

MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENT AGREEMENTS

What are Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs)?

MEAs are legally binding International Agreements between three or more state parties to reach a common environmental goal.

What MEAs apply to the Cook Islands environment?

There are a number of MEAs that apply to the Cook Islands, with shared responsibilities across Cook Islands entities (Government and NGOs). This is covered in Part One.

Furthermore, there are MEAs that are relevant to the Cook Islands where NES is the focal point for implementation. This is covered in Part Two.

Who can I contact to get more information?



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PART ONE: MEAS IN THE COOK ISLANDS

Land	Ocean	Air
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) • Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity • Convention on Conservation of Nature in the South Pacific Region (Apia Convention). • Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Convention. • Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region 1986 (SPREP or Noumea Convention with Annex). • Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) • Convention on Wetlands of International importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (RAMSAR Convention). Amendments - Paris 1982 and Regina 1987. • United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution of the South Pacific Region by Dumping, with Annexes I-IV (Protocol on Dumping). • Protocol concerning Co-operation in combating Pollution Emergencies in the South Pacific Region (Protocol on Pollution Emergencies). • South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (with Annexes and 3 Protocols) • International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS 1974) and its Protocol of 1978. • United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), with Annexes I-IX • Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982. • Agreement relating to the implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982. It also relates to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. • Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and Protocols • Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. • Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (London) • Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Copenhagen)

Land	Ocean	Air
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convention for the Prohibition of Fishing with Long Driftnets in the South Pacific (Wellington Convention). • International Convention on the Regulation of Whaling. • International Convention Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties (Intervention Convention 1969) • The International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation 1990 (OPRC Convention). • International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973; and the Protocol of 1978 relating to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 (MARPOL 73/78). • Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, 1972 (London Dumping Convention and 1996 Protocol to the London Convention). • International Convention relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties (1969); and the Protocol relating to Intervention on the High Seas in cases of Pollution by Substances other than Oil, 1973. • International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1969 and the 1976, 1984 and 1992 Protocols to the Civil Liability Convention (CLC 1969.) • International Convention on the Establishment of a International Fund for Compensation of Oil Pollution Damage, 1976, 1984 and the 1992 Protocols to the Fund Convention (FUND 1971). • Agreement establishing the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). • Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. (1992) • Barbados Declaration and Program of Action. 	

PART TWO: MEAS IMPLEMENTED BY NES

International Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs)	Implemented into National Legislation	MEA Objectives	NES's Implementation Role
Basel Convention Ratified 29 June 2004	Prevention of Marine Pollution Act 1998	The Convention aims to protect human health and the environment against the adverse effects of waste: from generation, transboundary movements and management of hazardous wastes and other wastes.	Project- based and Reporting.
Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity Ratified 21 May 2001	Biosecurity Act 2008	The Protocol deals primarily with living Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) that are to be introduced into the environment (such as seeds, trees or fish) and with genetically modified farm commodities (such as corn and grain used for food, animal feed or processing).	It obligates developing countries to have the human resources and institutions required to promote biosafety.
Convention on Biological Diversity 1992 Ratified 20 Apr 1993	Environment Act 2003	This Convention is to conserve biological diversity, promote the sustainable use of its components, and encourage equitable sharing of the benefits of using genetic resources.	Translated into Environment Act 2003.
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals 2006 (BONN Convention) Ratified 01 Aug 2006	No	This Convention aims for the conservation of migratory species of wild animals worldwide. Conservation of migratory species particularly requires international cooperation to ensure protection across their full range.	Shared obligation for National reporting.
Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) 1972	Culture and Historic Places Act 1994 Cook Islands Natural Heritage and Trust Act 1999	The Convention addresses the increasing threat of destruction to the cultural and natural heritage of the world by establishing an effective system of collective conservation.	Environment Act 2003 mandates for regulations to be created for Protected Areas and Species

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Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (RAMSAR Convention) 1971	Environment Act 2003	This Convention seeks to conserve wetlands areas being marsh, fern, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary to conserve the habitat for waterfowl which are birds ecologically dependent on wetlands.	NES is not a party to the Convention but has adopted the objectives into Environment Act 2003 to designate Wetlands as a significant area of concern
The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer 1985	Environment Act 2003 Environment (Montreal Protocol) Regulations 2021	The Precursor Convention to the Montreal Protocol and succeeding protocols. The Convention aims to create a framework to protect the globe's ozone layer.	ODS is recognized under Environment Act 2003 and ODS Regulations (NES is the leading agency).
Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer 1985 (Vienna Convention) <i>Ratified 22 Dec 2003</i>	Environment Act 2003 Environment (Montreal Protocol) Regulations 2021	The Protocol's main objective is to protect the ozone layer by taking precautionary measures to control global emissions of substances that deplete it.	
The Montreal Amendment 1997 <i>Signatory 22 Dec 2003</i>	Environment Act 2003 Environment (Montreal Protocol) Regulations 2021	Included the phase out of HCFCs in developing countries, as well as the phase out of methyl bromide in developed and developing countries in 2005 and 2015 respectively.	
Kigali Amendment 2016 <i>Signatory 22 Aug 2019</i>	Environment (Montreal Protocol) Regulations 2021	Extended controls to phase down the production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) as potent greenhouse gases damaging to the earth's climate.	
The London Amendment 1990 <i>Signatory 22 Dec 2003</i>		Changed the ODS emission schedule by requiring the complete phase out of CFCs, halons, and carbon tetrachloride	

