

64th Working Group Meeting of the MEA IKM Initiative

Tuesday, May 18, 2021 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM CET

Audio Conference – Bonn, Geneva, Nairobi, Montreal, Santiago, Singapore, Rome

Report

Meeting Participants

BRS – Osmany PEREIRA, Julien HORTONEDA
CITES- Haruko OKUSU
CMS – Maria Jose ORTIZ
ECLAC – David Barrio LAMARCHE
IPBES – Benedict Omare
ITPGRFA - Francisco LOPEZ
IWC – Moussa Ki SOW
Minamata Convention – Anna GARCIA SANS
Ozone Secretariat- Gerald MUTISYA
Ramsar- Ed JENNINGS
UNFCCC Secretariat- Jingwen YANG
UNEP MAP – Maria Luisa Rodriguez LUCAS

KM Team

UNEP – Eva DUER, Kelly KABIRU, Peter SPEELMAN, Iddah KAMAU Leah KIURA, Abdul GHANI, Lillian ONYANGO

A. Dates and Processes agreed

- Tuesday, **16 November 2021** was identified as the tentative date of the 12th InforMEA Steering Committee Meeting, expected to be again a virtual meeting.
- SCM focus group sessions would be held in the coming months well ahead of between now and the next Steering Committee meeting in November.
- For the next InforMEA Working Group tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, 15 June 2021 and since proposed to be held on **22 June 2021**, until when MEAs would consider proposals for inclusion in the Steering Committee Meeting agenda and review the status of implementation of last year's and previous pending recommendations.

B. Progress and Updates:

I. PoolParty (Kelly Kabiru & PoolParty sub-working group)

Eau de Web in partnerships with Semantic Web Company have been commissioned to help harness the Pool Party Server and set up a solid infrastructure of related projects (including the SDG Interface Ontology and GEMET) to ensure the achievement of the goals set out by the Initiative in the recommendations with regard to indexing.

Given the mixed results due to delays to date with the installation of the PoolParty server on the one hand and the promising recent developments/contracts on the other hand the meeting noted that the time until the next Steering Committee Meeting would be crucial to determine whether the PoolParty solution will be the main channel of the future indexing work of the InforMEA Initiative or whether alternative options, such as VocBench of FAO, will have to be explored in parallel to remain flexible.

In this context, Mr. Kabiru summarized recent developments and discussions of the recent two PoolParty sub-working group meetings.

Three new Servers have been acquired by InforMEA, with two still in the process of being installed to ensure that the Collective Intelligence for Environmental Governance hosting environment (InforMEA, ECOLEX, LEAP, Judicial Portal, AND the PoolParty Server, etc.) remains stable. The underlying ambition is to be independently equipped to harness all potential of the perpetual server installation of the PoolParty thesaurus management and indexing tool including the Drupal connector. While the immediate concern is to install the latest version recently released by SWC, the PoolParty sub-working group explores the best *modus operandi* for the service using PoolParty and to find the right workflow between the production and development server installation. Still to be considered is the requirement of Uniform Resource Identifiers (URIs) of term concepts. Different scenarios under informea.org and for the individual MEA Thesauri or Taxonomies that MEAs still must be considered for URI schemes.

Mr. Pereira (BRS) complemented emphasizing the need for different version numbers for the different taxonomies as a method of quality control for the content of the taxonomy and recommended that the PoolParty sub-working group came up with some Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that could be implemented as soon as possible. Mr. Omare (IPBES) shared their PoolParty experience from a user perspective and cautioned against overloading the governance process in the context of SOP mindful of the limitations of thinly stretched entities.

Follow Up items:

- *MEAs can/should provide their thesauri before end of July 2021 to secure availability of indexing features against them.*
- *PoolParty Sub-working group is invited to present slim and simple Standard Operating Procedures to the 12th InforMEA Steering Committee for endorsement.*
- *By next WG Meeting have a stable InforMEA tagger integrated with Glossary Section.*

II. E-Learning

As already noted by the 11th InforMEA Steering Committee Meeting, consequences of COVID-19 have led to a pivoting shift to online learning. MEAs and partners recently needed to repurpose resources for in-person events, with some of these projects shifting to online resources including on the e-learning tool of InforMEA which are coming to fruition now. Two consultants to the InforMEA team accelerated progress on several identified priorities.

- The E-Learning developer has resolved the issue of translations in Moodle with SCORM packages from RISE. The Instructional designer has begun working on an update to the CBD course, with other introductory MEA courses expected to follow soon. The Basel update is live as of this week,

and the updates of the Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention courses are expected to be live soon.

