



Convention on Biological Diversity

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**Steering Committee of the Multilateral
Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable
Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital
Sequence Information on Genetic Resources,
including the Cali Fund**
Fourth meeting
Online, 31 August and 1 September 2026

**Conference of the Parties to the
Convention on Biological Diversity**
Seventeenth meeting
Yerevan, 19–30 October 2026
Item 11 of the provisional agenda*
**Digital sequence information on genetic
resources**

Report of the Steering Committee of the Multilateral Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, including the Cali Fund

Note by the interim Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. At its sixteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted decision [16/2](#) on digital sequence information on genetic resources, operationalizing the Multilateral Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, including the Cali Fund. In paragraph 28 and enclosure IV of the annex to the same decision, the Conference of the Parties established a Steering Committee to support the governance of the Multilateral Mechanism, including the Cali Fund, under the guidance of the Conference of the Parties.
2. Pursuant to enclosure IV of the annex to decision [16/2](#), the Steering Committee is mandated, among other things, to report and provide advice to the Conference of the Parties. Accordingly, the present report of the Committee covers several topics and issues for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth meeting.

II. Governance and financial overview of the Cali Fund

A. Organization of the Steering Committee

3. The Steering Committee consists of 23 members, including representatives of Parties (three from each region), indigenous peoples and local communities (one from each sociocultural region, with one of those regions not currently represented) and one from each of the three participating United Nations organizations.¹ In addition, six observers sit on the Committee (two from each represented sector: civil society, scientific institutions and the private sector), as well as one ex officio member representing the administrative agent of the Cali Fund (see annex I).
4. Pursuant to decision [16/2](#) (paragraph 3 of enclosure IV of the annex and footnote 9), the Steering Committee has two Co-Chairs, one from among the members of the Committee representing

* [CBD/COP/17/1/Rev.1](#).

¹ The participating United Nations organizations are the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

the Parties (designated by the Committee) and one from among the participating United Nations organizations (designated by the United Nations organizations). These Co-Chairs are Nneka Nicholas (Antigua and Barbuda) and Astrid Schomaker (Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity). In addition, the Committee acknowledged at its first meeting that the Steering Committee of the Multilateral Mechanism would also serve as the Steering Committee of the Cali Fund and that the interim Secretariat would follow the same arrangements. As such, the Committee agreed that the Co-Chair designated from among the Parties would consistently be the one to facilitate discussions and decisions on aspects of the Multilateral Mechanism not related to the Cali Fund.

B. Organization of the interim Secretariat

5. The work of the Steering Committee has been supported by an interim Secretariat of the Multilateral Mechanism in the absence of the establishment of a Secretariat as provided for in enclosure V of the annex to decision [16/2](#). The interim Secretariat is composed of one core-funded post and one Junior Professional Officer from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The work of the Committee has also been supported directly by three consultants hired with extrabudgetary resources by the Secretariat of the Convention for the drafting of the operations manual, the review methodology and the communication strategy. The communication work has been supported by interns of the Secretariat of the Convention.

6. The various activities of the interim Secretariat, such as the hiring of consultants, the recruitment of a firm to design the Cali Fund logo and the travel of staff members to informal workshops, have been made possible thanks to a generous donation of the Government of Norway to the Secretariat of the Convention.

7. Experience from the first biennium has underscored the importance of a clear and shared understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Conference of the Parties, the Steering Committee, the interim Secretariat, the participating United Nations organizations and the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office of the United Nations in the governance and operationalization of the Multilateral Mechanism and the Cali Fund. In particular, experience has shown that the relationship between the governance of the broader Multilateral Mechanism and that of the Cali Fund, including the fact that the same Steering Committee performs functions in relation to both, is not always readily understood by Parties and stakeholders. Going forward, the governance architecture, the legal and operational basis for the respective roles of each actor and the relationship between Steering Committee decision-making and guidance from the Conference of the Parties should be explained more clearly and consistently in formal documents and communications.

C. Opening of the Cali Fund

8. After the adoption of decision [16/2](#) by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity engaged with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office of the United Nations as the designated Administrative Agent in order to set up the partnership and prepare the documents necessary to be able to open the Cali Fund. Terms of reference for the Cali Fund were drafted to give effect to decision [16/2](#) within the framework of a United Nations multi-partner trust fund, taking into account the specific nature of the Cali Fund and applicable United Nations Sustainable Development Group guidelines and standards. The memorandum of understanding, to which the terms of reference are annexed, is the standard legal instrument required to establish a multi-partner trust fund as a partnership between United Nations organizations. The terms of reference set out the specific nature, objectives and governance arrangements of the Cali Fund, in line with decision [16/2](#).

