

Knowledge Management For MEAs

Building Coherence and Strengthening International
Law

Why is KM important?

- Consistency and coherence are the foundations of strong international law
 - Example 1 precautionary principle
 - Variations: Rio Declaration, UNFCCC, Cartagena Protocol Biosafety
 - WTO Beef Harmones Case
 - Example 2 ILO Collective Right to bargaining
 - Consistency is well established never contradictory recognized as a fundamental principle

Why is KM Important?

- “It’s an Evolution not a Revolution”
 - No outright conflicts of treaties but also no cooperation
 - MEAs ARE NOT SELF-CONTAINED
- Article 31 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties
 - Interpretation of a treaty must take account of all other relevant treaties and subsequent practices
- How can MEAs keep track of each other?

What do they have they we don't?

- One secretariat for all treaties
- One authoritative voice on the issue
- Tools that generate and promote coherence
 - ILO lex, FAO lex, WTO analytical index
 - Common data portals, no problems of interoperability of data
 - Outreach and capacity-building to promote the development of law in respective areas

KM for MEAs what can we do?

- Harmonize data so we can have interoperability
- Provide tools for that will bring bodies together
 - InfoMEA
 - Ecolex
- Provide capacity building
- Lessen the procedural burdens of MEAs member-states
 - Harmonized Reporting
 - Online Reporting

Ingredients for a Strategy

- First steps
 - Rebuild confidence with MEAs Secretariats
 - Support pilot Project between MEAs
 - Build on existing initiatives (ECOLEX)
 - Compatibility with existing efforts (INFOMEA, TEMATEA, CIESIN)
 - Agree on interoperability guidelines
- Bigger Steps
 - Build a knowledge management platform
 - Interoperability between MEAs
 - Develop new tools
 - Analytical legal index
 - Tools for searching data
- Provide capacity building MEAs
- National and regional levels

Other Perspectives : Importance KM

- Compliance and Implementation
 - Common Functional elements
 - Research , Education, Customs, etc
- Resource efficiency
- Conflict avoidance
- Robustness and learning from each other
- Political/Negotiations

Have we come so far?

One key problems with information use and provision relating to MEAs is that, often, the ways in which information is prepared and used varies from one convention to another. This places a burden, not only the signatory countries who are party to these conventions, but also the secretariats themselves as they cannot easily share knowledge between them. Obviously, the problem is not purely structural as the type of information required by each user also varies. Yet, opportunities do exist in the harmonisation of information systems and exchanges between MEAs.

Conference on Synergies and Interlinkages 1998

Why Geneva?

Its all about building trust.....

- Neutrality
 - Not the HQ of UNEP
- Visibility
 - Working daily with MEAs secretariats
- Accessibility
 - Vicinity CITES, RAMSAR, Basel, Stockholm/Rotterdam
 - Will need to work closely with other partners (IUCN, WCMC)
 - Infrastructure