- The CMS and Ozone Secretariats have begun developing updates to their introductory courses on the second InforMEA license of RISE, while Ramsar is looking into this option.
- Beyond the core MEA courses the course for the Thai Judiciary was introduced as a first example of not only a non-UN language course, but also as a successful example of blended learning.
- The SDG 16 course in French was launched in time for Escazu entry into force on Thursday 22 April 2021.
- The National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) course will be launched soon as a compliment to the introductory course on environment and human rights.
- The InforMEA team is currently working to make the Environmental Defenders course available in Portuguese in partnership with the Brazilian office.
- The drafting of courses on SDG 14, Negotiators, Trade & Environment, and Marine Pollution is ongoing.
- Some MEAs have proposed more specific courses building on the Introductory courses, including on plastics, on capacity-building for chairpersons, and on reporting.
- Several talks have taken place on how to make InforMEA courses useful for a blended learning approach, including with the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in African Universities (ASSELAU).

In the context of outreach, the finalized [Bees scroll](#) was shared with the working group meeting.

III. InforMEA Joint Calendar

Feedback received from the MEAs informed the joint InforMEA calendar page and colleagues in the Law Division already begun the process of manually updating content for MEAs that have not yet implemented the events API. At the same time as the InforMEA calendar is being developed in Drupal 9, a UNEP-wide Calendar developed by the Policy division. The calendar will be launched after the World Environment Day in June 2021 in collaboration with the Communications division. As agreed during the SC Meeting, the InforMEA joint calendar will be interoperable with the UNEP calendar.

IV. Archiving: Way forward (Jingwen Yang-UNFCCC)

Following the recommendation, which was endorsed at the last Steering Committee, UNFCCC called for the establishment of a sub-working group on Web archiving and invited all the interested MEAs to join the group to work on the formulation of the proposal for the pilot. A demo and a workshop could be organized with UNHCR or other UN organizations who have already implemented web archiving to raise awareness and get inspired. The goal would be for the InforMEA pilot to be implemented before the next Steering Committee Meeting. The UNFCCC Chief of Records and Archiving of UNHCR confirmed that they will support the archiving initiative.

The InforMEA team was requested to support the coordination of the Archiving sub-working group on sending out meeting invitations, scheduling the meetings, sharing the information, and supporting the pilot project.

V. Data mining & upcoming evaluation

The InforMEA team informed that it would in the new future explore acquiring data mining/analytics expertise, looking especially at how best to extract information from national reports in InforMEA. The SDGs have already been identified and data sets to be looked at had already been proposed during the last working group meeting. MEAs were once again invited to share the proposals with the team per email/teams so that they can be incorporated in the terms of reference for the data mining process. MEAs with any experience with experts in that field were invited to share the information. Equally MEAs who had experience with good evaluators were requested to share their experiences and tips on whoever they engaged with in the context of the upcoming mid-term evaluation.

C. Round of feedback by MEAs

- Ms. Jingwen Yang (**UNFCCC**) informed that UNFCCC has incorporated the introduction course on Climate Change in their learning system for their internal staff and for interns to access the online courses. Regarding the date, she noted that the UNFCCC COP was also scheduled to take place in November. She also informed that UNFCCC has incorporated work on InforMEA within the next biannual as a core activity and that more links to the InforMEA Portal have been integrated on the website.
- Ms. Anna Garcia Sans (**Minamata Convention**) reported that she would contact the InforMEA team on the secretariat's upcoming training courses related to gender and on the soon-to-be-launched report on interlinkages of biodiversity with chemicals and waste under development with BRS. On World Environment Day a report on Climate change and the interlinkages with Chemicals and waste would also be launched. The Minamata COP would take place in two segments, of which the first (1-5 November 2021) would cover time sensitive issues like PoW' and budget and a second hopefully face to face meeting is planned to be held in Bali, Indonesia later in 2022. The Minamata website is currently under implementation and the Secretariat is collaborating with CBD for an online registration system to governance meetings.
- Mr. Gerald Mutisya (**Ozone Secretariat**) announced that Ms. Meg Seki has been appointed as the new Executive Secretary which would provide continuity in the engagement with InforMEA.
- Ms. Haruko Okusu (**CITES**) informed of the ongoing process of renovating the CITES virtual college in the context of which two consultants would be involved with the re-design.
- Ms. Maria Luisa Rodriguez (**Mediterranean Action Plan- regional seas**) also referred to the next COP to be conducted online at the end of 2021. She expressed an interest to collaborate with InforMEA towards specific courses and MAP related products.
- **Ramsar** informed of a new emphasis on newly structured courses as well as on their ongoing work and learnings regarding working with Akoma Ntoso.
- Mr. Moussa Ki Sow (**International Whaling Commission**) referred to the recent upgrade to Drupal 9 being finalized which would now allow a strong technical integration/data exchange with InforMEA. A dedicated technical bilateral technical discussion was anticipated in this regard.

Action points:

- *API discussion between IWC (Moussa Sow) and Eau de Web*
- *Bilateral discussion with UNFCCC preparing the archiving workstream*
- *Minamata to share the upcoming reports for uploading on InforMEA*