



Convention on Biological Diversity

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**Conference of the Parties to the
Convention on Biological Diversity
Sixteenth meeting**
High-Level Segment
Cali, Colombia, 29 and 30 October 2024

Report on the high-level segment

I. Introduction

1. The high-level ministerial segment of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization was held in Cali, Colombia, on 29 and 30 October 2024. The high-level segment, on the theme of “Peace with nature”, was attended by ministers of environment, other ministers, heads of delegation and high-level representatives, as well as representatives of national and international organizations, local authorities and subnational governments, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities and youth.

II. Opening remarks

2. The high-level segment was chaired by the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia and President of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, María Susana Muhamad González.

3. Opening remarks were delivered by the President of Colombia, Gustavo Petro Urrego, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres.

4. The President of Colombia addressed a number of political issues related to the discussions at the present meeting and at many global meetings concerning the environment. Of primary concern was the lack of action in the face of impending human extinction and the burgeoning global environmental crisis, including climate change and biodiversity loss. The process could only be halted by addressing the causes of extinction. Colombia was an appropriate venue for discussing those matters, given the great diversity of its people and its well-known biodiversity. Building a fairer and more tolerant society included consideration of economic fairness, which could only be achieved by ensuring the democratic involvement of all people in decision-making. Currently, however, there was a democratic deficit, with policymakers convening to take decisions on behalf of millions of people who were absent from the process. Human greed had given rise to means of production aimed at maximizing earnings, which had consequently maximized the destruction of the planet and its life forms. Other means of production were needed – ones that safeguarded life on the planet and the life

of humanity and reflected the choice of sustainability over greed. The solutions were political, not technical.

5. Experience had shown that market forces alone could not save humanity. Financing projects according to their profitability meant neglecting important human considerations, such as the impact of climate change on Pacific or Caribbean islands, and the water shortages faced by many communities. The exploitation of oil and gas had typically financed the large-scale expansion of capital in the main financial centres, as well as resulted in pollution and climate change. In Latin America, indigenous inhabitants had warned that such exploitation of their ancestral lands would have severe negative impacts and had been proved right. Great inequalities in wealth had resulted, leading to attempts by waves of migrants to access the wealthier countries. The solution lay in a fairer distribution of wealth rather than discrimination against migrants. In the meantime, the financial markets lent at high interest rates, further impoverishing the poorer countries. Conflict, displacement and human suffering were additional consequences of that imbalance. The true environmental cost of development and production should be calculated, including the cost of adding carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. It was in the nature of humanity to fight against injustice and for equality and freedom, and the time had come to invest in climate action, life and clean energy rather than unsustainable production and consumption. The greed underpinning current economic models had to be acknowledged and discussed in order to enable the transition to a more sustainable and efficient financial model based on public power and global democracy that put humanity above greed and private interests. In conclusion, the President of Colombia expressed the hope that the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention could represent a turning point in efforts to place all of humanity at the centre of action to combat biodiversity loss.

6. The Secretary-General stated that humanity was engaged in a war with nature in which there could be no winner. Every minute of every day, the world was experiencing rising temperatures, loss of species and pollution of its oceans, rivers and lakes. Environmental crises knew no borders. No country, rich or poor, was immune to climate change, pollution or biodiversity loss, which threatened ecosystems and human health and undermined sustainable development. Such destruction was driven by obsolete, unsustainable models of production and consumption and multiplied by economic inequality. That destruction affected 75 per cent of the globe and 66 per cent of the oceans, and each day brought further turning points in terms of hunger, human displacement and armed conflict. Biodiversity was humanity's ally, and making peace with nature was the defining task of the twenty-first century. It was essential to combine national and international forces for the protection of nature and the restoration of biodiversity, in a sustainable manner, at the global level.

7. The need to accelerate current efforts while ensuring social and environmental safeguards, in line with the Paris Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, was recognized in The Pact for the Future, adopted by the General Assembly on 22 September 2024. In order for the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity to be achieved, priorities must be translated into action. Nations therefore had to develop clear and ambitious plans, shift to nature-positive business models and embrace the development of sustainable supply chains and farming practices. They had to agree on a strengthened monitoring and transparency framework to enable course correction and drive ambition. Promises had to be kept, pledges honoured and support to developing countries accelerated. All parts of society, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, had to be engaged, and the private sector had to step up and stop treating nature as a free, infinite resource. Swift global cooperation would provide much-needed defences against wildfires, floods, extreme weather events and pandemics. Progress for biodiversity had to be accelerated and resources mobilized to save ecosystems and make climate goals achievable. To choose life, humanity needed to choose to make peace with nature.