9. At its first meeting, the Steering Committee discussed the fact that the memorandum of understanding had been signed and that the terms of reference has been drafted and annexed to the memorandum prior to the meeting.² The Committee requested that the terms of reference be revised. The revised terms of reference will be published once finalized. At its fourth meeting, and upon

² See [MMDSI/SC/2025/1/6](#).

reflection on the discussion during the seventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, the Committee decided that guidance of the Conference of the Parties on the memorandum of understanding would be welcome.

D. Meetings of the Steering Committee

10. The Steering Committee held four formal meetings between the sixteenth and seventeenth meetings of the Conference of the Parties, co-chaired by Nneka Nicholas and Astrid Schomaker. The meeting dates were as follows:

- 16–18 June 2025 (online)
- 3–6 September 2025 (Bonn, Germany)
- 7–9 April 2026 (Cape Town, South Africa)
- 31 August–1 September 2026 (online)

11. Meeting minutes, documents considered by the Steering Committee and other relevant information can be found on the website of the Convention on Biological Diversity.³

12. In addition to these meetings, 13 intersessional online sessions were held on several topics.

1. Lessons learned on the role and work of the Steering Committee

13. Important lessons were learned during the first biennium regarding the role and working methods of the Steering Committee. The Committee was required to establish a substantial amount of institutional infrastructure within a short period, with significant support from the interim Secretariat, consultants and technical experts. Experience during this period has highlighted the importance of ensuring that the working methods of the Committee reflect its strategic oversight and decision-making responsibilities. This includes distinguishing matters requiring collective strategic direction and deliberation by the Committee from technical or operational work that may appropriately be undertaken by the interim Secretariat and relevant experts. Going forward, sufficient space should be provided for members of the Committee to establish strategic direction on matters with wider implications for the Multilateral Mechanism, while ensuring that the interim Secretariat and technical experts have clear mandates for work undertaken in support of the Committee. Written procedures can be useful for routine or clearly bounded matters. Where a question may have significant implications for the design or political architecture of the Multilateral Mechanism, the Committee should normally have sufficient opportunity for collective deliberation before a decision is taken through written procedure.

2. Challenges with regard to the resources needed for the Steering Committee to meet in person

14. The work expected of the Steering Committee to establish a substantial amount of institutional infrastructure and prepare fundamental operational documents within a short period was underestimated. The Committee was required to operate with significant support from the interim Secretariat, consultants and technical experts.

15. While the Steering Committee held 13 online discussions, these were helpful only up to a point. In-person meetings have yielded significantly better results in terms of advancement of the work, consensus-building and approval of documents. Certain items, such as those with political implications, benefit more from in-person discussions. For other items that are more technical, online meetings are sufficient, provided that there is sufficient time for collective deliberation before a decision is taken through written procedure. Considering the early stage of the Multilateral Mechanism and the Cali Fund, at least two in-person meetings per year for the coming biennium are needed to realistically allow the Committee to fulfil its role properly and in a timely manner. The Committee also reflected on the limitations of relying exclusively on voluntary contributions to finance such meetings during the ramp-up period of the Fund. Consideration should be given to the

³ www.cbd.int/conferences/dsi-sc.

attendance of sufficient supporting staff, including one able to support the Committee on legal matters.

16. The ability of the Steering Committee to meet twice in person in the past biennium has only been possible thanks to the generous hosting by the Government of Germany and the Government of South Africa and to donations made from the Government of Germany and the Government of Norway to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Committee expresses its thanks for the crucial support of these Governments in these early days of the Multilateral Mechanism and the Cali Fund. The Committee further reiterates the need for adequate and stable funding for its activities.

3. Ability of Steering Committee members to acquire a visa

17. Directly linked with the importance of in-person meetings stated above, certain participants of Committee meetings had difficulties travelling to the meeting locations. In some cases, it was impossible for them to do so for a variety of reasons. In future, host countries should agree to full arrangements for visas, and in the exceptional case that this is not possible, the interim Secretariat is requested to provide the possibility of online participation.

E. Cali Fund contribution and disbursement activities

18. The consolidated annual financial and annual narrative reports of the Cali Fund for the year 2025 have been prepared by the Administrative Agent, as part of its mandate, and can be found on the Cali Fund gateway page.⁴ The 2026 annual report will be available on 31 May 2027.

1. Cali Fund contributions

19. The Cali Fund received two contributions in the biennium between the sixteenth and seventeenth meetings of the Conference of the Parties, as indicated in the table below.

Contributions to the Cali Fund, as at 15 September 2026
(United States dollars)

<i>Contributor/partner</i>	<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Deposit</i>
Prozomix Limited	5 000	5 000
TierraViva AI Limited	1 000	1 000
Total	6 000	6 000

2. Cali Fund disbursements

20. The Cali Fund has disbursed no allocations to date.

III. Activities of the Steering Committee

21. The section below details the work of the Steering Committee between the sixteenth and seventeenth meetings of the Conference of the Parties in accordance with the functions of the Committee set out in enclosure IV of the annex to decision [16/2](#).

