP (in collaboration with the UNCTs) is uniquely positioned to provide in view of its convening role. Regular trainings, capacity building initiatives and peer-learning opportunities offer useful entry points to promote greater cooperation, collaboration and synergies for national MEAs implementation and facilitate greater awareness and support from UNCTs.

Annex I: List of participants

	<u>Country / organization</u>	<u>Surname</u>	<u>First name</u>	<u>Occupation and role / Institution</u>	<u>Contact details</u>
1	SADC Secretariat	Mavimbela	Sibongile	Senior Programme Officer, Environment and Climate Change, Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Directorate	smavimbela@sadc.int
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4	Botswana	Nthaka	Mosimanegape	Principal Natural Resources Officer at the Department of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Tourism	mosinthaka@gmail.com
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6	Botswana-FAO (UNCT Representative)	Flyman	Michael	FAO UNCT Representative	michael.flyman@fao.org
7	Botswana - UNDP	Keoagile	Kebaabetswe	Project Lead and Senior Public Finance Expert (BIOFIN), UNDP Botswana	kebaabetswe.keoagile@undp.org
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11	Eswatini	Nyoni	Dumsile	Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy	nyonid@gov.sz
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15	Lesotho	Mabatla	Sello	District Environment Officer	s.mabatladave@gmail.com
16	Lesotho	Maboi	Mahula	Senior Environment Officer, Ministry of Environment and Forestry	maboi.mahula@gov.ls
17	Lesotho - WFP (UNCT Representative)	Chawawa	Nancy	Climate Change and Resilience Specialist	nancy.chawawa@wfp.org
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19	South Africa	Baloyi	Obed	Chief Director of the Chemicals Management, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	obaloyi@dffe.gov.za
20	South Africa	Kobese	Sibusiso	Director of Law Reform, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	skobese@dffe.gov.za

21	South Africa – OHCHR (UNCT Representative)	Teddy	Namatovu	Associate Human Rights Officer, Regional Office for Southern Africa	teddy.namatovu@un.org
22	South Africa - South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)	Mahlodi	Tau	Chief Director, Biodiversity Information and Policy Advice	m.tau@sanbi.org.za
23	African Union Commission	Koboto	Oldman	MEA Coordinator, African Union	kobotoo@africa-union.org
24	CBD Secretariat (online)	Tamale	Erie	Senior Programme Management Officer and Head of the Capacity Building and Knowledge Management Unit at the CBD secretariat	erie.tamale@un.org
25	BRS Secretariat	Wanjiru	Jackline Wanja	Programme Management Officer, Legal and Policy Unit, BRS Secretariat	jackline.wanjiru@un.org
26	UNEP	Ambala	Christopher	Regional Development Coordination Officer, Regional Office for Africa	ambala@un.org
27	UNEP	Rizzo	Andrea	Programme Management Officer, Law Division	andrea.rizzo@un.org
28	UNEP	Monipher	Musasa	Programme Management Officer, Law Division	monipher.musasa@un.org
29	UNEP (Online)	Banda	Gracian	Head of the Montevideo Coordination and Delivery Unit, Law Division	gracian.banda@un.org
30	UNEP (Online)	Gift	Renee	Legal Officer, Montevideo Coordination and Delivery Unit, Law Division	renee.gift@un.org
31	UNEP (Online)	Kariuki	Angela	Legal Officer, Law Division	angela.kariuki@un.org

32	UNEP (Online)	Cruceru	Raluca	Associate Information Systems Officer, Law Division	raluca.cruceru@un.org
33	UNEP (Online)	Mugo	Susan	Programme Support Officer, Law Division	susan.mugo@un.org
34	UNEP / EMG Secretariat (Online)	Fadaei	Hossein	Head, Secretariat of the United Nations Environment Management Group	hossein.fadaei@un.org
35	UNEP / EMG Secretariat (Online)	Pitkanen	Jannica	Programme Management Officer, United Nations Environment Management Group	jannica.pitkanen@un.org

Annex II: Workshop programme

TECHNICAL WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Leveraging Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) for effective implementation of Sustainable Development Goals

