

ANNEX III

TERMS OF REFERENCE

OF THE

Multilateral Environmental Agreements Information and Knowledge Management (MEA IKM) Steering Committee

Background

In 2009 the Division of Environmental Law and Conventions of UNEP re-confirmed its commitment to knowledge and information management (IKM) and invited to the DELC MEA Knowledge Management Meeting in Chexbres, Switzerland in September of that year to promote a collaborative approach among MEAs to develop much needed knowledge tools across clusters in a cost-effective and sustainable manner.

The DELC MEA KM meeting was attended by representatives of 9 MEAs¹ and interested parties including FAO, IUCN and WCMC. The recommendations of this meeting focused on a more mutually beneficial approach to information management, particularly through harmonization of data and information standards and included the development of a proof of concept project on interoperability of information and the establishment of an MEA Steering Committee. The outcomes of this meeting represent the start of the MEA IKM initiative (Appendix II). The below Terms of Reference and their endorsement by the undersigned Executive Heads of MEA Secretariats will further refine the mandate of the MEA IKM Steering Committee.

Objective

1. The overall aim of the MEA Information and Knowledge Management (IKM) Initiative is to contribute to more effective MEA implementation by improving coherence in the area of data and knowledge sharing within and across clusters of MEAs and UN Organisations including UNEP, UNESCO and FAO.
2. It aims to facilitate discussions amongst the MEAs on issues related to environmental governance by demonstrating the effectiveness of collaborative activities and harmonized approaches and processes in the field of information and knowledge management.
3. To this end, the Steering Committee of the MEA Information and Knowledge Management initiative was established. It consists of one representative from each participating MEA and is open to observers involved in information and knowledge management of MEA generated data. The Steering Committee is tasked to examine issues of common interest in the area of data and information management and to provide recommendations on possible collaborative activities

¹ Basel Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention on Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), International Plant Treaty (ITPGR-FA), Montreal Protocol, Rotterdam Convention, Stockholm Convention, Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) and the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO-WHC); regrets came from Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD),

to the undersigned heads of MEAs. The Steering Committee will designate working groups and task forces to implement agreed upon strategies and collaborative activities amongst several or all participating MEAs as required.

Areas of Cooperation

Through the Steering Committee, the participating MEAs will:

1. Endeavour to make MEA information inter-operable and accessible and develop information services and resources through mutually agreed formats, protocols and standards, with full recognition of source and with due regard to existing intellectual property rights;
2. Develop an MEA-wide web-based gateway to the information resources hosted at participating MEAs, including decisions and resolutions, calendar of events, focal points and official documents and other relevant information;
3. Identify possible synergies through collaboration in areas of common interest such as the development of online-reporting tools and examine the potential of adhering to a collaborative approach to the use of information and knowledge management systems;
4. Examine how to enhance technical capacity at the Secretariats to ensure equitable participation by all MEAs;
5. Coordinate with related processes and contribute to the development of information and knowledge management strategies of United Nations system organizations and others;
6. Establish and maintain a network of experts across MEAs to promote sharing of experiences and lessons learned;
7. Review the possibility of needs assessments, jointly hosting, training activities and sharing information.

Modalities of Cooperation

1. The Steering Committee will meet once a year to review and further guide the implementation of these TORs;
2. Task Forces and Working Groups designated by the Steering Committee shall meet in between Steering Committee Meetings to collaborate toward the implementation of agreed projects and provide recommendations for the consideration of the Steering Committee.
3. The work of the IKM Steering Committee and its Task Forces and Working Groups will be coordinated and facilitated through the UNEP-DELC MEA Information and Knowledge Management team in cooperation with the participating MEAs.

Financial Aspects

1. Collaborative activities of the MEA IKM Steering Committee and its Task Forces and Working Groups are subject to the availability of funding for that purpose;

2. Within the scope of their respective regulations, rules and standard business practices, the participating MEAs will endeavour to seek funding as a priority for the implementation of activities under this initiative.

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Executive Secretary
Basel Convention

Ahmed Djoghlaif
Executive Secretary
CBD

John Scanlon
Secretary General
CITES

Elizabeth Mrema
Executive Secretary
CMS

Shakeel Bhatti
Executive Secretary
ITPGR-FA

Marco Gonzalez
Executive Secretary
Montreal Protocol

Anada Tiega
Secretary General
Ramsar (Convention on
Wetlands)

Donald Cooper
Executive Secretary
Stockholm Convention
&
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Rotterdam Convention

Luc Gnacadja
Executive Secretary
UNCCD

Cristina Figueires
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Francesco Bandarin
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