A. Provide oversight of the operations of the Cali Fund host⁵

1. Rules of procedure and composition of the Steering Committee

22. Membership of the Steering Committee was facilitated through a notification process. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, with the ultimate approval of the Bureau of

⁴ <https://mptf.undp.org/fund/cal00>.

⁵ In the present report, the section on oversight also contains an overview of activities related to the setting up of the Steering Committee and the Cali Fund.

the Conference of the Parties and through notification Nos. [2024-113](#), [2025-013](#), [2025-043](#) and [2025-091](#), facilitated the nomination and selection process for members, alternates and observers. The representatives of the participating United Nations organizations were nominated by their respective organizations.

23. The Steering Committee recognized the value of alternates in supporting continuity, institutional memory and effective participation in Committee processes. The Committee noted that alternates can help to maintain engagement and ensure continuity when designated members cannot participate. Discussions within the Committee are ongoing to identify appropriate and structured communication and information-sharing, coordination and handover between members and their designated alternates, both before and after meetings, as appropriate. The current list of Committee members can be found in annex I.

24. At its second meeting, the Steering Committee finalized the rules of procedure for its meetings, which are available on the meeting web page.⁶ Guided by decision [16/2](#), the Committee identified that one rule pertaining to terms of office (rule 11) would benefit from the advice and endorsement of the Conference of the Parties.

25. Rule 11 addresses the terms of office of members, observers and alternates. It also sets out the standard process in the case of the resignation of a member, observer or alternate, and seeks to ensure knowledge retention and continuity in the work of the Steering Committee. This rule has been provisionally applied and remains in brackets for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties. At its fourth meeting, the Committee, taking into account the discussions held at the seventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, initiated a discussion on the selection of its members and agreed that guidance from the Conference of the Parties on this matter would be welcome.

26. At its second meeting, the Steering Committee also established conflict of interest guidelines for the Committee, which are also available on the meeting web page.⁷

27. **The Steering Committee concluded that rule 11 of the rules of procedure for its meetings⁸ should be considered by the Conference of the Parties for its approval.**

2. Programmatic document for the Secretariat of the Multilateral Mechanism

28. The Steering Committee developed and approved a programmatic document for the Secretariat of the Multilateral Mechanism.⁹

3. Terms of reference of the Cali Fund

29. The Steering Committee revised the terms of reference of the Cali Fund.¹⁰

30. Upon reflection, the Steering Committee notes that the level of understanding of and support for the way in which the terms of reference were drafted and published turned out to be low. A longer timeline to finalize and issue these documents and the involvement of the future members of the Committee ahead of its establishment would have been preferable. The terms of reference will be posted on the Cali Fund gateway page once finalized.

4. Procedures for accepting contributions to the Cali Fund

31. The Steering Committee agreed to a procedure for handling contributions to the Cali Fund, which involves the interim Secretariat creating a one page summary of the risk assessment results provided by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office that outlines the risk level and other information relevant to Committee members. An online forum provides the required space for members to

⁶ www.cbd.int/documents/68dd3d922af7df829a2f773b.

⁷ www.cbd.int/documents/68dd3eda3822546adfd4ec29.

⁸ CBD/COP/17/6, annex II.

⁹ See www.cbd.int/documents/68dd3f45bf63f80e406a9f86.

¹⁰ Noting that it is anticipated that the Steering Committee will recommend an update to the terms of reference after the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

securely access this summary and ultimately conclude whether the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office should accept the contribution. Further work is in progress regarding the risk management process after contributions.

5. Tranche approach

32. The Steering Committee agreed on a tranche approach to funding from the Cali Fund, which includes a process for opting out of the approach. The tranche disbursement approach would automatically apply for all programmes of \$500,000 or more and with a duration of three or more years, unless the participating organization¹¹ opts out and requests the entire budget in one initial disbursement.

6. Operations manual

33. The Steering Committee is developing the operations manual of the Cali Fund, which will set out the operational rules, guidelines and processes of the Fund, complementing the terms of reference of the Fund. At its fourth meeting, the Committee agreed to continue working on this document after the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

7. Programmatic document template

34. The Steering Committee is developing a programmatic document template, which is shared with all participating organizations and has to be approved by the national authority (focal point). A completed programmatic document is required in order for funds to be disbursed by the Cali Fund.

35. As the disbursement pathways for indigenous peoples and local communities are further operationalized, the Steering Committee considers that it may be useful to clarify how programmatic document requirements apply under option 1 (see subpara. 45 (a) below), including the role of national authorities, while maintaining the possibility of direct payments through institutions identified by indigenous peoples and local communities, in accordance with decision [16/2](#).

