

Summary of the 25th Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice and the Resumed Second Part of the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity: 15-20 October 2023

Ten months after the historic adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), the 25th Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 25) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) convened to provide expert advice on the scientific, technical, and technological aspects of GBF implementation.

The meeting addressed various aspects of implementation including the monitoring frameworks, mechanisms for planning and review, scientific and technical needs, and plant conservation. Discussions also extended to the implications of the assessments of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC AR6) on GBF implementation and the Convention’s work programme.

In light of the extensive and compelling findings presented by both the IPBES and IPCC assessments, the meeting placed a strong emphasis on developing synergistic strategies for concurrently addressing two primary drivers of biodiversity loss, namely, climate change and invasive alien species (IAS). These assessments have underscored the urgent need to adopt a comprehensive approach that simultaneously targets these key challenges, recognizing their intertwined impacts on global biodiversity. This focus on tackling crosscutting issues together further extended to the topic of sustainable wildlife management and brought about reflections on ways to increase collaboration among multilateral environmental agreements in GBF implementation.

In this regard, the CBD was lauded for its longstanding history of collaboration with others on biodiversity objectives, including specialized conventions such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Convention on Wetlands. Through enhanced collaboration, these conventions can harness their respective expertise, exchange crucial information, and synchronize their actions, creating more streamlined and powerful GBF implementation actions.

During the week’s deliberations, delegates also aimed to ensure coherence in the scientific guidance for the monitoring framework.

Many divergent views were expressed, stemming from diversity of the ecological and socio-economic realities of different countries and regions, and the unique circumstances experienced by parties in addressing the challenges of biodiversity loss.

By the end of the meeting, SBSTTA 25 adopted eight resolutions on:

- plant conservation;
- review of findings from the IPBES Methodological Assessment Report on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature;
- IAS;

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- approaches to identify the scientific and technical needs to support GBF implementation;
- sustainable wildlife management;
- scientific, technical and technological inputs that should inform the global review of collective progress in GBF implementation;
- monitoring framework for the GBF; and
- biodiversity and climate change.

The conclusion of the meeting also signified the end of a five-year chapter in the tenure of SBSTTA Chair Hesiquio Benítez Díaz, who received a standing ovation and accolades for his unwavering commitment to the subsidiary body.

Following the conclusion of SBSTTA 25, the resumed second part of the CBD COP 15 convened concurrently with the tenth meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CP-MOP-10) and the fourth MOP to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising from their Utilization (NP-MOP-4).

The meeting's primary agenda was to elect new vice-presidents to the Bureau, the SBSTTA and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), and to discuss the date and venue of CBD COP 16.

CBD COP 15 will go down in history for being the Convention's longest meeting, spanning just over two years. Although plagued by pandemic-related challenges and broader geopolitical tensions in Central and Eastern Europe, delegates completed their work, and the meeting came to a successful conclusion.

SBSTTA 25 and the resumed second part of CBD COP 15 convened in Nairobi, Kenya, from 15-20 October 2023, drawing over 700 delegates including representatives from governments, civil society and other stakeholder groups.

A Brief History of the Convention on Biological Diversity

The CBD was adopted on 22 May 1992 and opened for signature on 5 June 1992 at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio "Earth Summit"). The CBD entered into force on 29 December 1993. There are currently 196 parties to the Convention, which aims to promote the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

Key Turning Points

Three protocols have been adopted under the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (January 2000, Montreal, Canada) addresses the safe transfer, handling, and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) that may have adverse effects on biodiversity, taking into account human health, with a specific focus on transboundary movements. It entered into force on 11 September 2003 and currently has 173 parties.

The Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (October 2010, Nagoya, Japan) provides for international rules and procedures on liability and redress for damage to biodiversity resulting from LMOs. It entered into force on 5 March 2018 and currently has 53 parties.

The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits arising from their Utilization (ABS, October 2010, Nagoya) sets out an international framework

for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and technologies, and by appropriate funding, thereby contributing to the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of its components. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and currently has 140 parties.

Other major decisions include:

- the Jakarta Mandate on marine and coastal biodiversity (COP 2, November 1995, Jakarta, Indonesia);
- work programmes on agricultural and forest biodiversity (COP 3, November 1996, Buenos Aires, Argentina);
- the Global Taxonomy Initiative (COP 4, May 1998, Bratislava, Slovakia);
- work programmes on Article 8(j), dry and sub-humid lands, and incentive measures (COP 5, May 2000, Nairobi, Kenya);
- the Bonn Guidelines on ABS and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (COP 6, April 2002, The Hague, the Netherlands);
- work programmes on mountain biodiversity, protected areas, and technology transfer, the Akwé: Kon Guidelines for cultural, environmental, and social impact assessments, and the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for sustainable use (COP 7, February 2004, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia);
- a work programme on island biodiversity (COP 8, March 2006, Curitiba, Brazil);
- a resource mobilization strategy, and scientific criteria and guidance for marine areas in need of protection (COP 9, May 2008, Bonn, Germany);
- the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including the Aichi Targets, and a decision on activities and indicators for the implementation of the resource mobilization strategy (COP 10, October 2010, Nagoya, Japan);
- an interim target of doubling biodiversity-related international financial resource flows to developing countries by 2015, and at least maintaining this level until 2020, coupled with targets aiming to improve the robustness of baseline information (COP 11, October 2012, Hyderabad, India); and
- agreement to use the terminology "Indigenous peoples and local communities" (COP 12, October 2014, Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea).

Recent Meetings

COP 14 (November 2018, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt), set up the intersessional open-ended working group on the GBF; established an intersessional process, including an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) to continue work on Digital Sequence Information (DSI) on genetic resources; and adopted the Rutzolijirixaxik voluntary guidelines for repatriation of traditional knowledge.

The **Working Group on the GBF**, co-chaired by Francis Ogwal (Uganda) and Basile van Havre (Canada), held four meetings between 2019 and mid-2022. Various submissions and consultations, as well as recommendations from SBSTTA, SBI, the Working Group on Article 8(j), and the AHTEG on DSI informed these negotiations. With several issues remaining unresolved, the Working Group held its fifth meeting immediately prior to COP 15. Lengthy negotiations on various sections, goals, and targets of the GBF did not manage to bridge entrenched positions on several elements of the draft, which

remained largely bracketed. In addition, a non-negotiated, entirely bracketed non-paper on DSI was forwarded to COP 15.

COP 15: The first part of the UN Biodiversity Conference convened virtually from 11-15 October 2021, with a limited number of delegates physically present in Kunming, China. The meeting's theme was "Ecological Civilization: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth." It resulted in the adoption of the Kunming Declaration, which called for urgent and integrated action to reflect biodiversity considerations in all sectors of the global economy.

The second part of the UN Biodiversity Conference, which convened from 7-19 December 2022 in Montreal, Canada, delivered the GBF, which will guide biodiversity policy in the years to come, through four overarching goals and a set of targets to be achieved by 2030.

