

Fifth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme V): delivering for people and the planet

Third global meeting of national focal points

Online, 4-5 November 2026

Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda¹

Priority areas for implementation and emerging issues in environmental law: Summary of the regional consultation meetings of national focal points for the Montevideo Programme V

Note of the secretariat

1. Introduction

1. In its resolution 4/20 of 15 March 2019, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) adopted the fifth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law for the decade beginning in 2020 (Montevideo Programme V). [Paragraph 6 \(b\) \(i\) of the Montevideo Programme V](#) invites national focal points to identify the priority areas for the implementation of the Programme.

2. Under the guidance of the steering committee for implementation of the Montevideo Programme V, a series of regional consultations was convened between June and July 2026. These consultative meetings were held virtually and brought together national focal points of the Programme from all five United Nations regional groups. Regional consultations were led by the members of the steering committee for implementation from each region, with the support of the secretariat of the Programme. They served as an opportunity for national focal points to consider potential nominations for the steering committee for implementation, and to exchange their views on the implementation of the Programme. In particular, the regional consultations offered a forum for national focal points to identify environmental law and governance trends, challenges, needs and emerging issues from each region, to inform the implementation of the Programme during its remaining period, and consider specific activities to inform UNEP's work in environmental law and governance, as well as the Programme's midterm review mandated by UNEA resolution 4/20, in line with the [UNEP medium-term strategy 2026-2029](#) and [programme of work](#). The consultation also provided national focal points with an opportunity to consider how to link the Montevideo Programme V implementation to the priorities identified by regional ministerial environment fora and reflect, as appropriate, on key issues that, through the Programme, Member States may wish to bring to the attention of the eighth session of UNEA in 2027.

3. The following questions guided the consultations:

a. In your view, what emerging environmental law and governance issues from your region warrant attention from the Montevideo Programme V, and what specific actions would you recommend?

b. What specific activities would you like the Montevideo Programme V to focus on in your country/region (e.g. model laws, guidance tools, trainings and capacity building, research and education, others)? Please indicate any relevant partners/stakeholders that should be involved.

¹ UNEP/Env.Law/MTV5/GNFP.3/1.

4. Following the consultations, members of the steering committee for implementation circulated a preliminary written summary to all national focal points from each region. The outcomes of the regional consultations are further reflected in this summary report that serves as background to agenda item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda of the third global meeting of national focal points. Section 2 summarizes the common areas identified by national focal points in two or more regions, whereas section 3 reports the outcomes of each consultation by region.

5. Building on the outcomes of the regional consultations, during the third global meeting, national focal points are invited to provide further guidance to the UNEP secretariat on any particular environmental law and governance trends, challenges, needs and emerging issues and proposed actions for consideration by the Montevideo Programme V during its remaining period, subject to available resources.

2. Common areas identified by two or more regions

6. Common areas and proposed activities identified by national focal points in two or more regions are listed in table 1. They are presented in alphabetical order.

Table 1

Common areas identified by national focal points in two or more regions

<u>Key area</u>	<u>Proposed activities</u>
Awareness raising of the Montevideo Programme V and promotion of greater engagement of national focal points	• More awareness raising efforts and more frequent engagement of national focal points to improve more regular participation and greater results uptake. • Improving clarity and accessibility to the process of requesting technical legal assistance under the Programme, including through UNEP's Law and Environment Assistance Platform (UNEP-LEAP). • Facilitating more synergies between and joint engagement of national focal points for the Montevideo Programme V and national multilateral environmental agreements (MEA) focal points, to enhance the Programme's impact at national level.
Circularity, including critical minerals for the energy transition and waste management	• Development of national standards on circularity, including in relation to issues related to recycling and methane emissions; development of national circular economy roadmaps and action plans; development of model laws on circular economy, particularly on extended producer responsibility (EPR). • Capacity building and technical legal support, including through the development of guidelines or good practices on environmental due diligence in critical mineral value chains; training and capacity building on establishment and operationalization of hierarchy methodologies for national environmental laws to facilitate synergies between international environmental commitments and other areas of law, such as trade.
Crimes that affect the environment	• Support with mapping of legal and institutional challenges and good practices, facilitating exchanges amongst Member States on legislative and enforcement approaches and harmonization among international, regional and national frameworks.

