

68th Working Group Meeting of the MEA IKM Initiative

Tuesday, February 1, 2022, 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM GMT+3

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

Draft Report

Meeting Participants

BRS – Osmany PEREIRA, Julien HORTONEDA
CBD – Frederick VOGEL, Erie TAMALE
CITES – Shashika SEDARA-HETTIGE, Helene GANDOIS
UNECLAC – David BARRIO
IPBES – Benedict OMARE
ITPGRFAO – Francisco LOPEZ
IWC – Moussa Ki SOW
Minamata Convention – Anna GARCIA SANS
Ramsar – Edmund JENNINGS, Manuel KERN
UNFCCC – Jingwen YANG, Anna Maria Bezerra de MELLO CARCAMO, Gianluca CRISPI
UNECE – Maryna YANUSH
UNEP MAP – Stavros ANTONIADIS

KM Team

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

A. Establishment of the Semantic Governance Committee and scheduling of its first meeting

Ms. Duer began with a series of updates. Endorsed by the 12th InforMEA Steering Committee the InforMEA Semantic Governance Committee (SGC) will be established and hold its first meeting virtually in the first quarter of 2022. It will comprise representatives of at least three members of the InforMEA Initiative and convene once annually. The SGC will be supported by the designated InforMEA Team member, Ms. Kamau, in the preparation and execution of its decisions. Every project that will be finalized and approved will have a sole PoolParty admin user as well as a super admin user at this time provided by InforMEA. The main function of the of the SGC will be to confirm or reject transfers to the production server and change requests, considering the guidelines. The InforMEA team is also looking into arrangements for a taxonomist to support this process. The frequency will be at least once a year unless prompted by a special request. This workflow and approach will be reviewed by the 13th Steering Committee. BRS, CITES, and CBD indicated their interest to join the SGC, with IPBES additionally offering support.

Action point:

- *InforMEA to hold constituting SGC session within first quarter of 2022.*

B. E-Learning and Negotiations

a) Negotiators Course and Section

Ms. Duer welcomed the launch of a Online Negotiations course (available [here](#)), and explained how it will fit into a broader concept section on Negotiators (available [here](#)) to include training materials, the updated Negotiators Handbook, simulation negotiation exercises, the online negotiation course, and other negotiation courses and trainings. An additional section will overview of the Rules of Procedure and Standard Operating Procedures for the different MEAs. Inputs from MEAs are welcome.

Action point:

- MEAs with any material that they wish to be featured in a Negotiators Section to contact the InforMEA team.

b) Sub-Working Group on e-learning

There has been a suggestion to create a Sub-Working Group for those MEAs considering hosting a portfolio of courses with InforMEA. The purpose of this group would be to look at the long-term implications in terms of server space and personnel, to ensure this is a sustained solution, and to evaluate how cost-effective such a solution could be. The second broader implication would be on how the e-learning platform will need to be structured to accommodate these new demands. Members wishing to be part of the group were invited to join. CBD, CITES, UNFCCC, and UNEP MAP expressed interest to join. On e-learning outreach across languages generally, Ms. Yanush (UNECE) suggested translating syllabi even if the courses are not yet available in those languages.

Action point:

- InforMEA to convene first e-learning Sub-Working Group.
- InforMEA to explore possibility of translating syllabi.

C. Way forward on Data Mining

Ms. Duer explained that Zoi Environment Network has been contracted to look into the data that can be extracted from reports on InforMEA to measure progress against SDGs. The goal of this exercise is to explore the utility of searching key words in MEA reports, based on SDG meta-data from the UN Statistics Division, testing the strength of this relationship across a sample of countries over several years, and to see if this can be scaled up with tools like PoolParty. Mr. Kern (Ramsar) affirmed the Zoi proposal reflects well the points made at the Steering Committee meeting with its emphasis on automatic extraction and time series, which implicitly lead to upscaling, but this could also be included explicitly.

Action points:

- MEAs to confirm and provide inputs on the proposal.

D. Compliance Section

Ms. Duer mentioned that UNFCCC had approached InforMEA to revisit the idea of sharing information on compliance decisions and procedures. Several MEAs have developed or strengthened compliance

mechanisms since this idea was first raised. The proposal would be to develop a section like that on negotiations, prefiltering some of the existing content. Mr. Crispi (UNFCCC) affirmed the idea of a cluster on compliance on InforMEA and offered to share public information from the Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement compliance mechanisms. Mr. Hortonedá (BRS) added that some information on compliance under the Basel Convention is public, some restricted. The public data could be shared.

Action points:

- *MEAs to consider proposal on Compliance Section and sharing data.*
- *InforMEA to explore incorporation of UNFCCC compliance information.*

E. Update on Akoma Ntoso

Mr. Kabiru updated the group on a meeting on Akoma Ntoso held in February 2022 to address how the syntax that provides the document URIs should look using the AKN formula. The InforMEA team is currently working with implementing partner Laws.Africa to convert COP decisions provided by the MEAs which should be presented to the next Working Group. After the converting process, the next issue to consider is possible applications to demonstrate the value of this work. The Sub-Working Group on Akoma Ntoso will be called upon to formulate some proposals.

Action points:

- *MEAs to give their feedback on Akoma Ntoso.*
- *InforMEA to present conversion work to next Working Group.*

F. Joint Calendar: Update and status and discussions on content maintenance

Ms. Kamau noted that the joint calendar is up and working but does not yet have enough content from the MEAs. On the UNEP side, colleagues are still working on the UNEP-wide calendar which will still take some time.

Action points:

- *MEAs to work on updating the calendar.*

G. Round of updates from the MEAs

Ms. Yanush (UNECE) raised the possibility to additionally set up information exchange with the Geneva Environment Network calendar. On SDGs it could be fruitful for InforMEA to exchanges with some of the regional platforms to be created. Another consideration on SDG data mining to keep in mind who is the custodian. Ms. Duer acknowledge the possibility of exchange, while noting that the InforMEA calendar is MEA-specific.

Mr. Omare (IPBES) added IPBES is preparing for an in-person plenary in July 2022. Their website has been upgraded from Drupal 9.2 to 9.3, and they are addressing some compatibility issues. There is also on-going work to test an open-source way of extracting terms with Semantic Web on Apache.

Mr. Sedara-Hettige (CITES) explained the secretariat is preparing for the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee from 7-11 March 2022. The next CITES COP is scheduled to take place in Panama City, Panama, on 14-25 November 2022.

Ms. Yang (UNFCCC) reiterated UNFCCC's interest in collaborating through the E-Learning Sub-Working Group and Semantic Governance Committee, and support for the compliance section proposal. Following the COP in Glasgow, UNFCCC is working towards improving its digital platform to accommodate both physical and hybrid meetings. On web archiving, UNFCCC has purchased the services to be implemented within the secretariat in 2022. The other system purchased is a digital preservation system to ensure long term availability, reliability, accessibility, and usability of digital information.

Mr. Jennings (Ramsar) mentioned that World Wetlands Day 2022 is the first time the day will be recognized by as a UN International Day, which is very good for wetlands visibility. A wetlands visibility site is now available at <https://www.worldwetlandsday.org>

Mr. Lopez (ITGRFAO) reported that that their content management system will soon be changed. They are now focusing their efforts in reviewing the content of the website so that the quality is maintained. They have information on compliance but need to consider how it can be shared. Their Governing Body meeting scheduled to happen in India in May Has been postponed to 19-24 September 2022.

Mr. Sow (IWC) updated the group that they are working on their API. Their Drupal 9 is also working well. They currently have sections on Treaties, Meetings, and Contacts (available [here](#)). The next step is Decisions.