SBSTTA 25 Report

SBSTTA Chair Hesiquio Benítez Díaz (Mexico), opened the meeting on Sunday, 15 October, noting that this was the first meeting since the adoption of the GBF, and stressed the importance of SBSTTA 25 for GBF implementation and urged moving from words to action.

Susan Gardner, Ecosystem Division, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), emphasized that to deliver on the GBF, we need a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, adequate financing, and positive yet disruptive practices underpinned by knowledge and science.

Underlining the scope and challenges of GBF implementation by 2030, David Cooper, Acting Executive Secretary, CBD, drew attention to the adoption of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the work of the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures.

Organizational Matters

Adoption of agenda and organization of work: Delegates adopted the provisional agenda and organization of work ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/1/Rev.1](#) and [CBD/SBSTTA/25/1/Add.1/Rev.3](#)).

Election of officers: The Secretariat reminded delegates that SBSTTA 25 is required to elect five new members to the Bureau to serve a term commencing at the end SBSTTA 25 until the close of SBSTTA 27, to replace outgoing members. She also noted that a new SBSTTA Chair would be elected at the resumed session of the CBD COP 15. Delegates elected Kibagu Kenneth Heinrich Uiseb (Namibia) for the African Group, Taulant Bino (Albania) for Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), Jahigul Kabir (Bangladesh) for the Asia Pacific, Scott Wilson (Canada) for the Western European and Others Group (WEOG), with Niklaus Wagner (Switzerland) serving as a substitute for matters relating to the CBD Protocols, and Aria St. Louis (Grenada) for the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC). Bilal Qteshat (Jordan) was elected rapporteur.

On Thursday, SAINT LUCIA nominated Francis Omar Reyes Polanco (Dominican Republic) as the substitute for GRULAC. AUSTRALIA nominated Jane Stratford (UK), to replace their original nominee as WEOG substitute.

Facilitating the Implementation of the GBF and the Monitoring Progress

Monitoring framework for the GBF: On [Sunday](#), James Williams (UK), Co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on GBF Indicators, presented an update on their work, including the annexed proposed list of binary indicator questions ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/2](#)).

Some delegations noted imbalance in the headline indicators, particularly those related to sustainable use, benefit-sharing, and means of implementation. GRULAC proposed synergies with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and, with the INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY, CBD WOMEN'S CAUCUS, and GLOBAL YOUTH BIODIVERSITY NETWORK, the inclusivity of all stakeholders including Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs), women and youth.

Chair Benítez then established a contact group on the binary indicators, co-chaired by Jan Plesnik (Czechia), and Adams Toussaint (Saint Lucia).

On [Wednesday](#), the contact group met to finalize its deliberations. Delegates discussed prioritization of the work of the AHTEG and deliberated on its tasks related to headline indicators. Parties agreed that these tasks should remain within the scope of current mandates. Delegates agreed to defer completion of binary questions for the global indicators to SBSTTA 26. A conference room paper (CRP) was prepared. During plenary, delegates considered CBD/SBSTTA/25/CRP.6 and agreed to defer the discussions on the annex containing a list of binary indicator questions. The plenary approved the draft recommendation as amended.

On [Thursday](#), delegates considered the recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.8) on the monitoring framework for the GBF. FINLAND noted that some targets have not been discussed. Delegates approved the recommendation. The annex contains a bracketed list of binary indicator questions.

Draft Recommendation: In the recommendation ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.8](#)), the SBSTTA, among others:

- welcomes the progress of the AHTEG on GBF indicators, including the proposed way forward for the global indicators constructed from binary responses;
- requests the AHTEG to identify and provide technical advice to fill critical gaps to improve the monitoring framework;
- requests the Secretariat to facilitate the engagement of the members of the AHTEG with biodiversity-related conventions and relevant international organizations;
- requests the AHTEG to make available in due time for review by the parties before SBSTTA 26 the revised metadata for each indicator;
- invites the AHTEG to provide advice on the wording on the list of binary questions, with the support of the Secretariat to be provided in the form of an explanatory note to facilitate discussions at SBSTTA 26; and
- decides that, when the full monitoring framework is considered, SBSTTA 26 will consider the list of binary questions for the global indicators, constructed from binary responses, and will provide it for consideration by COP 16.

Mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting and

review: On [Sunday](#), Chair Benítez reminded delegates of COP decision 15/6 to conduct a global review of collective progress in the implementation of the GBF, and the request to SBSTTA 25 to provide relevant scientific, technical and technological inputs to inform the review. The Secretariat presented the document ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/3](#)).

Several countries supported the inclusion of a high-level summary on the state and trends of biodiversity but called for distinguishing the global review report from the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO). Others prioritized elements to be included in the report, including biodiversity trends following the IPBES global assessments; collective progress from national reports; contributions from other biodiversity-related agreements; and implementation gaps.

Chair Benítez established a contact group, co-chaired by Gaute Voigt-Hanssen (Norway) and Bilal Qteshat (Jordan). The contact group considered the Co-Chairs' non-paper on scientific and technical inputs that should inform the global review of collective progress in the implementation of the GBF. Delegates deliberated, among others, the elements to be included in the report. They discussed including the interlinkages and contributions of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and the SDGs to the implementation of GBF, while being mindful of not encroaching upon the mandates of other conventions.

In discussing the related draft recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/25/CRP.7) in plenary on [Wednesday](#), views diverged on the inclusion of the language related to the contributions of other MEAs to GBF implementation.

On [Thursday](#), the SBSTTA approved the recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.7), including bracketed text, reflecting the points of divergence.

Draft Recommendation: In the recommendation ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.7](#)), the SBSTTA: decides to provide SBI 4 the following elements of a draft decision concerning the concrete procedures for the global review of collective progress in the implementation of the GBF, which will be submitted for consideration by COP 16; and requests the Secretariat to take into account views expressed by parties during the intersessional period, including at SBSTTA 25, when preparing the pre-session document concerning the process and the procedures.

The SBSTTA recommends that COP 16 decide that the global review of collective progress in GBF implementation will comprise a global report assessing implementation progress, containing the following elements in its structure, *inter alia*:

- an introduction to the report and the GBF;
- a concise scientific and technical synthesis of the state of, and trends in, biodiversity;
- a review of collective progress in the GBF implementation, including a target-by-target assessment of progress;
- a dedicated section on the provision of means of implementation consistent with the GBF; and
- an analysis of progress towards the goals of the GBF and the 2050 Vision.