8. Information and updates on relevant external activities

36. At the meetings of the Steering Committee, Committee members were invited to share or provide an update on any activities relevant to the implementation of decision [16/2](#), in order for members to stay informed and connected to the reality outside the Committee and, where opportune, to assess the potential value and involvement of the Committee itself.

37. The Steering Committee was informed about the creation of the Friends of the Cali Fund, a coalition of Parties launched by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Chile to pledge collective commitment to promoting the effective implementation of the Multilateral Mechanism, including the Cali Fund.¹²

38. At its third meeting, the Steering Committee was informed about the outcomes of the global informal dialogue on digital sequence information and the Cali Fund (co-sponsored by the European Union and the Government of Norway) held in Leuven, Belgium, in March 2026, including the idea of promoting a testing phase or pilot of the system.¹³ More information on the discussion that followed can be found below in section D.2 on the structured approach to the implementation, learning and effectiveness review of the Multilateral Mechanism, including the Cali Fund.

¹¹ Participating organizations are those that receive funds from the Cali Fund. They can be government organizations, United Nations organizations and not-for-profit non-United Nations organizations.

¹² See www.gov.uk/government/publications/friends-of-the-cali-fund-government-joint-statement.

¹³ See https://environment.ec.europa.eu/document/231606c5-eeef2-4758-970d-6b653cf15680_en and <https://geo-media.de/dsi-informal-dialogues/>.

B. Guide the operations of the Secretariat of the Multilateral Mechanism

1. Capitalization strategy

39. The Steering Committee, with the support of the interim Secretariat, is leading the development of a capitalization strategy, which will provide an evolving overview of the current capitalization activities and processes of the Cali Fund, serving as a living report that will be updated following the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

40. The Steering Committee offers its reflections on the need for stronger capitalization of the Cali Fund. The level of capitalization of the Cali Fund after two years is low. The interaction of various actors with the private sector has revealed that few companies are familiar with the Cali Fund and its objectives. In order to raise the necessary awareness, there is a need for greater involvement of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and of the interim Secretariat and its partners. Other aspects will also be essential to achieving stronger capitalization, such as legal clarity around the effect of the certificate, a clear disbursement methodology and a robust approach to the review of the effectiveness of the Multilateral Mechanism, all guided by the Conference of the Parties, as well as the identification of champions among users of digital sequence information. More generally, building the enabling conditions discussed below will also help in this regard.

2. Funding and staffing constraints affecting the interim Secretariat

41. The Steering Committee also offers its reflections on the low staffing of the interim Secretariat. In other funds, the first few years are usually financed by seed money used for the hiring of at least the essential members of a secretariat and the piloting of various aspects of the fund before the expected donors or contributors start transferring money into the fund. The Cali Fund, however, is different in that it lacks seed money and currently has an interim Secretariat. This first biennium has demonstrated that the staffing currently available to support the Multilateral Mechanism, including the Cali Fund, is not commensurate with the scale of the institutional, technical and operational work required for its establishment. Officers of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity are acting as the interim Secretariat while leading on a heavy portfolio on digital sequence information on genetic resources. In future, dedicated and predictable resources will be required to enable the Secretariat of the Multilateral Mechanism, including the Cali Fund, to fulfil its functions effectively.

42. **The Steering Committee therefore recommends that the resource requirements of the Secretariat be considered appropriately in the relevant budgetary discussions.**

C. Report and provide advice to the Conference of the Parties

1. Disbursements and direct allocations to indigenous peoples and local communities, including women and youth within those communities

43. The Steering Committee recognized that more clarity is required in order to disburse allocations from the Cali Fund to indigenous peoples and local communities.

44. The Steering Committee recognizes that decision [16/2](#) does not have explicit information on how to distribute allocations to indigenous peoples and local communities. In an effort to understand how to address this, the Committee met with the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Allocation Methodology.¹⁴

45. The selection and application of the appropriate delivery pathway or combination of pathways should be undertaken jointly with the indigenous peoples and local communities concerned, taking into account national circumstances and national legislation. This process should respect their self-identified needs and preserve the distinct possibility of direct payments through institutions identified

¹⁴ For more information about the allocation methodology, see [CBD/COP/17/6/Add.2](#).

by them, in accordance with decision [16/2](#). The Steering Committee suggests three options for distributing allocations to indigenous peoples and local communities:

(a) Option 1. Direct access: funds are channelled through institutions identified by indigenous peoples and local communities themselves, with appropriate safeguards for transparency and accountability and established fiduciary standards. This option reflects the possibility of direct access and is particularly relevant where established institutions serving indigenous peoples and local communities exist or are being developed;

(b) Option 2. National-level delivery through designated entities: funds are channelled through nationally designated entities or government-linked arrangements, with provisions to ensure transparency, accountability and meaningful participation of indigenous peoples and local communities. This option reflects the role of national circumstances in shaping delivery pathways;

(c) Option 3. Hybrid or context-specific approach: a flexible approach in which countries may utilize a combination of pathways, including direct payments to indigenous peoples and local communities through identified institutions and payments through government-designated intermediary entities, depending on the context. This option allows for adaptive implementation.

