UN environment programme

CBD

Convention on Biological Diversity

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Capacity-building workshop on synthetic biology
Isle of Vilm, Germany, 3-7 November 2025

INFORMATION NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS



Visa Information (page 5)

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Workshop Documents (page 3)



Hotel Information (page 5)



Weather Information (page 6)



Currency Information (page 6)

INFORMATION HIGHLIGHTS

1. **OPENING AND REGISTRATION** 2
2. **VENUE** 2
4. **DOCUMENTS** 3
5. **GENERAL INFORMATION ON ACCESS TO THE ISLE OF VILM, GERMANY** 3
6. **VISA INFORMATION** 5
7. **HOTEL INFORMATION** 5
8. **PAYMENT OF THE DAILY SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE (DSA)** 5
10. **WEATHER AND TIME ZONE INFORMATION** 6
11. **ELECTRICITY** 6
12. **CURRENCY** 6
13. **DISCLAIMER** 7

1. Opening and Registration

The Capacity-building workshop on synthetic biology will be held in the Isle of Vilm, Germany from 3 to 7 November 2025. The workshop will start at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, 3 November 2025. Dinner will be served in advance, at 6 p.m. Registration will take place at the venue of the workshop upon arrival on the Isle of Vilm.

2. Venue and registration at the venue

The workshop will be held at:

International Academy for Nature Conservation (INA)
Isle of Vilm
D-18581 Putbus
Germany
Website: https://www.bfn.de/en/international-academy-nature-conservation-isle-vilm
Telephone: +49 38301 86-0
E-mail: ina-org@bfn.de

IMPORTANT:

All participants are required to **register on the INA website before Friday, 3 October 2025**. Please contact the Secretariat for the registration link. Please note that registration will also include booking the ferry transfer the Isle of Vilm (see point 5 below) and accommodation on the Isle of Vilm (see point 7 below).





3. Working language of the workshop

The workshop will be held in English.

4. Documents

Documents will be made available at: https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SYNBIO-WS-2025-01.

In order to minimize the environmental footprint of the workshop and in line with the UN policy towards greener meetings, participants are kindly reminded to bring their own copies of the pre-session documents for the workshop as there will be no extra copies made available onsite during the workshop.

5. General information on access to the Isle of Vilm



The Isle of Vilm is located about 300 km from Berlin. Delegates to the workshop will arrive on the Island in the afternoon of Monday, 3 November. Recommended travel is via Berlin, from where it will be necessary to travel by train to Lauterbach/Mole, the harbour village close to Vilm (see the Annex for details).

From Lauterbach/Mole you must then take a ferry to the Isle of Vilm. From the Lauterbach/Mole train station, you can walk to the pier where the ferry boat to the Isle of Vilm departs (10-minute walk, see map below.) The ferry is free of charge, and the crossing takes approximately 10 minutes. Ferry crossings from port Lauterbach/Mole are regularly scheduled for 4:10 p.m., 5:10 p.m. and 6:10 p.m. It is also possible, if necessary, to book the ferry for 8:10 p.m. Delegates will leave the Island in the morning of Friday, 7 November. Ferry crossings from the Isle of Vilm to Lauterbach/Mole are scheduled for 7:25 a.m., 7:55 a.m., 8:25 a.m., and 9:20 a.m. Breakfast will be served at 7:30 a.m. Delegates who leave the Island with the earliest connection will receive a packed breakfast.

The ferry should be booked in connection with registration for the workshop on the INA website (see point 2 above). If, due to delays or changes in your itinerary, you wish to take a different ferry than the one booked in advance, please contact +49-38301 86 0.