The COP also decides that the following sources of information should be drawn upon when preparing the global report, *inter alia*:

- as its primary source, national reports;

- the global analysis of information in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and national targets;
- the five editions of the GBO and the two editions of the Local Biodiversity Outlook;
- IPBES assessments and other relevant intergovernmentally-reviewed scientific assessments and reports, including those of the IPCC;
- reports on means of implementation, reviewed by the SBI, including those of the GEF Council on progress in the GEF Trust Fund and GBFF;
- other relevant scientific and technical peer-reviewed literature as well as relevant databases;
- information on commitments by non-state actors towards the GBF, including disaggregated information on contributions from IPLCs, women and youth;
- relevant information from biodiversity-related conventions and other relevant MEAs, international organizations, and processes; and
- relevant traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technology of IPLCs that is given access to with their free, prior and informed consent.

The COP also decides to establish an ad hoc scientific and technical advisory group for the preparation of the global report on collective progress in the implementation of the GBF, with a time-bound mandate until COP 17, that will provide scientific, technical, and technological recommendations, including on traditional knowledge, for the preparation of the global report on collective progress.

Approaches to identifying scientific and technical needs to support the GBF implementation, including its implication for the Convention's programmes of work: This issue was addressed in plenary on [Sunday](#) and [Wednesday](#). The Secretariat introduced the document ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/4](#)) on Sunday, noting that the rapid analysis described in this document was conducted in order to support SBSTTA deliberations in identifying overarching gaps in scientific and technical guidance for the implementation of GBF targets. In the discussion, CANADA, FINLAND, MEXICO, COSTA RICA, JAPAN, UK, BRAZIL, AUSTRALIA, and NEW ZEALAND called for aligning this issue with the existing documents and guidelines of the CBD, including its work programmes and multi-year programme of work.

SPAIN and BELGIUM suggested undertaking another rapid analysis, taking into account other cross-cutting issues. Namibia, for the AFRICAN GROUP, stressed that the rapid analysis was insufficient and, with SOUTH SUDAN, called to defer this issue to SBSTTA 26 to allow the Secretariat to revise this work.

On Wednesday, plenary discussed a draft recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/25/CRP.4). CANADA called for deletion of a paragraph affirming the importance of CBD programmes of work in supporting the achievement of the GBF goals and targets, noting that it was premature to do so before SBSTTA 26.

JAPAN proposed including a reference to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and other relevant organizations as a source of information in the request to the Executive Secretary to undertake a comprehensive review and analysis of existing tools and guidance that can support GBF implementation.

On [Thursday](#), they approved an amended recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.5), after further discussion.

Draft Recommendation: In the recommendation ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.5](#)), the SBSTTA takes note of the results of the rapid analysis of programmes of work of the Convention and related guidance, guidelines and tools with regard to the GBF goals and targets, and notes the need for further analysis. The SBSTTA requests the Secretariat to:

- undertake a comprehensive review and analysis of existing tools and guidance that can support the implementation of the targets and other elements of the GBF;
- compile views and information from parties, other governments, IPLCs, secretariats of other MEAs, relevant intergovernmental bodies and organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, and make the compilation and findings available for SBSTTA 26;
- identify gaps and redundancies to support the implementation of the GBF goals and targets in line with the mandates of the Convention, for consideration by SBSTTA 26; and
- on the basis of the analysis, prepare technical advice, including, recommendations for the adjustments of the Convention's work.

The SBSTTA invites contributions from relevant MEAs and intergovernmental organizations that could support the implementation of the targets and other elements of the GBF. It also invites views related to the work programme of the IPBES and its potential contribution in addressing the scientific and technical needs to support the GBF implementation and the global review of collective progress.

Plant conservation: On [Sunday](#), Maïté Delmas, Co-Chair of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation (GPPC), presented on the set of complementary actions related to plant conservation to support the implementation of the GBF. The Secretariat introduced the documents ([SBSTTA/25/5](#) and [SBSTTA/25/INF/4](#)). Discussions continued on [Monday](#), with many delegates welcoming the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC). JAPAN, supported by many, underlined the need for flexibility regarding the use of the strategy in NBSAPs. SOUTH AFRICA called for a standardized reporting template to facilitate voluntary reporting on the implementation of the complementary actions. BRAZIL called for retaining reference to IAS, and inclusion of coastal and marine plant species. DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC) underscored the need to conserve the genetic biodiversity of plants both in and ex situ. The AFRICAN GROUP noted that the complementary actions proposed are impractical and cannot be achieved by the 2030 GBF timeline.

On [Tuesday](#), delegates considered a draft recommendation on plant conservation (CBD/SBSTTA/25/CRP.1). On the suggestion of BRAZIL, and recognizing the voluntary complementary actions related to plant conservation have been sufficiently peer-reviewed, delegates approved the recommendation as presented.

On [Thursday](#), the SBSTTA approved the recommendation.

Draft Recommendation: In the recommendation ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.2](#)), the SBSTTA encourages the AHTEG to take into account the voluntary complementary actions related to plant conservation when providing technical advice on the GBF monitoring framework. The SBSTTA recommends that COP 16 should:

- decide to adopt the voluntary complementary actions related to plant conservation as an update to the GSPC to support GBF implementation;
- emphasize these voluntary complementary actions should be viewed as a flexible framework within which national and regional actions may be developed;
- invite parties and other governments to develop or update national and regional actions related to plant conservation and incorporate them into relevant plans, programmes, and initiatives;
- express its appreciation to the GPPC and invites them to provide guidance on using the monitoring framework for the GBF, develop specific indicators of the voluntary complementary actions, and develop a template for voluntary reporting on the progress of its implementation;
- invite the flexible coordination mechanism for the GSPC; and
- request parties to provide financial and technical support for enabling the implementation of the GSPC, in particular in developing countries.

Findings from IPBES and IPCC Assessments and their Implications on the CBD's Work

IPBES assessments: On [Monday](#), Anne Larigauderie, Executive Secretary, IPBES, highlighted three assessments adopted at the ninth and tenth sessions of the IPBES Plenary:

- [Methodological Assessment Report on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature](#) (Values Assessment);
- [Thematic Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species](#) (Sustainable Use Assessment); and
- [Thematic Assessment Report on IAS and their Control](#) (IAS Assessment).

The Secretariat presented SBSTTA's review of findings from these assessments ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/6](#), [7](#), and [8/Rev.1](#)). Helen Roy, Co-Chair, IAS Assessment, said this first comprehensive global IAS report presents compelling evidence of the need for immediate and urgent control of IAS. Mike Christie, Co-Chair, Values Assessment, said the analysis and tools presented will contribute to GBF implementation by shifting all decisions towards better values-centered outcomes for people and nature. Maria Emery, Co-Chair, Sustainable Use Assessment, presented key elements towards building a common vision for sustainable use and transformative change in human-nature relationships.

On the Values Assessment, the EU recognized the importance of the assessment for the entire planning, monitoring, and review process. COLOMBIA underscored the importance of including IPLCs and other knowledge systems. On the Sustainable Use Assessment, BRAZIL stressed the importance of community-based monitoring. The AFRICAN GROUP noted the need to scale the assessment findings to national and regional levels. On the IAS Assessment, the NETHERLANDS underscored the importance of strengthening regulations on IAS at the national, regional and international levels.