	• Support with practical guidance, model laws or toolkits on multi-agency cooperation and coordination across the relevant authorities, as well as linkages between administrative and criminal procedures; capacity-building for law enforcement officials to investigate and prosecute offences; and support for countries in harmonising and translating international and regional frameworks into national law, with particular attention to information-sharing mechanisms and coordinated enforcement strategies. • Promoting synergies and cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
Environmental education, partnerships and stakeholder engagement	• Scaling up environmental education and partnerships with academic institutions and other relevant education institutions and networks, including on environmental diplomacy. • Maintain and expand the current network of the Programme's partners and stakeholders to enhance its effectiveness and delivery. • Provide good practice on stakeholder engagement in national climate governance set-ups for a whole-of-society approach.
Environmental integrity and liability, including on carbon capture, removal, and storage	• Facilitate the exchange of regulatory experiences regarding environmental integrity, liability, and long-term stewardship and governance of carbon cross-border transport and storage. • Development of practical guidance, comparative legal analysis, and capacity-building for policymakers, regulators and legal practitioners, drawing on existing experience.
Environmental restoration and remediation, including from mining operations	• Development of guidance tools for enforcement following pollution incidents to ensure restoration and remediation, as well as guidance tools to address pollution incidents resulting from mining operations.
Environmental rights, the protection of environmental human rights defenders and Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders' participation in environmental governance	• Supporting the ratification and implementation of international conventions on the protection of environmental rights, including rights of environmental human rights defenders and their translation into national legal frameworks. • Sharing good practice on public and community participation in environmental decision-making and developing model laws and other guidance tools to help countries account for the particular needs of stakeholders. • Technical assistance and capacity building to protect and enforce access rights in the context of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). • Provide practical, legal and policy tools to strengthen Indigenous Peoples' participation within MEA governance processes; as well as provide guidance on how to better recognize and integrate indigenous knowledge into the key functions of MEAs and their national-level implementation.

Implementation of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement)	• Technical assistance and capacity-building on development and implementation of national legislation, education, development of model laws or toolkits, comparative legal analyses and collection of good practice. • Facilitating synergies with Regional Seas Conventions, including through joint capacity building involving the respective treaty secretariats and national focal points. • Training for navies, coast guards and coastal communities on marine law enforcement, including on management models for protected coastal areas.
Market-based mechanisms, including high-integrity carbon markets, carbon credits, biodiversity credits	• Development of legal tools and institutional arrangements to operationalize market-based approaches to climate and biodiversity governance. • Development and delivery of trainings, capacity-building, and model laws to help establish solid, high-integrity legal frameworks and support effective and equitable countries' participation in carbon markets.
Plastic pollution	• Support with national legislation development and implementation, including through model laws and guidance tools, capacity building and education. • Regulation of single-use plastics, microplastics and the sound management of pollutants and emissions.

3. Key areas identified per region

African States

7. The regional consultation for the African States was held online on 09 July 2026 from 14:00-17:00 (EAT). Participants included the Montevideo Programme V national focal points and the UNEP secretariat.

8. National focal points from the African States identified the following areas for consideration by the Programme during its remaining period:

- a. **Awareness raising and access to technical legal assistance and capacity building under the Montevideo Programme V.** National focal points recognized the need to improve clarity and accessibility with respect to the process of requesting technical legal assistance under the Programme. Furthermore, they also recognized that building the capacity of national focal points from the region to develop and implement effective laws, whilst avoiding normative conflicts, could benefit from structured opportunities for experience-sharing and mutual transfer of good practices. Involving national MEA focal points in the activities supported by the Programme was also recognized as an important point to foster synergies and collaboration with the Programme and to enhance its impact at the national level.
- b. **Capacity building and training for judicial officers, including judges, magistrates, and chairs of specialized environmental tribunals.** National focal points recognized the need to build capacities and offer training activities of policymakers and judicial officers in environmental law as a recurring need in the region. The UNEP Environmental Courts and Tribunals Guide² was identified as a practical resource to support countries in establishing or strengthening environmental courts and tribunals, including the transition to independent environmental divisions.
- c. **Plastic pollution.** Plastic pollution was recognized to be an important emerging issue in the region that requires urgent legal and policy responses and considering the attention that it is receiving in the context of the process of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop an international legally