46. The Steering Committee seeks the guidance of the Conference of the Parties on whether it is appropriate to use the allocation methodology developed by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Allocation Methodology for the purpose of calculating allocations to indigenous peoples and local communities, and requests the support of the Conference of the Parties in further working on refining this methodology for allocations to indigenous peoples and local communities. The Committee also requests that the Conference of the Parties consider the proposal on the disbursement pathways for indigenous peoples and local communities, with a view to approving it.

2. Confidential information

47. The Steering Committee is developing guidelines on confidential information, which cover how to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information arising from the work of the Committee. The guidelines will apply only to Committee members, alternates and observers, as participating United Nations organizations and the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office will handle confidentiality in accordance with the rules, policies and procedures of their respective entities.

48. Experience from the first biennium has highlighted the need to strike an appropriate balance between confidentiality and transparency in the work of the Steering Committee. While certain information, in particular commercially or financially sensitive information, may require confidentiality, information related to processes and decision-making needs to be appropriately shared. Clear guidelines on the management of information will strengthen the transparency, accountability and ownership of and confidence in the Multilateral Mechanism and the Cali Fund.

3. Communication strategy

49. The Steering Committee, with the support of the interim Secretariat, developed and launched a Cali Fund logo and branding materials (see annex II). More broadly, the Committee offers its reflections on the communication of the work of the Committee.

50. The Steering Committee notes that the negotiations at the seventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, as well as numerous bilateral interactions, indicate a lack of adequate communication of the work of the Committee, and consequently of the interim Secretariat, on various aspects of setting up and running the Multilateral Mechanism and its Cali Fund.

51. Going forward, the Steering Committee will prioritize efforts to report back to relevant constituencies on the work of the Committee. In addition, clear linkages can be made between the low staffing of the interim Secretariat and its subsequent lack of resources for communication and outreach. Resources should also be prioritized for the purpose of building a common understanding of the governance architecture, the legal and operational basis for the respective roles of each actor

and the relationship between Committee decision-making and guidance from the Conference of the Parties. This will, in turn, positively influence the political buy-in from the Parties on the Multilateral Mechanism and its Cali Fund, governing body and Secretariat.

4. Certificates

52. Pursuant to paragraph 15 of the annex to decision [16/2](#), contributors making monetary payments to the Cali Fund in line with the modalities in decision [16/2](#) will receive a certificate that excludes them from any expectation to share further monetary benefits from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources within the scope of the Multilateral Mechanism for that year.

53. In paragraph 26 of the same annex, Parties that have put in place national access and benefit-sharing measures are invited to align these with the Multilateral Mechanism, such that there is no duplication of expectations to share the benefits arising from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources under the Multilateral Mechanism.

54. In paragraphs 9 and 10 of decision [15/9](#), the Conference of the Parties set out criteria¹⁵ to ensure fair and equitable benefit-sharing on digital sequence information on genetic resources through the Multilateral Mechanism. More specifically, the Multilateral Mechanism should: be efficient and feasible, generate more benefits than costs, be effective, provide certainty and legal clarity, not hinder innovation, be consistent with open access to data, not be incompatible with international legal obligations, be mutually supportive of other access and benefit-sharing instruments and take into account the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.

55. The Steering Committee considers that the certificate is fundamental to the capacity of the Multilateral Mechanism to achieve these criteria, in particular the need stipulated in subparagraph 9 (d) of decision [15/9](#) to provide legal clarity and certainty for both countries and contributors.

56. After discussions on this important topic during its second and third meeting, the Steering Committee formed an informal subgroup to prepare elements of the certificate and compile reflections on the topic broadly defined, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties.

57. The subgroup met online for several informal discussions, sharing draft language of the certificate and reviewing it during intersessional periods. On that basis, the subgroup identified three main clusters of issues that would require further work to ensure that the provision of certificates contributes to the attainment of the principles laid out in paragraphs 9 and 10 of decision [15/9](#): (a) the governance framework and process for issuing the certificate; (b) the legal effect or recognition of the certificate within national legal frameworks; and (c) the scope of the certificate. The subgroup also drafted a text of the certificate delivered to contributors, as well as language for Parties to recognize the certificate as intended by the Conference of the Parties in decision [16/2](#).