On [Tuesday](#), delegates approved a draft recommendation on findings from the IPBES assessments and their implications for the work undertaken under the Convention (CBD/SBSTTA/25/CRP.2), with editorial amendments. On [Thursday](#), delegates considered CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.3 on the review of findings from the IPBES

Values Assessment and their implications for the Convention's work. Even though they were unable to agree on whether to "welcome," "welcome with appreciation," or "endorse" the assessment, they approved the recommendation.

Draft Recommendation: In the decision ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.3](#)), the SBSTTA among others, recommends that COP 16 welcomes [with appreciation], the IPBES Values Assessment Report, including the summary for policymakers (SPM), and notes the relevance of the findings.

The SBSTTA also recommends that the COP encourage:

- the use of the information contained in the assessment in the implementation of the Convention and the GBF, including in planning, monitoring, reporting and review, through the update and revision of NBSAPs, and the preparation of national reports; and
- parties to develop capacities to take into account and consider findings of the assessment in relevant implementation processes and urges the provision of support to developing countries.

The SBSTTA also recommends that parties take steps to, *inter alia*:

- address the diverse values of nature in ongoing and new valuation processes;
- meaningfully include the diverse intrinsic, relational and instrumental values of nature in decision-making;
- reform policies and institutions to internalize the diverse values of nature and align them with the global objectives of sustainability and environmental justice;
- support participatory processes; and
- ensure the full and effective participation of IPLCs, women and girls, children and young people, and persons with disabilities.

IPCC AR6: On [Monday](#), the Secretariat presented the document containing IPCC AR6 findings ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/9](#)). COLOMBIA, UK, NORWAY, and SWEDEN called for merging the discussion and decisions on the report with the agenda item on biodiversity and climate change.

Invasive Alien Species

On [Monday](#), the Secretariat introduced the document ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/10](#)), developed pursuant to COP decision 15/27 requesting the Secretariat to organize a peer-review process to solicit advice on draft voluntary guidance and advice on various IAS-related matters.

The AFRICAN GROUP lamented limited data from the region and highlighted gaps between the One Health approach and other existing approaches in IAS management in Africa. FINLAND, with the EU, BELGIUM, GERMANY, SWITZERLAND, MEXICO, CANADA, the UK and others, called for a COP decision endorsing the voluntary guidance and advice. She also proposed highlighting its voluntary nature. BURUNDI suggested collaborative and cooperative measures instead of voluntary ones while INDONESIA highlighted the need for regional collaboration. Delegates also addressed the annex on cost-benefit, cost-effectiveness, and multi-criteria analysis methodologies that best apply to IAS management. Chair Benítez established a contact group, co-chaired by Senka Barudanovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Jean Bruno Mikissa (Gabon) to address the annex and requested the Secretariat to prepare a CRP on the recommendation.

On [Tuesday](#), the contact group met, basing deliberations on a Co-Chairs' non-paper on IAS. The non-paper incorporated written comments and textual amendments addressing the annexes on voluntary guidance and advice on various matters related to IAS. In their discussions, some delegates proposed adding a human-rights based approach to the risk analysis of the potential consequences of the introduction of IAS on socio-economic and cultural values. Others pointed out that risk analysis has a specific meaning and understanding under the Convention and stated that including a human-rights based approach is misplaced.

On [Wednesday](#), Chair Benítez opened plenary discussions on the draft recommendations on IAS, including on the findings of the IPBES IAS Assessment Report (CBD/SBSTTA/25/CRP.3/Rev.1). Delegates considered whether to endorse or welcome the key messages outlined in the SPM as well as the chapters of the IPBES IAS assessment. BRAZIL, ARGENTINA, and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION preferred to welcome the SPM, noting that the chapters of the assessment are yet to be reviewed by the SBSTTA. Delegates agreed that the full assessment can be approved at CBD COP 16.

On [Thursday](#), delegates discussed, amended and approved the recommendation on IAS.

Draft Recommendation: In the recommendation ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.4](#)), the SBSTTA recommends that COP 16 welcomes the IPBES IAS assessment and its SPM and note the relevance of its findings. It also recommends encouraging the use of the information contained in the assessment in the implementation of the Convention and the GBF, including when updating or revising and implementing NBSAPs and during the preparation of national reports, and urges providing support to developing countries.

The SBSTTA also recommends that COP 16:

- recognize that increasing the availability and accessibility of information and means of implementation and addressing major knowledge gaps on biological invasions would result in more robust and effective policy instruments and management actions, and that additional efforts and cooperation are needed to improve data collection in certain regions;
- endorse the elements of voluntary guidance developed based on the work of the AHTEG on IAS and further complemented through a peer-review process to support GBF implementation, and urge parties to use them to update and implement NBSAPs and to inform national and subnational actions for the management of IAS; and
- urge parties and invite other governments and relevant organizations to make use of the information available in the assessment.

It further recommends that COP 16 request the Secretariat to: further strengthen collaboration among relevant organizations through the Inter-Agency Liaison Group on IAS with a view to supporting implementation of GBF Target 6 on IAS; hold an open-ended online forum to facilitate the exchange of information and experiences; and report progress to the SBSTTA.

Biodiversity and Climate Change

The Secretariat introduced the document ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/12](#)) on Monday. On [Tuesday](#), delegates addressed the proposed draft recommendation contained in the document. SUDAN, with others, welcomed suggestions for synergistic actions that address climate

change, biodiversity loss, desertification, and other crises. Several delegations also called for a balanced approach that reflects the reports and assessments from IPBES and the IPCC.

VENEZUELA, with CHINA, DRC, and others, proposed deleting reference to nature-based solutions (NbS), noting the lack of concrete outcomes from the recently concluded intergovernmental consultations on NbS. BRAZIL underscored that NbS are not a panacea for climate change mitigation, noting the concept shifts the burden of implementation to developing countries. SAUDI ARABIA also noted there has yet to be a suitable definition of NbS and suggested that IPBES be requested to summarize, review, and make recommendations. MEXICO drew attention to ecosystem-based approaches (EbA) and the need to take into account local and cultural contexts.

Emphasizing the need to use EbA as part of NbS to address biodiversity loss and climate change, GERMANY called on delegates to refrain from discussions on terminology. NEW ZEALAND, CANADA, BELGIUM, ITALY and others pointed to UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolution 5/5 on NbS for sustainable development.

Chair Benítez established a contact group, co-chaired by Mariela Cánepa Montalvo (Peru), and Tia Stevens (Australia).

On [Wednesday](#), the contact group met to discuss relevant draft recommendations, basing their discussions on a Co-Chairs' non-paper. Delegates agreed to reorder the paragraphs to give preeminence to biodiversity-related work and its intersections with climate change. They debated on how best to reflect CBD decision 15/2 welcoming the IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and IPCC AR6.