² The UNEP Environmental Courts and Tribunals Guide is available at:
<https://www.unep.org/resources/publication/environmental-courts-and-tribunals-2021-guide-policy-makers>

binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. EPR was identified as an issue closely linked to plastic pollution and as a priority area for the region, representing a shift from a linear economy to a circular economy approach. The Montevideo Programme V could support countries with model legislative frameworks on plastic pollution and EPR, and capacity building for the value chain.

- d. **Circular economy and the development of legislative frameworks, roadmaps and action plans, including waste management legislation.** Capacity building on the development of circular economy national roadmaps and action plans was recognized as an important need across the region, including in the context of promoting alignment with national development plans and regional action plans. The Montevideo Programme V could further support this area through model laws on circular economy, particularly on EPR.
- e. **Carbon markets, carbon credits, and green finance.** The Montevideo Programme V could support this area with capacity building and training on green finance, carbon markets, and carbon credits. A specific need for capacity building on the legal implications of recent advisory opinions on climate change was also recognized, particularly on how these can influence domestic legislation and its implementation, as well as climate litigation.
- f. **Environmental restoration and remediation.** National focal points highlighted that the Montevideo Programme V could support this area through guidance tools on environmental restoration and remediation, including clear standards for what constitutes adequate restoration of aquatic life, land, and crops, as well as guidance tools to address pollution incidents, including those resulting from mining operations
- g. **BBNJ Agreement implementation at national level.** The BBNJ Agreement implementation was identified as an emerging issue requiring attention in the region, particularly with respect to how national legislation can be developed or adapted to give effect nationally to the international obligations arising from the Agreement.
- h. **Promoting education and partnerships with universities and academic institutions.** The Montevideo Programme V could provide further opportunities to scale up education, training activities and partnerships with academic institutions initiatives, to extend more opportunities for participation to national focal points, institutions and delegates from the region.
- i. **Scaling up partnerships and stakeholder engagement.** The need to maintain and expand the current network of the Programme's partners and stakeholders was recognized as a core need to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Montevideo Programme V going forward, and to enhance its effectiveness and delivery.

Asia-Pacific States

9. The regional consultation for the Asia Pacific States was held online on 08 July 2026 from 10:00-12:00 (UTC+7). Participants included the Montevideo Programme V national focal points and the UNEP secretariat.

10. National focal points from the Asia-Pacific States identified the following areas for consideration by the Montevideo Programme V during its remaining period:

- a. **Improvement of legal frameworks and practical tools to address the balance between environmental conservation and development needs, including through enhanced stakeholders' participation in environmental decision-making and implementation of access rights.** Recognizing that many countries in the region have strong environmental laws, clearer legal frameworks and practical tools to enable different sectors to converge with environmental regulation in practice were highlighted as a need. In the context of environmental rights and stakeholders' participation in environmental decision-making, the Montevideo Programme V could provide greater regional support. On the one hand, by sharing good practice to provide greater clarity on forms of public and community participation in environmental decision-making. On the other hand, by developing and socializing model laws and other guidance tools to help countries account for the particular needs of stakeholders' groups in environmental decision-making. Specific guidance on the engagement of the business community and the private sector was also highlighted as an important entry point to improve environmental law and regulation in practice with a whole-of-society approach.
- b. **Implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation, including through capacity building of relevant stakeholders and improved awareness raising of policymakers.** National focal points highlighted the need for practical, hands-on training and capacity-building activities of those who actually implement and enforce environmental laws and regulations at national level, such as officials from

environmental protection agencies and customs authorities. The Montevideo Programme V could support further efforts in this area, including through supporting targeted training sessions for policymakers as a concrete entry point to raise awareness of environmental issues and influence national policymaking across all spheres of sustainable development.