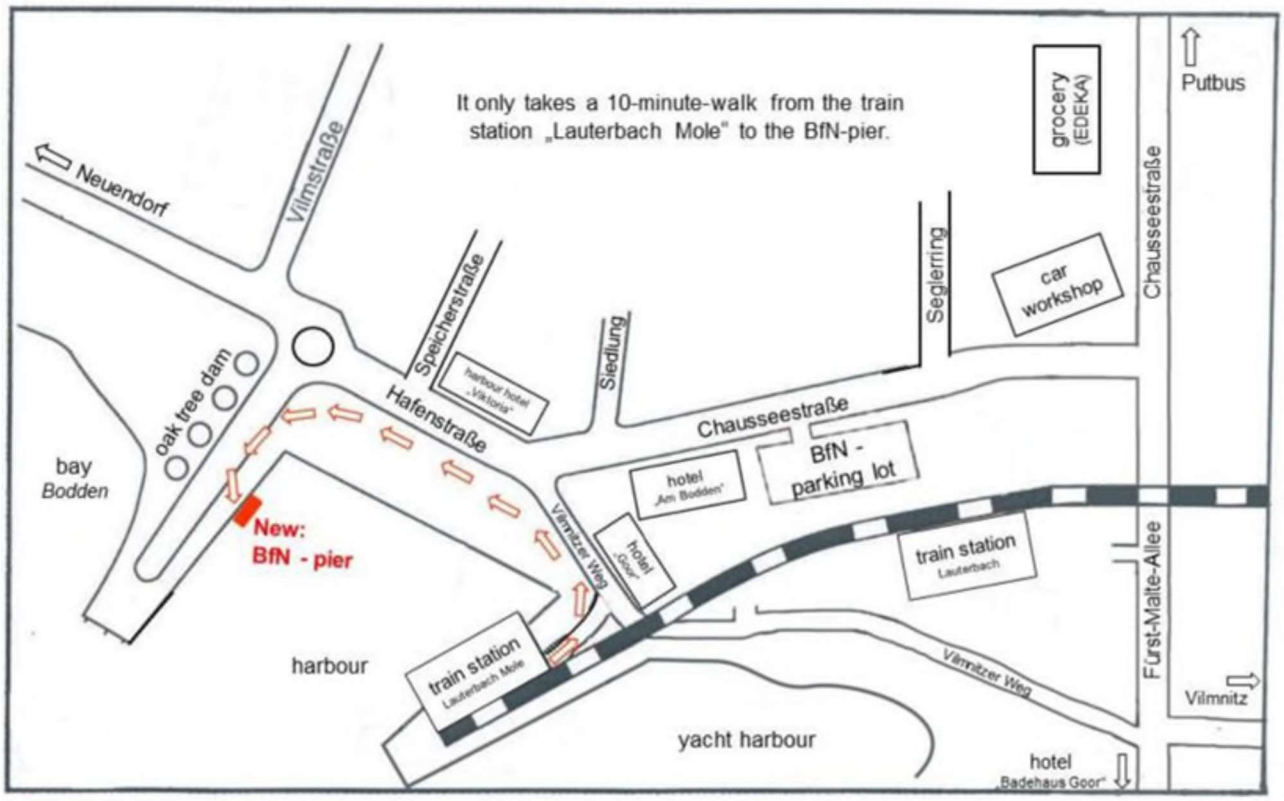
Access information is also available available at: https://www.bfn.de/en/vilm-rugen.

Crossing to the Isle of Vilm

- The only way to cross from Lauterbach to the Isle of Vilm is on the BfN passenger ferry.
- The crossing takes 10 minutes.

From Lauterbach	16:10	17:10	18:10	
From Vilm	07:25	07:55	08:25	09:20

Boat departure times (Monday - Friday)



6. Visa information



Participants are requested to verify whether they require an entry visa for Germany at the following link: https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/visa-service/231148-231148. If a Schengen visa is required, they are strongly advised to contact the nearest German diplomatic or consular mission as soon as possible in order to secure the required entry visa in a timely manner, prior to departure. **It should be noted that airline companies will deny boarding in the absence of a valid visa.**

Information regarding procedures for visa applications can be found on the same website at the following link: https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/visa-service/215870-215870.

Information on consular and diplomatic missions by country are available (*in German only*) at https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/reiseundsicherheit/deutsche-auslandsvertretungen/03-webseitenav#content_0.

Visa applications may be made at the following website https://videx.diplo.de/, which facilitates visa appointments with the authorities in the country of residence that handle visa issuance.

To facilitate the issuance of visas, the Secretariat will issue visa assistance letters that may be attached to the visa applications.

7. Hotel information 

Accommodation and all meals will be provided by the host at the venue from arrival on 3 November to departure on 7 November. More information is available at https://www.bfn.de/en/conference-centre-isle-vilm#anchor-2473. When registering in advance (see point 2), please choose the **single room option and all meals**, and indicate in case you have special dietary requirements. All participants will be provided single rooms (or with single occupancy of double rooms), and a maximum of two rooms share one bathroom. The expenses for accommodation and meals will be covered directly by the host for eligible participants.