During the evening plenary, delegates considered draft recommendations (CBD/SBSTTA/25/CRP.8), discussing contentious text relating to work of the CBD and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), also related to NbS and/or EbA. Issues remained unresolved. Chair Benítez tasked Canada, Portugal, DRC, Colombia, Germany, Malawi, and Brazil to work on compromise text.

On [Thursday](#), delegates approved the recommendation on biodiversity and climate change, as amended by the small group.

Draft Recommendation: In the recommendation ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.9](#)), the SBSTTA, *inter alia*:

- welcomes IPCC AR6 and takes note of its findings and their implications for the work of the Convention;
- welcomes the decisions taken at tenth session of IPBES to undertake a second global assessment, a methodological assessment on spatial planning and connectivity, and a methodological assessment on monitoring;
- encourages further collaboration between IPBES and the IPCC, reaffirming the need for transparency of any activity in conformity with the decisions of the Panel and the Platform and their respective policies and procedures;
- stresses the importance of CBD National Focal Points engaging with their UNFCCC counterparts, and enhancing collaboration among CBD and UNFCCC parties to raise awareness on relevant interlinkages between biodiversity and climate change to support relevant national planning processes, in line with national commitments, circumstances, and priorities; and

- requests the Secretariat, when undertaking the comprehensive review and analysis of existing tools and guidance that can support GBF implementation, to include tools developed under the CBD, and the IPBES and IPCC assessment reports, taking note of UNEA resolution 5/5 on NbS for sustainable development.

Sustainable Wildlife Management

On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the document ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/11](#)), which contains an analysis of areas beyond the wild meat sector that might require complementary guidance. CANADA, with AUSTRALIA, the EU, SWITZERLAND, NEW ZEALAND, NORWAY, ARGENTINA, and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, noted the list of areas for complementary guidance may be duplicative of the work of other conventions. BRAZIL stressed that the implementation of the Convention and its GBF is a party-driven process, and thus it was not the responsibility of the Secretariat to identify specific areas. SPAIN suggested that complementary measures be presented to SBSTTA before COP 16.

On [Wednesday](#), delegates considered a draft recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/25/CRP.5) in plenary. Parties agreed to the suggestion made by the UK, BRAZIL and others to welcome the key messages along with the IPBES Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species and its SPM.

Delegates engaged in lengthy debate on how to address increase in demand and technological developments that have negative impacts on wild species. BRAZIL argued that this topic goes beyond the mandate of the Convention. On the illegal harvesting and use of and trade in wild species, parties also debated whether to include unsustainability and traceability of trade to support GBF Target 5 on sustainable, safe and legal use, harvesting and trade of wild species. Both of these matters remained unresolved. The plenary approved the CRP, as amended.

On [Thursday](#), delegates approved the recommendation contained in CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.6 on sustainable wildlife management. The DRC requested, and delegates agreed, among others to delete all references to “subject to the availability of funding.”

Draft Recommendation: In the recommendation ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.6](#)), the SBSTTA, notes that additional guidance on sustainable wildlife management beyond the wild meat sector should, as its core objectives, contribute to GBF implementation; and requests the Secretariat:

- to collaborate with the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management to undertake a further gap analysis to identify areas not adequately covered by existing guidance developed under relevant MEAs and by competent intergovernmental organizations;
- when undertaking the gap analysis, to take into consideration the seven key elements of effective policy for the sustainable use of wild species identified in the Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species; and
- in undertaking the further analysis to: solicit views and inputs from parties, IPLCs, and women, relevant MEAs, and competent intergovernmental bodies, in conjunction with the comprehensive review and analysis of existing tools and guidance that can support the implementation of the goals and targets of the GBF; review the list of areas that might require complementary

guidance on the basis of the further analysis; and submit the results of the further analysis, including the revised list, to COP 16 for consideration.

Other Matters

On Thursday, IRAQ highlighted the importance of finding viable solutions for water scarcity occasioned by the building of dams. COLOMBIA raised the issue of CBD Article 8(j) on traditional knowledge, innovations and practices, noting the importance of effective participation of IPLCs.

Adoption of the Report and Closure of the Meeting

On Thursday, Rapporteur Bilal Qteshat (Jordan) introduced the report of the meeting ([CBD/SBSTTA/25/L.1](#)). Delegates adopted it with minor editorial amendments.

Acting Executive Secretary Cooper noted that the strength of the CBD lies in the open engagement of various groups and emphasized that this participation was essential for the “whole-of-government” and “whole-of-society” approach to the GBF. He also thanked SBSTTA Chair Benítez for his hard work and dedication to science for the past five years.

Following a standing ovation from delegates for his successful tenure, Chair Benítez expressed hope that the momentum at SBSTTA 25 will build up towards the successful completion of work for consideration at COP 16. He reminded delegates to find the common denominator for consensus and maintain high levels of ambition, discipline, and commitment. Chair Benítez closed the meeting at 12:54 pm.

Report of the Resumed Second Part of the UN Biodiversity Conference

On [Thursday](#), Zhou Guomei (China), on behalf of the COP 15 President, opened the resumed second part of CBD COP 15, CP-MOP 10, and NP-MOP 4. Acting Executive Secretary Cooper welcomed delegates and called for a spirit of cooperation to complete all the outstanding items.

Organizational Matters

Adoption of the agenda: On Thursday, delegates adopted the provisional agenda ([CBD/COP/15/1/Rev.1](#), [CBD/CP/MOP/10/1/Rev.1](#), and [CBD/NP/MOP/4/1/Rev.1](#)) including slight modifications regarding the order of business. Leina El-Awadhi (Kuwait) was elected as rapporteur for this meeting.

Credentials: On Thursday, Eric Okoree (Ghana) presented the credentials report ([CBD/COP/15/INF/29](#), [CBD/CP/MOP/10/INF/11](#), [CBD/NP/MOP/4/INF/8](#)). Delegates took note of it.

Election of officers: On Thursday afternoon, Guomei reminded delegations that due to procedural challenges, the election of officers ([CBD/COP/15/INF/28/Rev.1](#)) was not completed at the meeting in December 2022.

Delegates elected, by acclamation: Hlobisile Siko (Eswatini) and Abderahman Zino Izourar (Algeria) for the African Group; Sandeep Singh (Fiji) and Somaly Chan (Cambodia) for Asia Pacific; Gillian Guthrie (Jamaica) and Maria Teresa Becerra Ramirez (Colombia) for GRULAC; and Norbert Baerlocher (Switzerland) for WEOG. They also elected, by acclamation, Shri Reddy (India) as SBI Chair.

In an historic vote, delegates then elected Teona Karchava (Georgia), Angela Lozan (Moldova) for CEE; Eric Schauls

(Luxemburg) for WEOG; and Senka Barudanovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina) as SBSTTA Chair.