58. Due to lack of time, the work of the subgroup could not be properly discussed at the fourth meeting of the Steering Committee.¹⁶ The subgroup has not yet had the time to report to the full Committee, which will then need time to develop operational arrangements relating to the issuance, legal effect and scope of the certificate. Therefore, and considering that the certificate is fundamental to ensuring that the Multilateral Mechanism provides legal clarity and is essential to increasing incentivization for potential contributors, the Committee is seeking the support of the Conference of the Parties on this specific work.

59. Based on the work undertaken by the Steering Committee on certificates, the Committee is requesting that the Conference of the Parties provide support by:

¹⁵ The criteria are also referred to as the Geneva principles.

¹⁶ More information on this topic can be found under "other documents" on the web page of the fourth meeting of the Steering Committee (www.cbd.int/meetings/MMDSI-SC-04).

(a) Welcoming the work undertaken by the Steering Committee with regard to certificates under paragraphs 15 and 26 of the annex to decision [16/2](#), and noting that additional work on the certificates needs to be carried out by the Committee;

(b) Recognizing that further work is required to operationalize paragraphs 15 and 26 of the annex to decision [16/2](#), and inviting the Steering Committee, with the support of its interim Secretariat, to continue developing practical arrangements relating to the issuance, legal effect and scope of certificates, taking into account the criteria laid out in paragraphs 9 and 10 of decision [15/9](#);

(c) Reiterating the role of Parties in recognizing certificates issued in accordance with decision [16/2](#);

(d) Encouraging Parties to recognize that the certificate excludes the user of digital sequence information on genetic resources from any expectation to share further monetary benefits from the use of such information within the scope of the Multilateral Mechanism for that year, in accordance with their national laws;

(e) Inviting Parties to provide inputs to the interim Secretariat on the characteristics and elements that a certificate issued by the Cali Fund would need in order to operationalize paragraph 15 of the annex to decision [16/2](#), and which process, if any, would need to be undertaken domestically to recognize or give legal effect to Cali Fund certificates, taking into account any relevant national legislation.

5. Non-monetary benefit-sharing

60. The Steering Committee considered the importance of non-monetary benefit-sharing in the Multilateral Mechanism but did not have sufficient time to discuss in depth what the benefits were exactly and what was already being done. This is partly due to the lack of staffing of the interim Secretariat to consider the topic further and bring more information to the Committee for its discussion. The Committee, however, strongly agreed that the topic is of crucial importance for the proper functioning of the Multilateral Mechanism.

61. The interim Secretariat, at the invitation of the officer acting as the lead in the coordination unit of the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism, presented its work to the network of regional and subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centres. The need for further collaboration, notably during the support centres' next planning cycle and needs assessment surveys of their respective Parties, was highlighted.

62. The Steering Committee seeks further guidance from the Conference of the Parties on non-monetary benefit-sharing to support the further development of the Multilateral Mechanism and recommends the commissioning of a study to examine current non-monetary benefit-sharing by all users of digital sequence information on genetic resources and, inter alia, identify: capacity gaps in accessing, using and generating digital sequence information on genetic resources; pathways for the self-assessment of capacity needs; methods to monitor and report on non-monetary benefits; the delivery of targeted non-monetary benefits, including through the network of regional and subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centres; alignment with the monitoring framework for Goal C and Target 13 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; the clearing house for the Multilateral Mechanism foreseen in paragraph 8 of the annex to decision [16/2](#); and recommendations to the Committee for further operationalization. The Committee would consider the study in support of the operationalization of the Multilateral Mechanism.

6. Enabling conditions

63. At its third meeting, the Steering Committee reflected on what enabling conditions were required in order to mobilize contributions to the Cali Fund and to effectively implement the Multilateral Mechanism and Cali Fund. Considering the low capitalization of the Cali Fund to date,

the Committee discussed the importance of various enabling conditions, including clarity of scope of the Multilateral Mechanism, clarity on the contribution conditions for Parties and companies, legal certainty for users and providers (in particular against existing access and benefit-sharing obligations at the national and international levels), the applicability of contribution conditions to the diversity of potential contributors, incentives, and efficient and effective governance (in line with the principles under paragraph 9 of decision [15/9](#)).

64. The Steering Committee asks the Conference of the Parties to consider supporting the enabling conditions by:

(a) Requesting Parties to work towards the enabling conditions necessary to ensure long-term, stable and predictable monetary benefit-sharing;

(b) Urging private entities reliant on publicly available digital sequence information on genetic resources to share the benefits arising from its use by contributing to the Cali Fund.