III. Launch of the World Coalition for Peace with Nature: A Call for Life

8. During the opening session of the high-level segment, on 29 October, the “World Coalition for Peace with Nature: A Call for Life” was officially launched by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Luis Gilberto Murillo Urrutia.

9. In his remarks, the Minister for Foreign Affairs stated that humanity had reached a turning point, where decisions to reverse damage done in the past could no longer be taken; instead, decisions should be taken to build the future. The health of ecosystems had been put at risk for the sake of economic prosperity, which had not been evenly shared. He recalled the importance of learning to interact with and protect nature in Andagoya, his village in the Chocó region of Colombia, and called upon people to make peace with one another and with nature through a new economic model and collective mobilization. The “World Coalition for Peace with Nature: A Call for Life” offered an opportunity to build a joint strategy for tackling the climate crisis and biodiversity loss, ensuring the transition to a new, green economy and reconciling with nature through stronger international commitments. He invited the specially appointed young ambassadors for Peace with Nature, Heyni Palacios, Xiomara Acevedo, Gabriel Cuatín and Sara Sofía Díaz, to speak briefly about the subject, emphasizing that this would encompass a handover of ideas. The young ambassadors stressed the need for multidisciplinary involvement, intergenerational dialogue and the transmission of indigenous knowledge, as well as direct access for indigenous peoples to financial resources and information. They affirmed that all young people must harness the power of current technology to educate themselves on the climate crisis, as protecting nature was, above all, a question of survival.

10. A number of Heads of State and ministers made statements to mark the occasion.

11. The President of Armenia, Vahagn Khachaturyan, stated that Armenia had been steadfast in the development of its national biodiversity strategy and action plan, which would significantly contribute to global efforts to realize the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity. The country attached importance to inclusive participation, with involvement of the private sector and civil society, including women, young people, local communities and academia, and had been actively promoting the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The commitment of Armenia to addressing the triple planetary crisis of biodiversity loss, pollution and climate change through transformative change was attested by its interest in hosting the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which would provide an excellent opportunity to further multilateral efforts for global biodiversity protection and ensure that diverse voices and perspectives were heard.

12. The President of Ecuador, Daniel Roy-Gilchrist Noboa Azin, noted that the aim of the present meeting was to reach agreements on concrete actions in favour of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and the fair and equitable distribution of the benefits derived from the utilization of genetic resources. As one of the most megadiverse countries and home to many indigenous peoples and national groups, Ecuador was firmly committed to the objectives of the Convention and the implementation of the Framework, in accordance with the country’s constitutional principles and public policies. The country encouraged the creation of spaces for the engagement of young people, promoting environmental education and raising awareness of the need to care for ecosystems. While the task was made more difficult by a number of factors, such as conflict, crime and poor urban conditions, it was essential, for the future of humanity, for all actors to collaborate in making the right choices.

13. The President of Guinea-Bissau, Úmaro Sissoco Embaló, reported that 26.3 per cent of his country’s territory was currently protected, including such vital ecosystems as mangroves, which were essential for preserving biodiversity and mitigating the impact of climate change. Guinea-Bissau had proposed the Bijagós Islands for inscription on the World Heritage List, under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and was about to launch its second biosphere reserve, which would cover 11.7 per cent of the territory, with the aim of promoting conservation and encouraging sustainable development with the participation of communities. While its commitment to the 30 by 30 target was unwavering, the challenges presented had to be addressed

collectively. Global biodiversity financing had to be made accessible to developing countries. With clear goals, determination and global solidarity, Parties could build a future in which humanity and nature would exist and thrive in harmony.

14. The President of the Transitional Presidential Council of Haiti, Leslie Voltaire, stated that, while his country faced many challenges, including conflict, pollution, poverty, social inequality, invasive alien species and habitat degradation, the linkage between biodiversity and health remained very clear. The strong tradition of using many species of plants and animals for basic health and pharmacopoeial requirements underscored the need to combat the impoverishment of biodiversity and make peace with nature. In that context, Haiti was currently reviewing and updating its national strategies in line with the Framework, including by greatly extending its protected areas, restoring degraded landscapes, instituting a programme of “energy for peace” and encouraging young people and women entrepreneurs to create more green jobs. Vulnerable countries, including small island developing States, required further mobilization of financial and technical resources to strengthen their capacity to combat biodiversity loss and realize their environmental ambitions.

