

Fifth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme V)

Concept note and agenda for the consultation of partners and stakeholders

in preparation for the Third Global Meeting of National Focal Points

22 September 2026, 2:00 p.m. – 4.00 p.m. EAT

Online

Background

By its [resolution 4/20](#) of 15 March 2019, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) adopted the [Fifth Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law \(Montevideo Programme V or “the Programme”\)](#) for the decade 2020-2029. Serving as the foundational framework for UNEP’s environmental law initiatives and activities since 1982, the Montevideo Environmental Law Programme has significantly shaped the development and implementation of environmental law at national, regional, and international levels through its four previous iterations.

The Programme’s primary objective is to promote the development and implementation of environmental rule of law, strengthen related capacities in countries and contribute to the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since its inception, the Montevideo Programme V has served as a catalyst for legal and institutional reform across countries and regions, enabling Member States to translate global environmental commitments into effective domestic legal frameworks and enforceable norms, strengthen their regulatory and institutional capacities and built partnerships across sectors, actors and stakeholders to advance effective and inclusive environmental governance.¹

Partners and stakeholders, including academia, legal professionals, civil society organizations, environmental defenders, Indigenous Peoples, youth organizations, women organizations, faith-based organizations, parliamentarians, the judiciary, the private sector, secretariats of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other United Nations entities, have played a key role in advancing the implementation of the Montevideo Programme V.

The role of partners and stakeholders has been strengthened with the adoption of the Programme’s [Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy](#) in 2024,² which expressly emphasized guiding principles and modalities of engagement for partners and stakeholders.

In this context, partners and stakeholders have contributed to the development and implementation of environmental rule of law, providing expertise, knowledge, innovation,

¹ Handbook for The Fifth Montevideo Programme on the Progressive Development and Implementation of Environmental Law, UNEP (2024), available at <https://wedocs.unep.org/rest/api/core/bitstreams/ac6f9b64-fae3-479e-9d3d-ed6c3e5e20cf/content>

² UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.2/5, available in all 5 UN languages at the following link: <https://leap.unep.org/en/about/meetings/second-global-meeting-national-focal-points#meeting-documents>

practical experience, perspectives and networks that have been instrumental in ensuring the successful implementation of Montevideo Programme V.³

The year 2026 marks an important juncture for the Montevideo Programme V.

Following the [First Global Meeting of National Focal Points for the Montevideo Programme V held in two parts in 2021 and 2022](#), and the [Second Global Meeting held in 2024](#),⁴ and in line with a decision of the Programme's [Steering Committee for Implementation](#) a Third Global Meeting is planned online for 4-5 November 2026. The Third Global Meeting will provide an opportunity for National Focal Points, as well as partners and stakeholders, to review progress in the implementation of the Programme, provide thought leadership for its strategic direction and guidance to the Secretariat for its implementation during the remainder of its fifth iteration, in line with the [UNEP medium-term strategy 2026-2029](#) and [programme of work](#). The meeting will also be an important opportunity to designate members of its next Steering Committee for Implementation.

UNEA through resolution 4/20, *inter alia*, mandated the UNEP Executive Director to provide a midterm review report, including clearly defined and measurable targets, to be considered by UNEA at the session following the submission of that report. The midterm review report is expected to be presented to UNEA at its eighth session in December 2027. This provides a significant opportunity to put a spotlight on the Montevideo Programme V, to bring its achievements to the attention of Member States before the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment, set its direction until 2029 and possibly prepare the ground for the follow-up phase of the current Programme.

Objectives of the partners and stakeholders' consultation

In preparation for the Third Global Meeting, under the guidance of the Steering Committee for Implementation, the UNEP Secretariat will facilitate a consultation with partners and stakeholders of the Montevideo Programme V.

The consultation will serve as an opportunity to:

- 1. Explore opportunities to further engage partners and stakeholders in the implementation of the Montevideo Programme V**, building on the Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.⁵

³ Ibid

⁴ Including, amongst its outcomes: [Options for clearly defined priority areas to combat the biodiversity crisis](#); [Options for clearly defined priority areas to combat the climate crisis](#); a [Partnerships and stakeholder engagement strategy](#). A full report of the meeting, including progress in advancing the implementation of the Programme's implementation roadmaps is available here: <https://leap.unep.org/sites/default/files/2024-11/2411780E%20UNEP-Env-Law-MTV5-GNFP-2-6%20English.pdf>

⁵ In line with the [Montevideo Programme V strategic activities](#), activities under the Programme reflecting UNEP's work may include: model laws and approaches, practical guidance, tools, resources, best practice and model indicators to aid countries with the effective and inclusive development and implementation of environmental law; information and data exchange among legal stakeholders; activities to promote public participation, access to information and access to justice in environmental matters; partnerships and stakeholder engagement; education,

2. **Identify environmental law and governance trends, challenges, needs and emerging issues from the perspective of partners and stakeholders**, to inform the implementation of the Programme during the remainder of its fifth iteration.

The following questions will guide the consultation:

1. In your view, **what emerging environmental law and governance issues** from your perspective or that of your constituency warrant attention from the Montevideo Programme V, and what specific actions would you recommend?
2. Based on existing modalities of engagement with partners and stakeholders, how would you / your constituency wish to **strengthen your engagement** under the Montevideo Programme V to achieve its objectives?

The consultation will be conducted in English.

Expected outcomes

The consultations will be reflected in a **non-attributable summary report** that will be compiled into an information document serving as background to the third global meeting.

Provisional agenda

Time	Agenda item
20 minutes	1. Introductions and presentation of the Montevideo Programme V
15 minutes	2. Roadmap and upcoming key environmental governance milestones
20 minutes	3. Short overview of Montevideo Programme achievements since the Second Global Meeting
60 minutes	4. Strengthening partners and stakeholders' engagement in the Montevideo Programme V: Exchange with partners and stakeholders.
5 minutes	5. Closing of the meeting and AOB

research and capacity building; trainings for legal professionals such as lawyers, judges, prosecutors and other enforcement officials.