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The Copenhagen Amendment 1992 <i>Signatory 22 Dec 2003</i>	Environment Act 2003	Aims to significantly accelerate the phase out of ODSs and incorporated a hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC) phase out for developed countries, beginning in 2004.	ODS is recognized under Environment Act 2003 and ODS Regulations (NES is a leading agency)
The Beijing Amendment 1999 Ratified 01 Jan 1970		This amendment aims to tightened controls on the production and trade of HCFCs. Bromochloromethane was also added to the list of controlled substances with phaseout targeted for 2004.	As above
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 1992 <i>Ratified 20 April 1993</i>		The objective of this Convention and any related legal instruments is to achieve stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.	The Environment Act 2003 recognizes the implementation of UNFCCC. Implementation moved to Climate Change Cook Islands.
Kyoto Protocol 1998 <i>Ratified 27 Aug 2001</i>		Kyoto Protocol is a sub- agreement under the UNFCCC with an aim to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system, in a time frame which allows ecosystems to adapt naturally and enables sustainable development.	
Paris Agreement <i>Ratified 01 Sep 2016</i>		This Agreement is subsidiary to the UNFCCC with an aim to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.	
Stockholm Convention (POPs) 1970 <i>Ratified 29 Jun 2004</i>		This Convention aims to protect human health and the environment from the effects of persistent organic pollutants (POPs)	Project based implementations by NES. Also shared responsibilities with Agriculture.

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Rotterdam Convention Ratified 20 June 2004	Biosecurity Act 2008	The objective of the convention is to promote shared responsibility and cooperative efforts among parties in international trade of certain pesticides and hazardous chemicals to protect human health and environment from harm.	NES project based and shared responsibility with other agencies
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification 1970 <i>Acceded 23 August 1998</i>	Environment Act 2003	The objective of this Convention is to protect people living in areas affected by desertification, land degradation and drought to create a resilient livelihood base and secure long-term benefits while enhancing the healthy functioning of ecosystems.	Project based for NES and Agriculture
Law of the Sea Convention 1982 Ratified 15 Feb 1995	Ministry of Marine Resources Act 2005 Maritime Transport Act 2008 Seabed Minerals Activities Act 2019	Aims to define coastal and maritime boundaries, to regulate seabed exploration not within territorial claims, and to distribute revenue from regulated exploration.	Environment Act 2003 recognizes maritime boundaries and jurisdiction but implementation responsibility remains with other agencies.

Regional Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs)	MEA Objectives	NES's Implementation Role
<p>Noumea [SPREP Convention] 1986 Ratified 9 Sept 1987</p>	<p>The Convention applies to the South Pacific region. Regional parties seek to conclude bilateral or multilateral agreements for the protection, development and management of their marine and coastal environment, and to prevent, reduce and control pollution of the Convention areas.</p>	<p>NES is the focal implementing agency recognized by legislation</p>
<p>Noumea Dumping Protocol Ratified 29 Nov 1988</p>	<p>The Protocol supports the previous Convention and deals specifically with preventing pollution in the South Pacific region by way of dumping.</p>	<p>NES has shared responsibility with MOT</p>
<p>Noumea Emergency Protocol Ratified 9 Sept 1987</p>		<p>NES has shared responsibility with MOT and Emergency Management Cook Islands.</p>
<p>Convention on Conservation of Nature in the South Pacific Region (Apia Convention)</p>	<p>The main objective of this Convention is to commit the Parties to take action for the conservation, utilisation and development of the natural resources of the South Pacific region through careful planning and management for the benefit of present and future generations.</p>	<p>NES is the focal implementing agency and also recognizes the convention as an objective of the Environment Act 2003</p>
<p>Waigani Convention 1995 Ratified 24 Oct 2000</p>	<p>The Convention seeks the conservation, utilisation and development of the natural resources of the South Pacific region. It encourages the creation of national parks (or protected areas) for the preservation of indigenous fauna and flora. The Convention seeks to have countries create protected areas to safeguard representative samples of ecosystems, and places of scenic, geological, aesthetic, historical, cultural or scientific importance.</p>	<p>NES has a shared responsibility with MOT and MMR.</p>