- c. **Environmental diplomacy training.** The Montevideo Programme V could provide further support in this area, targeting diplomats, government officials, and future negotiators, including law students and trainees, to navigate multilateral environmental negotiations across the various multilateral environmental agreements (MEA) clusters, such as climate change and atmosphere, biodiversity loss and pollution.
- d. **Awareness raising and access to technical legal assistance and capacity building under the Montevideo Programme V.** National focal points recognized the need to improve clarity and accessibility with respect to the process of requesting technical legal assistance under the Programme. Considering the frequent changes in designation of national focal points, the Montevideo Programme V could intensify efforts to keep the focal points informed on how to submit requests, including through UNEP-LEAP, to maximize its effectiveness and impact at the national level.

Eastern European States

11. The regional consultation for the Eastern European States was held online on 19 June 2026 from 10:00 – 12:00 (CET). Participants included the Montevideo Programme V national focal points and the UNEP secretariat.

12. National focal points from the Eastern European States identified the following areas for consideration by the Montevideo Programme V during its remaining period:

- a. **Legal support for the approximation of national legislation to the EU *acquis*, particularly in relation to crimes that affect the environment and environmental liability.** National focal points recognized that the broadened scope of the Environmental Crime Directive poses a challenge for the countries in the region. Similarly, they highlighted challenges related to historical environmental burdens, such as brownfields, and cases where the application of the polluter-pays principle is undermined in the context of the EU Environmental Liability Directive. In response, the Montevideo Programme V could facilitate technical legal assistance in the context of these two EU Directives. In connection, other specific issues recognised include transboundary illegal waste operations and waste production linked to ‘fast fashion’, as well increasing awareness and understanding of the “end-of-waste” concept and when environmental burden passes from operators to the State and which environmental principles apply.
- b. **Nature and carbon credits.** The intersection of climate and biodiversity through nature and carbon credits was identified as an emerging cross-cutting issue, including in the context of the implementation of the EU Nature Restoration Law and the Carbon Removal Certification Framework, both of which require national implementing legislation and the involvement of multiple ministries. The Montevideo Programme V could provide support on these issues through training activities, capacity-building, and model laws.
- c. **Biodiversity and natural resource management, EIAs and access rights.** National focal points recognized that the Montevideo Programme V could provide support in this area, specifically through capacity building and technical legal assistance to ensure an effective and enforceable balance between EIAs, environmental permitting obligations and access rights.
- d. **Climate legislation, including for energy efficiency, and institutional strengthening.** Capacity building to develop, implement and enforce climate legislation at state level was recognized as a significant need in the region. In this respect, the Montevideo Programme V could provide good practice on institutional set-ups that, both horizontally and vertically, can ensure proper stakeholder engagement (e.g. whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach).
- e. **Air quality legislation.** The Montevideo Programme V could provide further support on air quality legislation, specifically through capacity building and technical legal support.
- f. **Awareness raising and regional uptake of the Montevideo Programme V.** Greater awareness-raising about the Programme and more consistent engagement with national focal points were identified as key enabling conditions to improve their participation and uptake of the Programme’s results.

Latin American and Caribbean States

13. The regional consultation of the Latin American and Caribbean States was held online on 07 July 2026 from 09:00-11:00 (EST). Participants included the Montevideo Programme V national focal points and the UNEP secretariat.

14. National focal points from the Latin American and Caribbean States identified the following areas for consideration by the Montevideo Programme V during its remaining period:

- a. **Technical legal assistance and capacity building on plastic pollution.** National focal points identified the intersection of the international plastics treaty currently under negotiation and existing MEAs, such as the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal as a significant emerging issue for the region, requiring careful legal analysis to promote synergies and complementarities. Recognizing that elements of national legislation can be developed even before the international agreement itself is finalised, the Montevideo Programme V could provide support in this area, including through a focus on the regulation of single-use plastics, microplastics, EPR frameworks, and the sound management related to pollutants and emissions. Capacity-building, education, model laws and guidance tools were identified as possible activities to support this focus area.
- b. **BBNJ Agreement implementation:** The BBNJ Agreement was identified as an emerging issue requiring attention, particularly with respect to how national legislation can be developed or adapted to give effect nationally to the international obligations arising from the agreement. The Montevideo Programme V could facilitate capacity-building and education, country technical legal assistance, as well as the development of model laws or toolkits to support countries in implementing the BBNJ Agreement domestically.
- c. **Digital sequence information (DSI).** National focal points recognized that many countries in the region lack dedicated legislation addressing DSI and that a number of countries are not yet parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The adoption of the Cali Fund at the 16th Conference of the Parties to CBD was recognized as a new avenue for Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities to access funding for conservation. Nonetheless, persisting legislative gaps were recognized in the region, preventing the development of national enabling conditions to support Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities accessing relevant resources under the Fund. The Montevideo Programme V could provide capacity building and awareness raising in these areas.
- d. **Critical minerals for the energy transition, and the intersection of environmental and trade law.** National focal points recognized that the environmental impact of the extraction of critical mineral resources require careful legal attention, including the development of biodiversity standards applicable to critical mineral value chains. The Montevideo Programme V could support this area through capacity building and technical legal support, in particular through the development of guidelines or good practices on environmental due diligence in critical mineral value chains. Training and capacity building activities on establishing and operationalizing hierarchy methodologies for national environmental laws were also recognized as concrete avenues to support countries in creating and implementing synergies in MEAs implementation, particularly between international environmental commitments and other areas of law, such as trade.
- e. **Carbon markets, carbon units, and their relationship with Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).** The trading or transaction of carbon units was recognized as an issue raising complex legal and policy questions, including how these should be traded amongst countries, and how to account for their impact in the context of climate action and NDC governance, as well as what criteria should govern such decisions. The Montevideo Programme V could support countries with capacity building and guidance on the legal and regulatory frameworks needed for their effective and equitable participation in carbon markets, while protecting the integrity of NDC governance.
- f. **Sargassum management:** Coastal countries in the region, particularly in the Caribbean, were recognized to face significant and growing challenges from sargassum accumulation, including when it is extracted together with coastal sand, causing damage to coastal ecosystems and communities. The absence of legislation governing sargassum management was recognized as a particular issue, alongside the limited scientific information on which to base regulatory action. The Montevideo Programme V could support countries through training activities for government officials and environmental law practitioners, including through

promoting South-South cooperation exchanges with similarly affected regions, such as West Africa, as well as the development and dissemination of guidance materials on this particular topic.

- g. Crimes that affect the environment.** National focal points highlighted that the development and enactment of dedicated legislation on crimes that affect the environment raises specific legal challenges for countries in the region, including issues around the principle of legality, the definitional elements of environmental criminal offences and related behaviours, and the appropriate scope of environmental crime provisions. The Montevideo Programme V could support countries in the region through technical legal assistance and model laws or toolkits to assist countries in addressing these challenges in a legally sound manner.
- h. Access to justice in environmental matters.** Although countries in the region were recognized to have mechanisms to provide legal protection for access to environmental justice, national focal points identified this area as requiring continued improvement to strive for more equitable governance systems in the region involving all justice system actors. The Montevideo Programme V could broaden its engagement with stakeholders in this area beyond judges and prosecutors to include attorneys, law schools and bar associations, recognising the full range of justice system participants in the technical legal work done in the region. In this respect, the Montevideo Programme V could provide greater support to countries with the implementation of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement), strengthening their capacity to accede to the Agreement and/or implement it through strengthening national enabling conditions.

Western European and Other States

15. The regional consultation for the Western European and Other States was held online on 19 June 2026 from 12:00-14:00 (CET). Participants included the Montevideo Programme V national focal points and the UNEP secretariat.

16. National focal points from the Western European and Other States identified the following areas for consideration by the Montevideo Programme V during its remaining period:³