D. Develop a methodology, for review by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth meeting, for the review of effectiveness of the Multilateral Mechanism, including the Cali Fund

1. Review methodology for the review of the effectiveness of the Multilateral Mechanism

65. In accordance with subparagraph 1 (d) of enclosure IV of the annex to decision [16/2](#), the Steering Committee was tasked with developing a methodology for review by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth meeting for the review of effectiveness of the Multilateral Mechanism, including the Cali Fund, with indicators, where appropriate, for the factors to be considered in the review, as described in enclosure VI of the annex to decision [16/2](#), taking account of the relevant indicators of the monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The review methodology was developed by the Steering Committee and considered by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its seventh meeting, held in August 2026.¹⁷ Consideration of this item is now within the Convention on Biological Diversity process, as outlined in recommendation 7/4 of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation.

66. The Steering Committee strongly requests that the Conference of the Parties adopt the review methodology and launch the associated process for conducting the review of the effectiveness of the Multilateral Mechanism at its eighteenth meeting.

2. Structured approach to the implementation, learning and effectiveness review of the Multilateral Mechanism, including the Cali Fund

67. Following the information received at its third meeting on external ongoing discussions on potential interest in a pilot or testing phase of the Multilateral Mechanism and its Cali Fund, the Steering Committee decided to create a subgroup to discuss the idea further. It was considered beneficial to have the Committee involved in this ongoing discussion. While no conclusion on the content, form or timing was reached, it was assessed that such a phase (also referred to as a pilot or sandbox) could, with the appropriate safeguards, help to improve understanding and generate evidence under real-world conditions while remaining aligned with the guidance of the Committee and relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties. The informal subgroup generated a working paper (in July 2026) entitled “Structured approach to the implementation and review of the Multilateral Mechanism” and introduced the concept of coordinated and documented “implementation activities”, linked to the generation of evidence that will inform the effectiveness review to be undertaken at the eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The working

¹⁷ See [CBD/SBI/7/5/Add.2](#).

paper was shared with the wider Committee for further discussion at its fourth meeting. Due to lack of time, however, the work of the subgroup was not discussed at this meeting.¹⁸

68. In the review methodology to be considered at the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties,¹⁹ it is recognized that the Multilateral Mechanism is to be reviewed while several operational features may still be under development. The review methodology further contains a consolidated review framework of six evaluation pillars and a governance assessment.

69. Therefore, to ensure a robust review process, the Steering Committee considers it useful to have a structured approach to generating evidence on the implementation and operationalization of the Multilateral Mechanism under real-world conditions. The structured approach should follow the reporting requirements of the Cali Fund, and will, in turn, inform the review and result in lessons learned.

70. The Steering Committee agreed that the evidence generated through these implementation activities will assist the Conference of the Parties at its eighteenth meeting and inform Parties on the functionality of different aspects of the Multilateral Mechanism.

71. The Steering Committee concluded that the structured approach could facilitate voluntary, coordinated and appropriately documented implementation activities to generate evidence under real-world conditions. The Committee recognized that it is responsible for requesting disbursements from the Cali Fund and therefore that any structured approach to the implementation, learning and effectiveness review of the Multilateral Mechanism would need to be facilitated by the Committee and would take into account the following principles:

(a) Voluntary participation and without prejudice: participation in activities under the structured approach should be voluntary and without prejudice to the positions, rights and obligations of participating Parties and stakeholders, and should respect applicable national circumstances and legislation;

(b) Inclusive participation and mutual learning: activities should be inclusive and, as appropriate, involve interested Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, users of digital sequence information on genetic resources and other relevant stakeholders. Participants should be encouraged to collaborate as partners, share experiences and expertise and identify practical challenges, opportunities and lessons learned from implementation;

(c) Alignment, evidence generation and linkage to the effectiveness review: activities should be fully consistent with relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties and undertaken under the guidance of the Steering Committee. They should be designed and documented in a manner that generates evidence relevant to the effectiveness review, including by identifying the elements of the review methodology that they are intended to inform and clearly distinguishing evidence and implementation experience from participant views or recommendations;

(d) Proportionate safeguards, accountability and reporting: activities should apply appropriate environmental and social safeguards, conflict-of-interest provisions, data protection measures, confidentiality provisions and accessible grievance and accountability mechanisms, proportionate to their nature and level of risk. Reporting requirements should also be proportionate and should avoid unnecessary duplication or additional burdens;

(e) Timeliness and feedback on lessons learned: activities should be phased so that relevant evidence can be generated and lessons can be drawn in sufficient time to inform the effectiveness review at the eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and support continuous improvement in the implementation of the Multilateral Mechanism, including the Cali Fund. The Steering Committee may consider asking the interim Secretariat to produce a synthesis and identify

¹⁸ More information about the work of the subgroup can be found in the annex to the minutes of the fourth meeting of the Steering Committee (www.cbd.int/meetings/MMDSI-SC-04).

¹⁹ See recommendation 7/4 of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation.

lessons learned from this structured approach, which will, in turn, inform the first review methodology and the results to be presented in the report of the Committee submitted to the Conference of the Parties.