15. The President of Suriname, Chandrikapersad Santokhi, stated that, with 93 per cent of its land covered with vibrant green forests, Suriname was proud to be the world’s most wooded and carbon-negative nation. Biodiversity protection was woven into the very fabric of the nation’s identity and the traditional knowledge and practices of its indigenous and tribal communities were reflected in national conservation plans. The country’s initiatives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the launch of internationally transferred mitigation outcomes had demonstrated that conservation and economic growth could indeed go hand in hand. The world faced a tough battle, one which could only be won with the solidarity and support of the global community. As Mahatma Gandhi had once said, “Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s needs, but not every man’s greed.” It was time to heed that wisdom and choose the path of sustainability over that of exploitation.

16. The Vice-President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, David Choquehuanca Céspedes, observed that the indigenous peoples of the Andean and Amazonian lands were the guardians of the natural genetic information of a number of crops and medicinal plants of the area. The proprietary rights over that information, bestowed by Mother Earth, should be defended by the establishment of a multilateral mechanism that allocated to indigenous peoples a fair share of the benefits of the digital sequence information on genetic resources from those natural goods. The present unjust and inequitable global system, under which nature was viewed as a commodity for exploitation, was not capable of addressing the structural factors that had put Mother Earth at risk. An awakening of consciousness was needed, involving a return to the path of complementarity, balance and harmony. The adoption of the Framework was a sign that the Parties to the Convention, recognizing the value of harmony with nature, Earth-centred actions, non-market approaches and the rights of nations and indigenous peoples, were starting to take steps along that path.

17. The Minister of the Popular Power for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Yván Gil Pinto, stated that the current capitalist model, with its elements of imperialism, colonialism and exploitation, would spell the end of humanity. It was time to set out an action plan that tackled the main issues associated with the environment and biodiversity, including by opposing the major corporations that sought to dominate biodiversity and profit from it. Such an action plan would reap the benefits of science and technology to reduce the technical gap between rich and poor countries and support the survival of vulnerable peoples, such as those in Amazonia and the Caribbean and Pacific regions. The needed radical transformation to a new model prioritizing humanity and life would require concerted action not only within the United Nations but also by multilateral organizations across all countries.

18. The President of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties thanked the speakers, remarking that the attendance of so many Heads of State was indicative of the growing recognition accorded to biodiversity protection at the highest level and an endorsement of the whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach adopted under the Framework.

19. The President then declared the high-level segment of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention officially open, at 10.45 a.m.

IV. National and other statements

20. The second session of the high-level segment, held on 29 October, was chaired by the Vice-Minister of Environmental Policy and Standardization of Colombia, Mauricio Cabrera Leal.

21. At the outset of the session, the following keynote speakers delivered statements: the Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim; the Special Rapporteur on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, Astrid Puentes Riaño; the Executive Secretary of the International Whaling Commission, Martha Rojas Urrego (on behalf of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions); and a representative of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network, Shaw La Mun.

22. The Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues reminded participants of the vital role played by indigenous peoples in achieving the goal of living in peace with nature and called upon the assembled Heads of State and ministers to champion direct access finance for indigenous peoples under the finance agenda. She called for the creation of a dedicated subsidiary body to enable indigenous peoples to contribute to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

23. The Special Rapporteur on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment noted that, under the Framework, a human rights-based approach had been adopted, acknowledging the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and the importance of gender equality, the reduction of inequality and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities to the effective protection and restoration of biodiversity. As negotiations moved towards their conclusion, she urged participants to incorporate those vital elements, so crucial to the effective implementation of the Framework, into all outcomes.

24. Recalling that Parties had been encouraged to include, in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, actions to implement commitments and recommendations of other biodiversity-related agreements, the Executive Secretary of the International Whaling Commission provided examples of how those agreements were contributing to the achievement of the goals and targets of the Framework. Existing data and assessments of other biodiversity-related conventions could be used, inter alia, to review progress in the implementation of the Framework.

25. The representative of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network stated that young people were mobilizing globally to upend a system that put profit over well-being. The peace that they practised was rooted in action, the pursuit of justice and equity and a deep sense of responsibility towards past, present and future generations. He called upon delegates to eschew false solutions and exclusionary mechanisms for implementation and the review of collective progress and to recognize the key role of equity and human rights, as well as for the facilitation of direct access to resources by communities on the ground, so that they could take the lead in addressing biodiversity loss.