- a. Legal frameworks for carbon capture, removal, and storage and environmental integrity.** National focal points recognized that the Montevideo Programme V could facilitate the exchange of regulatory experiences regarding environmental integrity, liability, and long-term stewardship and governance of cross-border carbon transport and storage. In particular, the Programme could support the development of practical guidance, comparative legal analysis, and capacity-building for policymakers, regulators and legal practitioners, drawing on existing experience.
- b. Crimes that affect the environment, including illegal wildlife trade, illicit waste trafficking, illegal fishing and illegal logging.** The Montevideo Programme V could support activities such as mapping of legal and institutional challenges and good practices; facilitating exchanges amongst Member States on legislative and enforcement approaches and harmonization among international, regional and national frameworks. The Programme could also support with practical guidance on multi-agency cooperation and coordination across relevant authorities, as well as linkages between administrative and criminal procedures; capacity-building for law enforcement officials to investigate and prosecute offences; and harmonising and translating international and regional frameworks into national law, with particular attention to information-sharing mechanisms and coordinated enforcement strategies. The Programme could also promote exchange on integrated enforcement approaches and institutional coordination, given the close relationship between criminal and administrative law processes and foster coordination among environmental ministries and agencies, administrative authorities, customs, law enforcement, prosecutors and the judiciary. Furthermore, synergies could be pursued with the upcoming Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) overseen by UNODC, which will consider a new additional protocol on crimes that affect the environment, as well as within the scope of UNODC-UNEP cooperation, including under UNEA.
- c. Ocean protection and implementation of the BBNJ Agreement.** Ocean protection was identified as a major challenge following the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement, which creates new obligations requiring coherent integration with regional seas conventions and national frameworks. With many countries only now beginning to address the legal and institutional challenges of national implementation of the Agreement, the Montevideo Programme V could support activities such as: exploring synergies between obligations under the BBNJ Agreement and those under Regional Seas Conventions; joint capacity building

³ The summary also includes written contributions received by national focal points after the consultation.

involving the respective treaty secretariats and national focal points; training for navies, coast guards and coastal communities on marine law enforcement; a reference report on management models for marine protected areas; and comparative legal analysis, model laws, legislative guidance material and good practices, including with respect to BBNJ Agreement obligations as well as with respect to coastal communities and management models for protected coastal areas.

- d. **Integrity of information related to environment and climate change, battling misinformation, ensuring the protection of environmental researchers and environmental rights defenders and promoting enforcement.** The integrity of climate and environmental information was highlighted as at risk from misinformation and disinformation, undermining public trust in institutions and policy effectiveness. The Montevideo Programme V could continue supporting ratification and implementation of conventions on the protection of environmental rights, including rights of environmental defenders and their translation into national law. The Programme could also help better assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of legal tools to protect the scientific community and researchers, particularly against online harassment. Collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) under the Global Initiative on Information Integrity on Climate Change was recommended. From an environmental enforcement perspective, a persisting need for hands-on field trainings on how to generate sound scientific evidence that can enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement was also highlighted.
- e. **Artificial intelligence (AI) and environmental governance.** National focal points highlighted that the Programme could examine more closely the use of AI in environmental protection and climate action, fostering exchanges of views among Member States. More capacity-building was recognized as a need, including as follow-up to UNEA resolution 7/9 on environmental sustainability of artificial intelligence systems.⁴
- f. **High-integrity biodiversity credits.** The Montevideo Programme V could examine more closely the avenues to establish solid, high-integrity legal frameworks to align financial flows with global biodiversity goals. In this respect, it was recognized that the Programme could better connect with the work of the International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits (IAPB) to support knowledge development and capacity building, working with governments to promote high-integrity, effective national legal frameworks enabling such markets.
- g. **Indigenous Peoples' rights and their meaningful participation in environmental governance, particularly MEA processes.** Acknowledging that Indigenous Peoples' participation in MEA processes often remains constrained due to persisting barriers that prevent their full, effective and meaningful participation, the Montevideo Programme V could support the development of targeted, practical guidance tools tailored to relevant MEA contexts. Working in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders, the Programme could support the development of practical legal and policy tools to strengthen Indigenous Peoples' participation within MEA governance processes; as well as provide guidance on how to better recognize and integrate indigenous knowledge into the key functions of MEAs and their national-level implementation. Key focus areas could include: chemicals and waste management (e.g. persistent organic pollutants, mercury); national climate governance; as well as the application of rights-based approaches – including Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) – and implementation of access rights within domestic legal frameworks, aligned with MEA obligations.

⁴ UNEP/EA.7/Res.9, available at <https://docs.un.org/UNEP/EA.7/Res.9>