On Friday, delegates elected, by acclamation, substitutes for Bureau members to address matters of the Nagoya Protocol, including: Egypt, for the African Group; Tajikistan, for Asia Pacific; Cuba, for GRULAC; and Czechia for CEE.

Compliance

Compliance with Cartagena Protocol MOP 10: On Friday, Guomei introduced this item, noting that the Bureau, at its meeting held in May 2023, agreed to extend the terms of the members whose seats had been up for election until 31 December 2024. Delegates endorsed the extension of the terms of members of the compliance committee.

Compliance with Nagoya Protocol MOP 4: On Friday, Guomei introduced this item, noting that the Bureau, at its meeting held in May 2023, agreed to extend the terms of the members whose seats had been up for election until 31 December 2024. Delegates endorsed the extension of the terms of members of the compliance committee.

Date and Venue of COP 16

On Friday, Acting Executive Secretary Cooper noted that, with the withdrawal of Türkiye from hosting COP 16 due to the February 2023 earthquakes, the Secretariat was in talks with potential hosts. He noted that in the absence of an offer from a party, the meeting would be held at the seat of the Secretariat in Montreal, Canada.

TÜRKIYE shared that their decision to withdraw as COP 16 hosts was due to the emotional and physical toll of the earthquakes in February 2023, and thanked delegations for their expressions of sympathy and support. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION underlined that the new host country should issue visas to all delegates in time for the meeting. In response to EGYPT, Acting Executive Secretary Cooper highlighted that COP 16 is scheduled for 21 October – 1 November 2024. In response to SAUDI ARABIA, Cooper noted that the Secretariat had sent a notification to all states regarding hosting the meeting, and shared that the Secretariat could issue a follow-up to reiterate this.

Delegates then adopted the decision on the date and venue of the next meeting (CBD/COP/15/L.36), which, *inter alia*, expresses its sympathy and solidarity to the people and Government of Türkiye for the losses they have suffered in the aftermath of the earthquakes, and requests that the Executive Secretary expedite consultations with parties on the date and venue of the next meeting, and in the absence of any viable offer from a party by the end of December 2023, explore, in consultation with the Bureau, arrangements to hold the meetings at the seat of the Secretariat.

Other Matters

On Friday, DRC recalled the proceedings in Montreal in 2022 and expressed hope that moving forward, all parties are treated equally, and that principles of justice and equity will prevail, in both procedural and substantive matters. Guomei assured delegates that the priority of the Convention was the implementation of the GBF and that all parties' contributions are key to achieving the goals and targets.

UKRAINE noted the environmental damage to his country occasioned by the war in his country, and expressed gratitude for

the continued support of the international community. He lamented the politicization of the election of EEC members to the Bureau. He warned against the crime of ecocide and highlighted the cost of environmental damage. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION cautioned against the politicization of the CBD meeting, but responded to the accusations made against his country.

Adoption of the Report

On Friday, Rapporteur El-Awadhi (Kuwait) introduced the Nagoya Protocol meeting report (CBD/NP/MOP/4/L.1/Rev.2), which delegates adopted. She introduced the meeting report from COP/MOP 10 of the Cartagena Protocol (CBD/CP/MOP/10/L.1/Rev.2), which was also adopted.

Rapporteur El-Awadhi then introduced the meeting report from COP 16 (CBD/COP/15/Part-II/L.1/Rev.2). Acting Executive Secretary Cooper introduced some editorial amendments, and noted this was a procedural report whose purpose is to reflect what occurred at the meeting. Georgia, for the CEE, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, and SPAIN called for amendments related to the section on the election of officers. In the section on the organization of work, the DRC called to reflect their call to establish a special fund for biodiversity under the Convention. Delegates adopted the report with these and other minor changes.

Closure of COP 15

On Friday, Acting Executive Secretary Cooper noted that the day marked *Mashujaa* or Heroes Day in Kenya, and thanked the country for its hospitality. He also thanked all of those involved in making the meetings possible, recognizing COP 15's long journey. He thanked the outgoing members of the Bureau and welcomed new members, noting that there is still a lot of work to be done. Lastly, he thanked the current COP President for the skillful leadership and efforts.

Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of GRULAC, noted while COP 15 was unprecedented in terms of the challenges and issues it has faced, it has adopted the ambitious GBF. She noted the work still needed to be done to operationalize the GBF Fund.

The EU noted that there was a long-standing CBD practice of respecting nominations by regional groups, and expressed concern that one party opposed a nomination from another regional group. He stressed that this should be an isolated incident as it undermines the spirit of multilateralism.

Norway, on behalf of members of JUSCANZ, echoed this sentiment, noting their deep disappointment that the CBD had to resort to a vote by secret ballot. Nonetheless, as there are new members to the Bureau, she hoped that they could lead all to complete the important work that lies ahead.

The United Arab Emirates, for ASIA PACIFIC, looked forward to different synergies in implementing the GBF, including connectivity, integrity, NbS, and EbA for a blue, green, and healthy planet.

Comoros, on behalf of AFRICAN GROUP, noted the concerns raised by the continent during COP 15 in Montreal need to be taken into account in the implementation of the GBF. He stressed the need to continue consideration of a special fund for biodiversity under the Convention to enable the Secretariat to better discharge its responsibilities.

Incoming SBI Chair Reddy expressed his thanks to delegates for entrusting him with the responsibility of chairing the SBI, and assured them that he will do his best in his new role, sharing an Indian saying, "Nature protects if she is protected."

Indonesia, for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), highlighted the group's Center for Biodiversity, as well as its Green Initiative; and called for effective resource mobilization mechanisms, which take into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Closing the meeting, Guomei noted delegates' hard work, cooperation, and compromise, thanked the Secretariat for the meeting arrangements, and noted with the milestone success in adopting the landmark GBF "we have come to an exciting starting point."

She gavelled the meeting to a close at 1:13 pm.

A Brief Analysis of the Meetings

The fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 15) set a record as the longest meeting in the history of the Convention. Spanning three separate sessions over two years, the unprecedented duration of the COP was attributed to a combination of factors. The first part of the meeting took place in October 2021 in Kunming, China. However, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented China from hosting an in-person meeting for all parties to the Convention. The Convention agreed to hold the second part of the meeting in Montreal, Canada, in December 2022. In Montreal, the rigorous nature of the negotiations surrounding the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) made it impossible to complete the COP's agenda, leaving unresolved matters related to the election of new officers to the Bureau and the chairpersons of two subsidiary bodies. This ultimately necessitated the resumed session in Nairobi, Kenya.

In a second break with history, the resumed second part of the CBD held its first-ever vote to address unresolved matters related to the election of Bureau officials. While delegates elected other regions' nominees as vice presidents by acclamation, the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region invoked the seldom-used CBD voting procedure, as there was no consensus on the candidates for vice-president positions.