In case stayovers are necessary in Berlin or in Lauterbach/Mole in connection with arrival and/or departure, hotels will need to be booked separately. **This will be the responsibility of the participant.**

8. Payment of the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA)

Because the host is generously providing accommodations and all meals, eligible participants will receive a reduced DSA, which will be disbursed on the first day of the workshop in the form of a prepaid credit card (Swiss Bankers card). Participants are kindly requested to bring their passports and boarding passes on the first day of the workshop. These will be copied and returned to participants during the course of the day. It is advisable that participants have some cash at hand to cover expenses that may occur between their arrival and the moment at which they may access DSA funds provided in the form of a prepaid credit card. Please note that the funds can take up to 48 hours to be loaded on the cards.

IMPORTANT: If you were provided with a Swiss Bankers card for a previous CBD/UNEP meeting and it is still valid, please submit a copy to the Secretariat and bring it with you to the workshop so that it may be reused. Please make sure you remember the PIN, otherwise contact the bank to request that they reset the PIN.

Swiss Bankers Contacts:
Swiss Bankers Prepaid Services Ltd, Customer Service
(forgotten PIN numbers, card replacements or transaction claims)
Tel: +41-31 710 12 15
Email: info@swissbankers.ch
Opening hours:
Mon-Sun: 8.00-22.00 Swiss time. Closed on Swiss bank holidays.

9. Official languages

The official language in Germany is German. English is spoken in hotels and restaurants.

10. Weather and time zone information 

In November the average temperatures in the Isle of Vilm range between 8°C in the daytime and 1°C at night. The current weather conditions may be found at: https://wetterstationen.meteomedia.de/?map=Mecklenburg-Vorpommern&station=100980

(in German only) or at https://meteobox.com/germany/vilm/. Please bring appropriate clothing for cooler temperatures.

The standard time zone at the time of the workshop will be CET (Central European Time) which is GMT/UTC + 1 hour.

11. Electricity

The electrical currents in Germany are 230 Volts, 50 Hertz. The plugs are as shown in the illustrations below:



12. Currency



The currency in Germany is the Euro (€). The current exchange rate, as of 25 August 2025, is US $1 = € 0.86 and 1€ = US $ 1.17 (rates are subject to change, source: www.xe.com).

13. Disclaimer

The CBD Secretariat disclaims all responsibility for medical, accident and travel insurance, for compensation for death or disability compensation, for loss of or damage to personal property and for any other loss that may be incurred during travel time or the period of participation. In this context, it is strongly recommended to secure international medical, accident and travel insurance for the period of participation prior to departure.

Annex: Train Connections and Transportation Information

Train connections from **Berlin** Hauptbahnhof (Hbf/Central Station) to the ferry in Lauterbach/Mole:

From Berlin airport:

- The railway station at the airport is directly below T1
- Options to get to the central railway station (Berlin Hauptbahnhof) or city centre:
  - Airport Express (FEX), twice an hour
  - Regional trains (RE), twice an hour
- S-Bahn train lines S9 and S45, running every 20 minutes
- Intercity (ICE) from BER T1-2 to Rostock, running several times a day

For further information regarding BER, please visit: https://ber.berlin-airport.de/en/orientation/getting-here/public-transport.html

Arrival by train:

- Via Berlin: Stralsund or Rostock – Bergen auf Rügen – Lauterbach Mole

You can check train connections and purchase tickets on the website of "Deutsche Bahn" under TravelService: https://int.bahn.de/en

Important information regarding arrival by train:

- Point of Departure: e.g. "BER Berlin Brandenburg Airport" or "Hamburg Airport"
- Destination: Lauterbach Mole
- The train ride from Berlin to Lauterbach Mole takes a little less than 4.5 hours.
- General advice: DO NOT use the bus connections between Stralsund and Lauterbach Mole
- In case your intermediate stop in Bergen auf Rügen lasts longer than 45 minutes you can take a taxi to the harbour of Lauterbach as this will allow you to reach an earlier ferry to Vilm. The taxi rank is located in front of the train station.
- **Please order the taxi in advance!**
  - Taxi Rügen: +49 3838 252525
  - Petra Schwabe Taxi: +49 38304 12539
  - Taxi Central: +49 3838 255064
  - Fischer Taxi: +49 38301 339