26. Statements were made by the representatives of the following Parties: Angola, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, Cook Islands, Côte d'Ivoire, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Ireland, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Monaco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, State of Palestine, Sweden, Tajikistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

27. The representative of Norway announced a pledge of 150 million kroner to the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund.

28. Midway through the session, the Chair briefly suspended the interventions from representatives of Parties to invite the following keynote speakers to deliver statements: the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Inger Andersen; the Chairperson of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, June Soomer; the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ilze Marianne Brands Kehris; the Executive President of the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean, Sergio Díaz-Granados; the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, Ibrahim Thiaw; and the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs.

29. The Executive Director of UNEP underscored the importance of support for countries in producing achievable national strategies and action plans and strong financial support for implementation. She urged Parties to prioritize the leadership and knowledge of indigenous peoples and operationalize the multilateral mechanism and fund for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources. She outlined the many ways in which UNEP was participating in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including by helping to develop its monitoring framework and acting as an implementing agency.

30. The Chairperson of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent spoke about the role played by guardians of nature in the implementation of the Framework, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities and people of African descent, with their invaluable traditional knowledge, sustainable land management practices and conservation ethic. She described the conservation activities of Africans and people of African descent in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean and the systemic challenges that they faced, and she called upon Parties to recognize their rights, knowledge and leadership and ensure that they could play their role as central stakeholders in the implementation of the Framework.

31. The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, while applauding the efforts of States to address biodiversity loss and its impact, noted that, in the name of conservation, those efforts too often came at the expense of human rights. Only human rights-based conservation measures, such as the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, resources and territories and ensuring inclusive, participatory and non-discriminatory processes, would produce good results. In that regard, she encouraged Parties to take decisions that ensured the operationalization of a human rights-based gender-responsive approach to biodiversity action as a means of ensuring better policy and the fulfilment of the obligations of States under international human rights law.

32. The Executive President of the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean delivered three messages. First, his bank had established a scientific advisory group for its operations, being the first to do so, and advocated the recognition and enhancement of the role of indigenous peoples and people of African descent in protecting nature. Second, biodiversity protection required innovation, high-impact financial tools and joint action that was sustainable over time. Third, development banks, in particular those in the global South, should be used as channels for redistributing global income to finance development.

33. The Executive Secretary of the Convention to Combat Desertification stated that human beings depended on nature's ability to withstand droughts and generate the water resources essential to life and lives. He reminded participants that the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification, to be held in December 2024, was crucial for the implementation of the Framework, as the 197 Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification were expected to adopt landmark decisions on drought, land restoration and other issues affecting the livelihoods of those with no assets other than their land, including women, young people and indigenous peoples.

34. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC stated that development in the Latin America and the Caribbean region was hampered by a low capacity to grow and transform, high inequality, low social mobility, weak social cohesion and low institutional and governance capacity. He drew attention to a recent ECLAC publication, entitled *Development Traps in Latin America and the Caribbean: Vital Transformations and How to Manage Them*, in which the 11 vital transformations needed to enable the region to advance towards a more productive, inclusive and sustainable development model were explained.

35. The third session of the high-level segment, held on 30 October, was chaired by the Vice-Minister of Environmental Policy and Standardization of Colombia and began with the statements of the following keynote speakers: the Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Marcos Athias Neto; the Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS), Nestor Mendez; the Director General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Grethel Aguilar; and the Director General of World Wide Fund for Nature International, Kirsten Schuijt (on behalf of a group of international non-governmental organizations). Later in the session, the Director General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, Sefanaia Nawadra, also delivered a keynote speech.

36. The Director of the UNDP Bureau for Policy and Programme Support stated that people were nature's greatest problem solvers and innovators and were capable of the collaboration required to realize the targets of the Framework and scale up efforts to create tangible, enduring change, as evidenced by the pledge by the Fondo para el Financiamiento del Sector Agropecuario, the national development bank of Colombia, to green 100 per cent of its credits and investments by 2026. UNDP was committed to finding interconnected solutions through three systemic shifts: a value shift, an economic and finance shift and a policy and practice shift.