72. Based on the work undertaken by the Steering Committee on implementation activities and the review methodology, the Committee requests that the Conference of the Parties provide support by welcoming the work of the Committee on a structured approach to implementation activities and encouraging the Committee to continue this work and generate evidence, including results, conclusions and lessons learned from the structured approach, for the first review of the effectiveness of the Multilateral Mechanism, to be included in the report and advice of the Committee to the Conference of the Parties at its eighteenth meeting.

Annex I

Composition of the Steering Committee

Representatives of Parties and indigenous peoples and local communities

#	Parties	Selected
<i>African States</i>		
1	Burkina Faso	Daogo Ouoba
2	Malawi	Mphatso Kalemba-Msukwa
3	Zimbabwe	Desire Nemashakwe
	Egypt (alternate)	Ossama AbdelKawy
<i>Asia-Pacific States</i>		
4	China	Yujun Zhang
5	Japan	Masatoshi Kobayashi
6	Jordan	Bilal Qteshat
	Malaysia (alternate)	Siva Kumar
<i>Eastern European States</i>		
7	Armenia	Aram Meymaryan
8	Czechia	Eliška Rolfová
9	Lithuania	Florian Rabitz
<i>Latin American and Caribbean States</i>		
10	Antigua and Barbuda	Nneka Nicholas
11	Brazil	Patrick Luna
12	Chile	Eduardo Silva Besa
	Argentina (alternate)	Corina Sarli
<i>Western European and other States</i>		
13	Australia	Melissa Cotterill
14	Germany	Inka Gnittke
15	European Union	Mery Ciacci
	Norway (alternate)	Ida Elisabeth Hellmark
<i>Indigenous peoples and local communities</i>		
	<i>Sociocultural region</i>	<i>Selected</i>
16	Africa	Daniel Mabengo

17	Asia	June Rubis
18	Central and South America and the Caribbean	Yolanda Terán
19	Central and Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia	Aleksei Tsykarev
20	North America	Kyle Vermette
21	The Pacific	Manu Caddie

United Nations entities

22	United Nations Environment Programme/Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
23	United Nations Development Programme

Observers

#	Organization	Selected
<i>Civil society</i>		
1	Finance for Biodiversity Foundation	Anita de Horde
2	Third World Network	Nithin Ramakrishnan
	Morobe Development Foundation (alternate)	Emily Murugi
<i>Scientific institutions</i>		
3	SynBio Africa	Bupe Mwambingu
4	Leibniz Institute DSMZ	Amber Hartman Scholz
	Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture, part of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (alternate)	Michael Halewood
<i>Private sector</i>		
5	International Chamber of Commerce	Daphne Yong-d'Hervé
6	Personal Care Products Council	Bart Van Vooren
	Union for Ethical BioTrade (alternate)	Julia Maria Oliva

Annex II

Visual identity of the Cali Fund*

CALI FUND FOR OUR BIODIVERSE FUTURE

VISUAL IDENTITY GUIDE

COLOUR LOGO

Prioritize the use of these versions where possible.

File formats for screens, RGB colour: JPEG (white background), PNG (transparent background), SVG (vector).

File format for printing, CMYK colour: EPS (vector).



CALI FUND
FOR OUR BIODIVERSE FUTURE

Primary colours

HEX #00AEEF	HEX #F0402B	HEX #FAA21B	HEX #2E9947	HEX #9C358B
RGB 0, 171, 224	RGB 240, 64, 43	RGB 250, 162, 27	RGB 46, 153, 71	RGB 156, 53, 139
CMYK 75, 13, 0, 0	CMYK 0, 90, 94, 0	CMYK 0, 42, 100, 0	CMYK 81, 16, 100, 0	CMYK 44, 94, 7, 0

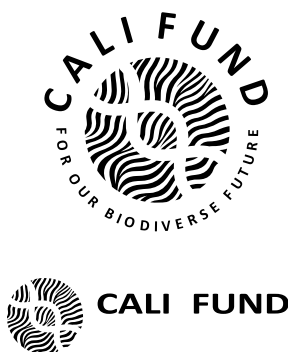
Secondary colours

HEX #73CBEE	HEX #B85F27	HEX #FFD400	HEX #A2C857	HEX #D58BC8
RGB 115, 203, 229	RGB 190, 95, 39	RGB 255, 212, 0	RGB 162, 203, 87	RGB 213, 136, 200
CMYK 50, 0, 7, 0	CMYK 20, 72, 100, 7	CMYK 0, 14, 100, 0	CMYK 41, 0, 85, 0	CMYK 16, 55, 0, 0

MONOTONE LOGO

Use these logos when printing in black and white, or with a screen application that is not full colour.

File formats for screens: JPEG (white background), PNG (transparent background), SVG (vector). File format for printing: EPS (vector).



* The full guidelines may be obtained from califund@un.org.