The week-long Nairobi meeting began with the 25th meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 25), which marked the first time the parties to the Convention had come together to discuss the GBF since its adoption. The primary focus of SBSTTA 25 was to facilitate implementation of the GBF by providing scientific, technological and technical information for monitoring implementation.

This brief analysis examines the roadmap proposed by SBSTTA 25 for developing the GBF's monitoring framework.

Breaking Ground

SBSTTA 25, held ten months after the GBF's adoption, marked a significant step towards the GBF's implementation. The meeting focused on the development of the GBF's monitoring framework, designed to serve as a tool for assessing progress and ensuring that parties uphold their commitments under the GBF.

The headline indicators, which have been the subject of lengthy debates and intense intersessional work, are the backbone of the GBF's implementation, serving, as some indicated, "as a compass for assessing progress." Not only can they assess the state of biodiversity, but they can also support development of effective conservation measures to attain the GBF goals and targets. Headline indicators, as many emphasized during the week, should be specific and suited for each target and leave no room for ambiguity in order to ensure concrete and measurable results. As such, the emphasis on transparency throughout the meeting was instigated by the fact that such indicators must foster trust and inclusivity in data collection, analysis, and sharing.

For many, building trust on the implementation of the GBF has a connotation of equality and justice, requiring that the agreed indicators are a reflection of the principles of the Convention. These principles reiterated through the meeting include: recognition of sovereign rights of nations over their biological resources; shared responsibility for conservation but not necessarily the same capacity to address it; and the need to promote rights-based approaches and full participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs), women, youth, and others in the quest to live in harmony with nature.

Broken Trust

The current state of the indicators points to eroded trust among parties and stakeholder groups. This was particularly apparent as a concerned group of stakeholders staged a protest decrying the inadequacy and lack of inclusivity in the indicators, particularly for IPLCs and marginalized groups including women, girls, and youth. The group claimed that some headline indicators like a faulty compass would lead the GBF implementation astray, and more than likely cause increased losses rather than restoration of biodiversity. For example, target 15 (business assess and disclose dependencies, impacts and risks, and reduce negative impacts) is measured on the component indicator on the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD). Some noted that the TNFD proposed indicators are biased towards businesses and companies, with no legal consequences or responsibilities for negative impacts caused.

Some further claimed the binary indicators, which are composed of yes-or-no responses in national reports, are an inadequate measure for assessing progress and would fail at distilling necessary information. In an example, one delegate noted that a majority "yes" response to whether a country has certain legislation supporting the GBF does not measure the effectiveness of such legislation. Biodiversity, as some added, is dynamic and thus identifying trends and emerging threats requires indicators that enable adaptive biodiversity and ecosystem management, supported by sustainable and effective strategies. This point gained prominence during discussions on the revision of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) in alignment with GBF goals and targets. Many countries noted the need for capacity building to achieve this task, while at the same time acknowledging that it is also time consuming and thus there is need for other ways of showcasing progress. Many supported compilation of success stories and best practices.

Delegates nevertheless stressed the importance of grounding headline indicators in science to steer policy, rather than the reverse. Some countries shared national experiences where science-based

policies are already achieving positive results. In this regard, some reported that ecosystem-based approaches (EbA) represent the Convention's most established approach for ecosystem restoration. They reported examples of their application, including recognition in national legislation. Those supporting shifting to new methods justified that nature-based solutions (NbS) are not an alternative but an integral part of a comprehensive and holistic approach. Many were convinced that while science may not provide a one-size-fits-all solution, its role in the GBF has created a necessity for fit-for-purpose innovative solutions.

Breakthrough Science

Scientific breakthroughs are needed to bridge the science-policy interface. The role of science is to provide credible, accurate, and impartial information to guide effective and informed implementation. The scientific community at SBSTTA 25 took a proactive approach, reaching out to policymakers with evidence on the dire state of global biodiversity, but also providing viable solutions. One such delegate commented, "Even though science is expensive, solutions should be affordable and accessible."

In addition, the scientific community was lauded for departing from its exclusive ivory tower to recognizing the significance of Indigenous and local knowledge. This form of information, as acknowledged by some scientists, has often proven more precise in estimating trends in species population changes and, critically, more up to date. This is attributed to the fact that IPLCs have a longstanding, daily interaction with nature over an extended period of time.

SBSTTA's role was put to the test during discussions on what sources of scientific information should guide implementation. All parties generally agreed that suitable scientific sources have already undergone stringent peer review processes. Nevertheless, a number of countries favored restricting the range of sources to those that have been "SBSTTA-approved," with particular focus on the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessment reports, and Global and Local Biodiversity Outlooks. This position was at odds with others who pointed to glaring gaps in information from some regions due to limited scientific, technological and technical capacity. They advocated for casting the net wider to capture more extensive sources. Much remains to be seen about what approach will be taken, even as some countries cautioned against locking out new and unconventional sources of knowledge.

Breaking Barriers

The GBF is imperative for ensuring synergies and collective action among multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in addressing the multifaceted challenges of biodiversity loss. Breaking the barriers of individual convention mandates is paramount not only to the GBF's implementation, but to addressing global drivers of biodiversity loss.

This "all-hands-on-deck" approach was a major focus of SBSTTA 25 discussions, as delegates reviewed the intricate linkages between climate change, invasive alien species (IAS), and biodiversity loss. They noted that cooperation needs to extend to other focal areas, such as sustainable wildlife management. SBSTTA members also

noted that addressing these issues in tandem offers significant co-benefits, contributing to climate mitigation and resilience in addition to biodiversity conservation.

The Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions was put forward as a key player in harnessing the collective power of environmental agreements, and breaking down the barriers of individual mandates, for a more comprehensive and coordinated approach in GBF implementation.

Make or Break

How we implement the GBF could be the make-or-break turning point in addressing the global biodiversity crisis and achieving the objectives of the CBD. SBSTTA 25 took a giant stride in initiating a crucial dialogue on the monitoring framework aimed at fostering transparency and accountability towards tracking the implementation of the landmark global Framework.

This meeting served as a stark reminder of the world's expectations. Delegates highlighted that the GBF is not to be regarded as a mere plan, but as a tangible path towards ending the war on nature. In this regard, several called on the CBD to assume an increased role in combatting "nature-blindness" in society through awareness-building of the pivotal role of biodiversity for human survival.

The looming 2030 deadline has also brought into sharp focus the urgency of swift implementation. While there may be doubts about the adequacy of the seven years left to achieve meaningful results, many are increasingly aware that the focus must shift from bureaucratic processes to expediting actions and channeling the financial resources, data, and tools necessary to attain the ambitious 2030 targets.