37. The OAS Assistant Secretary-General stated that threats to biodiversity and the environment had a direct impact on each of the pillars on which OAS had been founded, namely, democracy, human rights, multidimensional security and integral development. OAS was working with its member States and external allies to support initiatives across diverse sectors, including through pioneering efforts to protect biodiversity corridors throughout Latin America, create a healthy, biodiverse environment and safeguard the ability of all citizens of the Americas to thrive, be safe, prosper and strengthen democracies.

38. The Director General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature stated that transforming societies and economies required ambitious targets and the full involvement of all stakeholders across all sectors. The voices of indigenous peoples and local communities and young people must be heard and, with only 8.4 per cent of marine areas and 17.6 per cent of terrestrial areas under some form of protection, funding gaps had to be filled and investments redirected to support nature-positive solutions. With more than 1,400 members, 17,000 experts and its global secretariat, the International Union for Conservation of Nature stood ready to support all those willing to make a difference and unite for people and for nature.

39. The Director General of World Wide Fund for Nature International, speaking also on behalf of the Conservation International Foundation, BirdLife International, Trade Records Analysis in Flora and Fauna in Commerce, Campaign for Nature, The Nature Conservancy and ClientEarth, emphasized the need to work together to accelerate action towards meeting the targets of the Framework. Citing ambitious revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans and strong accountability mechanisms as the basis for the needed course correction, she urged Parties to conclude the revision of their strategies and action plans as soon as possible. She identified five key challenges for implementation: inclusiveness, mainstreaming, harmonizing the nature and climate agendas, mobilizing resources and elevating the profile of nature.

40. The Director General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme invited all partners and entities that worked and supported work in the Pacific region to work through

the framework of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. He cited an urgent need to increase resourcing for oceans and islands and ensure balanced resourcing for terrestrial and marine and ocean biodiversity. He recommended that Parties take a separate decision on island biodiversity and urgent action on coral reefs and come forward with clear national targets to meet the 30 by 30 target.

41. Statements were made by the representatives of the following Parties: Argentina, Austria, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Estonia, European Union and its member States, Fiji, Finland, Greece, Guinea, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Ukraine, Vanuatu and Zambia.

42. During the closing session, on 30 October, statements were made by representatives of the following Parties: Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burundi, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Malawi, Mauritania, Micronesia (Federated States of), Papua New Guinea, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Togo, Tonga and Tunisia.

V. Ministerial dialogues

43. During the high-level segment, four thematic ministerial dialogues were held, in parallel with the plenary sessions. The format of the dialogues consisted of short presentations by keynote speakers followed by an open discussion under the Chatham House Rule, whereby participants were free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speakers, nor that of any other participant, would be revealed.

A. Ministerial dialogue 1: urgent action for implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

44. The first ministerial dialogue, on urgent action for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, was moderated by the Director of the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Neville Ash. The keynote speakers were the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Madagascar, Max Andonirina Fontaine, and the Co-Chair of and Regional Coordinator for Asia of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, Lakpa Nuri Sherpa. Twenty-six ministers, heads of delegation and representatives of intergovernmental organizations and major groups and stakeholders took part in the open discussion.

45. Participants discussed the global stocktake presented by the Secretariat during the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, with the aim of identifying key issues and challenges with regard to the implementation at the political and strategic levels of the global objectives established under the Framework. Ministers, as well as indigenous and community leaders and representatives of international bodies and other organizations, discussed how to carry out the leading cross-sectoral actions and obtain resources from all sources in order to urgently meet commitments at the national level.

46. The key messages were as follows:

(a) It is crucial to move forward building on the ambitious agreements reached in Kunming and Montreal towards concrete implementation, with 36 countries already developing their national biodiversity strategies and action plans in alignment with the targets set. Colombia led in an exemplary way the implementation of the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach;

(b) The engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in the revision or update of national biodiversity strategies and action plans is vital, and direct and long-term funding is required to ensure their participation and the protection of biodiversity;

(c) There is an urgent need for a common agreement among megadiverse countries to move forward in the implementation of the Framework, emphasizing that it is a matter of survival and collaboration;

(d) The importance of mobilizing all actors and making meaningful decisions before the closing of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties was underlined, emphasizing the need to balance economic growth and biodiversity conservation;

(e) There are 115 countries with national targets aligned with the 23 targets of the Framework. The Framework is alive and advancing, and its implementation is not optional;