**Cresta Lodge
Gaborone, Botswana**

4-6 March 2025

DAY 1 - 4 March 2025 “Setting the scene: Why MEAs matter to UNCTs”		
Time	Agenda item	Presenter/Facilitator/Moderator
8:00 – 8:30	Participants registration	
8:30 – 9:00	Opening Session	UNEP staff members Representatives of the SADC Secretariat Representatives of the Ministry of Environment of Botswana
9:00 – 9:30	Introduction of participants, highlighting workshop objectives and expected outcomes	Monipher Musasa (UNEP, Law Division)
9:30 – 10:15	The role of Environmental Governance in the UN Development System	Andrea Rizzo (UNEP, Law Division)
10:15 – 11:15	Introduction to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Strategic Plan	Erie Tamale (CBD Secretariat, Online)
Coffee break		
12:15 – 13:00	Introduction to the BRS Conventions and the Global Framework on Chemicals	Jackline Wanja Wanjiru (BRS Secretariat)
13:00-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-14:45	Setting the scene for the SADC region: the environmental dimension of Country Analyses and Cooperation Frameworks	Christopher Ambala (UNEP, Africa Regional Office)
14:45 – 16:00	Break-out session – Challenges and opportunities for mainstreaming MEAs across the work of UNCTs, promoting synergies and SDGs implementation	Sessions moderated by UNEP staff members
16:00-16:15	Coffee break	
16:15-17:00	Group presentations – reporting back to plenary the identified common gaps, barriers and opportunities	

17:00 – 17:15	Wrap up of day 1	Andrea Rizzo (UNEP, Law Division) Monipher Musasa (UNEP, Law Division) Christopher Ambala (UNEP, Africa Regional Office)
DAY 2 – 5 March 2025 “Promoting enabling conditions and practical approaches to MEA mainstreaming”		
9:00 – 09:20	Recap of Day 1 and summary of insights discussed	SADC Secretariat and UNEP Law Division
9:20 – 10:00	1 st country deep dive: Eswatini and South Africa	Presentation by Eswatini UNCT selected representative Moderator Christopher Ambala (UNEP, Africa Regional Office)
10:00-10:45	Enabling solutions: Advancing environmental law through the UNEP Montevideo Programme	Renee Gift (UNEP, Law Division, Online) Moderator: Andrea Rizzo (UNEP, Law Division)
10:45-11:00	Coffee break	
11:00 – 12:00	Enabling solutions: The UNEP InforMEA tool	Angela Kariuki (UNEP, Law Division, Online) Moderator: Monipher Musasa (UNEP, Law Division)
12:00-13:00	Break-out session – advancing effective and coherent CCA and CFs development and implementation	Session moderated by UNEP staff members
13:00-14:00	Lunch break	
14:00-14:30	Group Presentations – reporting back to plenary – reporting back to plenary the identified common gaps, barriers and opportunities	Elected group representatives
14:30-15:15	Introducing the UN Common Approaches to Biodiversity and Pollution	Hossein Fadaei and Jannica Pitkanen (EMG Secretariat, Online) Moderator Christopher Ambala (UNEP, Africa Regional Office)
15:15 – 16:15	2 nd Country deep dive: Botswana and South Africa	Moderators: SADC Secretariat representatives and Monipher Musasa (UNEP, Law Division)
16:15 –16:30	Coffee break	
16:30- 17:00	Wrap up of day 2	SADC Secretariat representatives Andrea Rizzo (UNEP, Law Division)

		Monipher Musasa (UNEP, Law Division) Christopher Ambala (UNEP, Africa Regional Office)
17:00-19:00	Cocktail reception	Hosted by UNEP
DAY 3 – 6 March 2025 “Empowering UNCTs towards effective and coherent MEAs implementation”		
9:00 - 09:30	Recap of Day 1 and 2	Andrea Rizzo (UNEP, Law Division) Christopher Ambala (UNEP, Africa Regional Office)
9:30-10:30	Enabling solutions: financing MEAs implementation	Monipher Musasa (UNEP, Law Division) Jackline Wanja Wanjiru (BRS Secretariat)
10:30-11:45	Breakout groups – 4 groups per country	Session moderated by UNEP staff members
11:45 – 12:00	Coffee break	
12:00 -13:00	Presentation of workshop outcomes: country reflections and UNCT reflections	Representatives from Botswana, South Africa, Lesotho and Eswatini to present the outcomes Moderator: Christopher Ambala (UNEP, Africa Regional Office)
13:00 – 13:30	Closing remarks	SADC Secretariat Government of Botswana UNEP
13:30 onwards	Lunch	