The next twelve months leading up to the COP will undoubtedly be challenging for the CBD Secretariat, as the tasks requested of them seem unsurmountable. The global review of collective progress in the GBF implementation is a particularly daunting task, as the CBD seeks to develop a synthesis or summary of the state and trends of global biodiversity. This task will involve a critical review of several scientific sources such as the five Global Biodiversity Outlooks, the IPBES and IPCC assessments, and information from relevant MEAs. This endeavor, as some noted, is both resource intensive and time consuming. As 2030 draws near, and the burden of the global imperative to safeguard biodiversity weighs heavier on the CBD and its parties, there is no time to ruminate over the challenges. The demands require unwavering dedication and action from all.

Upcoming Meetings

77th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee: The Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora will convene to provide policy guidance to the Secretariat concerning the implementation of the Convention. **dates:** 6-10 November 2023 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **www:** cites.org/eng/meetings/sc

2023 Marine Regions Forum: The 2023 Marine Regions Forum will bring together representatives from governments, non-governmental organizations, industry, and the scientific community to strengthen regional ocean governance. The Forum aims to support regional action and international governance processes to achieve

SDG 14 (life below water). **dates:** 7-9 November 2023 **location:** Dar es Salaam, Tanzania **www:** prog-ocean.org/marine-regions-forum/conference-2022-3

Fourth Nature for Life Hub 2023: This event will showcase opportunities to accelerate action on the GBF and place nature at the heart of development. The Hub aims to bring together governments, civil society, academia, and the private sector to exchange knowledge and solutions, promote collaboration and partnerships, and raise awareness and countries' ambitions to deliver NBSAPs. **dates:** 7-9 November 2023 **location:** virtual **www:** learningfornature.org/en/nature-for-life-hub-2023

CBD WG8j-12 and WG DSI-1: The first meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of DSI on Genetic Resources will focus on further developing and operationalizing the multilateral mechanism for benefit-sharing from the use of DSI on genetic resources. The 12th meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) will address: implementation of the priority tasks of the multi-year programme of work on Article 8(j) and related provisions; the knowledge management component of the GBF; the joint programme of work on the links between biological and cultural diversity; and the recommendations of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. **dates:** 12-18 November 2023 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **www:** cbd.int/meetings

59th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Sessions of the Associated Committees: The Council is the International Tropical Timber Organization's governing body. It meets once a year to discuss wide-ranging issues of interest to members, including those related to the legal trade of tropical timber and the sustainable management of tropical forests. **dates:** 13-17 November 2023 **location:** Pattaya, Thailand **www:** itto.int

Tenth Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA): This meeting will reflect on the implementation of the Treaty, including the enhancement of its Multilateral System and farmers' rights. **dates:** 20-24 November 2023 **location:** Rome, Italy **www:** fao.org/plant-treaty

2023 UN Climate Change Conference: The Conference comprises: COP 28 to the UNFCCC; the fifth meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Paris Agreement (CMA 5); the 18th meeting of the COP serving as the MOP to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 18); and the 59th meetings of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). Among other things, COP 28 will conclude the first Global Stocktake of the implementation of the Paris Agreement. **dates:** 30 November – 12 December 2023 **location:** Dubai, United Arab Emirates **www:** unfccc.int/cop28

23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention: The meeting will address the protection of the marine environment and the coastal region of the Mediterranean. It will convene under the theme "From decisions to actions." **dates:** 4-8 December 2023 **location:** Portoroz, Slovenia **www:** unepmap/meetings/COP23-Portoroz

66th meeting of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Council: The GEF Council will continue its work developing, adopting, and evaluating the operational policies for

GEF-financed activities. It will also: review and approve the work program (projects submitted for approval); focus on relations with environmental conventions; address monitoring and evaluation; and approve criteria, standards, and priorities for programmatic approaches. **dates:** 5-9 February 2024 **location:** Washington D.C., US **www:** thegef.org

14th meeting of the COP to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS): CMS COP 14 will convene to review implementation of the Convention. CMS, also known as the Bonn Convention, recognizes that states must be the protectors of migratory species that live within or pass through their national jurisdictions and aims to conserve terrestrial, marine, and avian migratory species throughout their ranges. This meeting will, among others, discuss the proposed inclusion of species, including the Peruvian Pelican and the Sand Tiger Shark, in the Convention's appendices. **dates:** 12-17 February 2024 **location:** Samarkand, Uzbekistan **www:** cms.int/en/meeting/fourteenth-meeting-conference-parties-cms

Sixth meeting of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-6): UNEA-6 convenes under the theme "Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution." It will be preceded by the sixth meeting of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives, which will take place from 19-23 February 2024. **dates:** 26 February – 1 March 2024 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** unep.org/environmentassembly/unea-6

SBSTTA 26: The twenty-sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice will be held back-to-back with the fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI). **dates:** 13-18 May 2024 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** cbd.int/meetings

Fourth meeting of the CBD SBI: This meeting will review implementation of the CBD in advance of the next Conference of the Parties. **dates:** 21-29 May 2024 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** cbd.int/meetings

2024 UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF): The 2024 session of the HLPF will be the 12th session of the HLPF and will take place under the auspices of Economic and Social Council on the theme "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: The effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions." It will include in-depth review of SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger), SDG 13 (climate action), SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), and SDG 17 (partnerships for the Goals). **dates:** 8-17 July 2024 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** hlpf.un.org

Summit of the Future: The Summit aims to accelerate progress towards international commitments and take concrete action to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities, with an action-oriented outcome document called "The Pact for the Future." **dates:** 22-23 September 2024 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** un.org/en/summit-of-the-future

2024 Global Nature Positive Summit: The first Global Nature Positive Summit will bring together delegates from around the world including ministers, environment groups, First Nations Peoples, business, scientists, and community leaders, to consider

how to supercharge investment in projects that repair nature. **dates:** October 2024 **location:** Sydney, Australia **www:** dceew.gov.au/environment/international/nature-positive-summit

11th Session of the IPBES Plenary (IPBES 11): IPBES 11 will consider the assessment on interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health and the transformative change assessment. **dates:** 10-16 December 2024 **location:** Windhoek, Namibia **www:** ipbes.net

UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP 16/CP-MOP 11, and NP-MOP 5): The next UN Biodiversity Conference will convene in 2024 in a location to be determined. **dates:** 21 October – 1 November 2024 **location:** TBC **www:** cbd.int/meetings

For additional meetings, see sdg.iisd.org

Glossary

AHTEG	<i>Ad Hoc</i> Technical Expert Group
AR6	IPCC Sixth Assessment Report
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
COP	Conference of the Parties
CP	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
CRP	Conference room paper
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EbA	Ecosystem-based approaches
GBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
GBO	Global Biodiversity Outlook
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GBFF	Global Biodiversity Framework Fund
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
IAS	Invasive alien species
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPLCs	Indigenous peoples and local communities
MEAs	Multilateral environmental agreements
MOP	Meeting of the Parties
NbS	Nature-based solutions
NBSAPs	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NP	Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization
SBI	Subsidiary Body on Implementation
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPM	Summary for Policymakers
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly
WEOG	Western European and Others Group