(f) It is important to consolidate the level of ambition of each country's national targets in order to bring about transformative changes that connect the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Biodiversity and climate change goals and targets must not be addressed separately. The Sustainable Development Goals constitute a bridge for generating synergies between agendas;

(g) Progress made by countries shows the relevance of the meaningful participation of indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as the incorporation of gender-responsive and intergenerational approaches;

(h) The national biodiversity strategies and action plans show major advances in terms of incorporating gender-responsive and human rights-based approaches, even though negotiations at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties are lagging behind in that regard;

(i) It is crucial that concrete financing mechanisms for the implementation of the Framework be defined at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in accordance with the specific circumstances of each country, both those that have already adopted national targets and those that are still in the process of updating them;

(j) Developing the monitoring and reporting frameworks facilitates evidencing the progress made in meeting national and global targets;

(k) The Framework proposes transformative and urgent changes to halt biodiversity loss, which require collaborative work, science, technology, innovation, capacity strengthening, timely funding and political leadership to influence international and national agendas;

(l) Countries facing conflict and civil unrest need support from the international community;

(m) National biodiversity strategies and action plans need to be incorporated into national political agendas to transcend government terms.

B. Ministerial dialogue 2: sustainable finance, financial system reform and global responsibility to biodiversity

47. The second ministerial dialogue, on sustainable finance, financial system reform and global responsibility to biodiversity, was moderated by the Assistant Administrator and Director of the UNDP Bureau for Policy and Programme Support. The keynote speakers were the Minister of Finance and Public Credit of Colombia, Ricardo Bonilla González, and the Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer of the Inter-American Development Bank, Jordan Schwartz. Twenty-three ministers, heads of delegation and representatives of intergovernmental organizations and major groups and stakeholders took part in the open discussion.

48. Participants addressed critical challenges to the financing of biodiversity, in particular for developing countries with strategic ecosystems. Discussions were focused on the need for international financial system reform, concessional resources and enhanced cooperation to address the global biodiversity crisis. In addition, a central aim consisted in exploring innovative ways of

reconfiguring debt service flows in financial mechanisms to reward ecosystem conservation, ensuring that the countries concerned receive adequate support for their environmental management.

49. The above topic was discussed along four thematic components: (a) international financial system reform; (b) concessional financing and reconfiguration of debt flows; (c) global impacts of biodiversity loss; and (d) cooperation and direct support for strategic ecosystems.

50. The key messages were as follows:

(a) The international financial system is outdated and thus ill equipped to address the current crisis. A restructuring, such as the one implemented during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, is possible. The biodiversity crisis warrants a similar response;

(b) Complying with the commitments made at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and guaranteeing greater financing and fair mechanisms, with a gender perspective and aimed at indigenous peoples and local communities, are needed;

(c) The gap between business and biodiversity preservation messages must be bridged by strengthening corporate accountability and educating companies, so that they recognize nature as the most important asset for humanity;

(d) A biodiversity protection strategy must be devised, organized through ecological transformation models, such as that of Brazil, and investment priorities must be set in national plans;

(e) There is a strong need for debt-for-nature swaps;

(f) The solution lies in the political will to allocate resources to this decision and in recognizing the debt of transnational corporations through the valuation of the damage that they cause;

(g) The value of environmentally harmful subsidies must be assessed, and a shift towards positive subsidies must be made;

(h) The mechanism that will be used to implement those commitments must be clear;

(i) Fiscal revenue in many countries is dependent on traditional economic activities with a high ecological footprint, such as mining and energy;

(j) There is an urgent need to transform production activities to make them more environmentally resilient and to begin developing alternative options;

(k) Reassessing fossil fuel subsidies is crucial, redirecting those resources towards reforestation and ecosystem recovery;

(l) Obtaining resources without incurring more debt is proposed, using approaches such as green taxonomy and funding for environmental restoration;

(m) Financial alternatives that enable countries with vital ecosystems to protect their biodiversity without relying on debt must be created.

C. Ministerial dialogue 3: synergies between biodiversity and climate change: from science to action

51. The third ministerial dialogue, on synergies between biodiversity and climate change: from science to action, was moderated by the President of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Razan al-Mubarak.

52. The Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity delivered opening remarks.

53. The keynote speakers were the Chair of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, David Obura; the Vice-Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel

on Climate Change, Ramón Pichs-Madruga; and the Co-Chair of the Science Panel for the Amazon, Carlos Nobre.

54. Following introductory remarks by the President of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, 33 ministers, heads of delegation and representatives of intergovernmental organizations, major groups and stakeholders took part in the open discussion.

55. Biodiversity loss and climate change are strongly interconnected. The dialogue was focused on contributing to the establishment of enhanced coordination between the two issues at the political level, in order to achieve the global targets set under the Framework and the Paris Agreement. After the opening remarks, ministers and other high-level representatives discussed how to bring the two agendas closer together in practice.

56. The key messages were as follows:

(a) Biodiversity loss and climate change are pressing challenges that must be addressed in a joint manner at the global, national and local levels;

(b) It is essential to generate synergies through scientific knowledge and collaboration towards finding effective solutions in the affected territories;

(c) Recognizing the knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities and fostering international cooperation are essential for addressing the environmental crisis and restoring ecosystems, especially in critical areas such as Amazonia;

(d) The Paris Agreement, the Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals clearly lay out the path for global action and the common goals of humanity for 2030. Mobilizing their actions and targets accelerates their implementation;

(e) The targets of the Framework were defined by following scientific indications; its implementation requires moving from science to action. This requires cooperation and coordination among the various stakeholders, with the aim of working on concrete, effective and equitable actions;

(f) Amazonia is nearing a tipping point, and an international agreement to achieve zero deforestation by 2030 is needed, because even though Amazon basin countries have made notable efforts to contain deforestation, more scope and ambition are needed for restoration, bioeconomy, the decontamination of rivers and the protection of traditional knowledge;

(g) Nature is adapting to the climate crisis, but humanity is not;

(h) Consensus must be sought at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and at the thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the synergies between biodiversity and climate change at various levels. While there is political will to support synergies, what is being negotiated is some distance away from the high-level dialogues. Parties must lead synergies from the political and technical perspectives with concrete examples. Colombia has shown its leadership in implementing synergies in its national targets through a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach;

(i) At the national level, establishing synergies between agendas will make it possible to overcome redundant and fragmented policies. While not easy to achieve, an acceleration is necessary.

D. Ministerial dialogue 4: peace with nature

57. The fourth and final ministerial dialogue, on peace with nature, was moderated by the Secretary-General of the International Society for Human Rights, Matthias Boehning.

58. The Executive Secretary of the Convention delivered introductory remarks.

59. The keynote speakers were the President of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the Special Rapporteur on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable

environment. Following their presentations, 15 heads of delegation and representatives of intergovernmental organizations and major groups and stakeholders took part in the open discussion.

60. Drawing on the general theme of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and on the Declaration of the World Coalition for Peace with Nature, participants discussed how sustainable development could truly be achieved through peace among people, peace between human beings and nature and respect for human rights. Peace with nature is a cross-cutting issue in the implementation of the Framework and constitutes the strategy for achieving those goals.

61. The key messages were as follows:

- (a) It is important to work together and to view life as a central purpose to create solidarity and peace with nature;
- (b) Peace makes it possible to reduce emissions, use resources to solve the planetary crisis and guarantee the human right to a clean environment;
- (c) Conflict prevention can be achieved through cultural and ownership initiatives, such as communal tree planting;
- (d) The best way to prevent future conflict is by caring for nature and natural resources;
- (e) It is important to integrate peace and nature into the communities and all relevant sectors (e.g. health and economy);
- (f) Peace is only possible in a healthy world;
- (g) Achieving peace with nature implies a cross-cutting effort;
- (h) Biological diversity is connected with cultural diversity;
- (i) Conflict between elephants and human beings illustrates the challenges of implementing peace with nature;
- (j) It is important to reconcile peace with nature;
- (k) Indigenous communities protect 80 per cent of our biodiversity;
- (l) There should be a transition from a market-based society to a care-based society;
- (m) Environmental racism must be included in the discussions;
- (n) It is important to include young people in biodiversity protection efforts;
- (o) Humanitarian aid to face the current climate crisis and a transition plan that includes indigenous knowledge are needed;
- (p) Colombia seeks to implement peace with nature through a number of comprehensive programmes;
- (q) It is important to include Andean indigenous knowledge, given that it is a geographical area that is suffering species extinction and biodiversity loss;
- (r) There is potential for making life a central purpose to create solidarity and peace, and it is important to achieve peace with nature;
- (s) The present dialogue did not necessarily provide answers, but answers are being explored. The various dimensions that emerged and their connectivity are important;
- (t) Peace with nature must be understood as a relationship between people and nature, which can be conflictive, as can be the case with elephants and people. Just by talking about conflict with nature entails recognizing nature as an actor. An important issue is how industrialization has ruptured the cultural relationship that humanity had with nature.

(u) Oppressed cultures must be reconciled with general culture. It is important to find the roots in order to transcend the current paradigmatic relationship that humanity has with nature;

(v) It is important to understand how communities can interpret peace with nature in their own context;

(w) Society must be based on care, rather than on economic profit. Conflict caused by the market and the climate crisis can be fuelled by racist political forces that deny our climate crisis;

(x) It is importance to have those difficult conversations, which have an impact on the triple planetary crisis, which is in turn an existential crisis. Conflict and illegal activities have a negative impact. The increase in illegal activities that destroy ecosystems makes it necessary to implement countermeasures;

(y) Peace can foster a reduction in emissions and pollution;

(z) Humanity is capable of channelling the economic and human resources used in war efforts into solving the triple planetary crisis;

(aa) Peace is necessary for respecting and protecting human rights, including the right to a healthy environment;

(bb) The example was given of how army's resources can be used for education and the protection of nature. Colombia, through the transitional process and by including nature as a victim of conflict, opened the possibility of seeking accountability.

VI. Closing

62. At the closing session, on 30 October, the President of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention provided an oral summary of the thematic events held during the high-level segment.

63. The following representatives presented reports of the thematic events: the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change of Bangladesh, Fahmida Khanom, on the Biodiversity Capacity-Building and Development Forum; a representative of the Colombian Chapter of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network, Shannen Archbold, on the Global Youth Biodiversity Summit; the Chief Executive Officer of My Eco Home, Maritza Lopez, on the Business and Biodiversity Forum; the Vice-Minister of Environmental Policy and Standardization of Colombia, Mauricio Cabrera, on the Parliamentarians and Biodiversity Forum; the General Director of the Humboldt Institute, Hernando García Martínez, on the sixth Science Policy Forum for Biodiversity; a representative of the government of Quebec, Canada, Jean Lemire, representing Regions4, on the eighth Summit for Subnational Governments and Cities, who announced that the government of Quebec had made the first contribution by a subnational government to the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund; a representative of CBD Women's Caucus, Cicilia Githaiga, on the Women's Forum; the Adviser to the Vice-President of Colombia, José Absalón Suárez, on the International Forum on People of African Descent; a representative of Autoridades Indígenas del Sur Occidente, Maria Yolanda Campos, on the Nature and Culture Summit; and the President of the Colombian Bank of Foreign Trade and Business Development (Bancóldex) and Co-Chair of the International Development Finance Club, Javier Díaz Fajardo, on the Finance and Biodiversity Forum.

64. Representatives heard a summary of the events in the Green Zone of Cali by means of a short video.

65. The President of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties delivered a short statement on the Midori Prize for Biodiversity and introduced a video on the work of the 2024 prize winners, the Executive Director of the Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of

Kazakhstan, Vera Voronova, and the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Sumak Kawsay (Peru), Ysabel Agustina Calderón Carlos.¹

66. The President and Chief Executive Officer of the World Wildlife Fund, Carter Roberts, delivered a brief statement on the newly inaugurated Thomas E. Lovejoy Prize, named after the renowned biodiversity expert. He announced that the co-recipients of the 2024 prize were Marc Duorojeanni, Professor Emeritus at the Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina in Peru, and Belén Páez, President and Executive Director of Fundación Pachamama in Ecuador.

67. Closing remarks were delivered by the Executive Secretary of the Convention.

68. The Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Amor Mottley, delivered a statement through a recorded video message.

69. After making brief closing remarks, the President of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties declared the meeting closed, at 6.50 p.m.

VII. Associated events

70. On 29 October, a ministerial breakfast was held on the theme of “Strengthening action for peace with nature: integrated solutions to the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, desertification and pollution”. The same evening, Heads of State and ministers gathered for the Gran Cena de la Biodiversidad, hosted by the Government of Colombia.

71. On 30 October, the day began with a ministerial breakfast on the subject of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. A ministerial luncheon on the theme of “Engaging agrifood sectors in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework” was hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Following the closure of the high-level segment, an evening reception on the theme of “Accelerating biodiversity action: enhancing global collaboration to live in harmony with nature” was hosted by the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership.

¹ See www.cbd.int/cooperation/midori.