



## Convention on Biological Diversity

Distr.: General  
26 January 2026  
English only

---

### **Subsidiary Body on Implementation**

#### **Sixth meeting**

Rome, 16–19 February 2026

Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*

#### **Review of the effectiveness of the processes under the Convention and its Protocols**

### **Result of the survey on participation support mechanisms under other multilateral environmental agreements\*\***

**Note by the Secretariat**

#### **Introduction**

1. In its decision 16/25, adopted at its sixteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity requested the Executive Secretary to facilitate the identification of additional financial support to increase participation from developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, and Parties with economies in transition.
2. In its decision [14/37](#), adopted at its fourteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity requested the Executive Secretary, to present a proposal to revise the structure and rules related to the Special Voluntary Trust Fund for Facilitating the Participation of Parties in the Convention Process (BZ Trust Fund) in order to address the perennial problem of the lack of predictable and sustainable funding and to ensure that the BZ Trust Fund is focused on providing funding for the countries which are most in need of assistance for participation, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States. The Conference of the Parties further requested the Executive Secretary to report on progress in designing measures to raise the visibility of the Trust Fund and its attractiveness for donors, drawing on experience from similar trust funds in other international forums.
3. To draw experience from similar trust funds, situation of support provision for developing countries Parties under other multilateral environmental agreements were surveyed. The present document contains the result of the survey.

---

\* [CBD/SBI/6/1](#).

\*\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

## **Survey on participation support for developing country Parties in official meetings**

### **1. Objective of the survey**

1. The objective of the survey was to collect information on participation support mechanisms under other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), in order to inform the assessment of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)'s own participation support system. The assessment aims to identify potential improvements to the CBD's mechanism by comparing it with practices and experiences from other MEAs.

### **2. Methodology**

2. The Secretariat of CBD conducted a survey with the secretariats of global multilateral environmental agreements by sending a comprehensive questionnaire (annex I) in March 2025. Collected answers were synthesized and analyzed. In addition to the results of the survey, the assessment drew on the Convention's texts, official meeting documents, websites and follow-up individual communication with the secretariat when necessary.

3. List of MEA secretariats that responded to the survey:

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Basel)

Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (Rotterdam)

Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (Stockholm)

Minamata Convention on Mercury (Minamata)

Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and Montreal Protocol (Vienna Convention and Montreal Protocol)

Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar)

### **3. Survey response and analysis**

4. The survey responses provided a comprehensive overview of the current landscape of participation support for developing country Parties. The analysis of responses to questions revealed several overarching trends and practices that form the background for the key findings.

#### *Status of the Convention's participation support*

5. All MEAs have voluntary trust funds and rely on voluntary contribution to support participation, although the structure and legal basis vary. However, Ramsar's decision taken by their governing body authorizes the exceptional use of a surplus of the core funds to cover shortfalls in voluntary contributions.

6. Some MEAs have budget lines in core fund to support participation in certain subsidiary body meetings, for example, CMS's mandatory trust fund covers representatives' participation in meetings of the Standing Committee and Sessional Committees but not to support participation in the meetings of COP. Thus, voluntary contributions must be raised to cover for delegates' participation in COP meetings. Funding trends indicate a gap between the estimated requirements and actual contributions

received in most of MEAs. However, Minamata's funds have so far been sufficient to support one delegate per eligible party, taken the number of Parties to the Convention.

7. The Vienna Convention and Montreal Protocol present a unique situation. Although the funds allocated for supporting the participation of eligible countries cannot fund the requests of all these countries, the Secretariat has seldom utilized the full approved amount due to a lower number of nominations than available slots and participant cancellations. Consequently, bridging the gap has not been necessary. To understand this situation, the institutional and financial arrangements underpinning these treaties were studied. The meeting of the COP to the Vienna Convention is held every three years, jointly with the annual Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Montreal Protocol. Participation support for eligible countries to the joint meeting of COP and MOP (COP/MOP) is funded through the Montreal Protocol Trust Fund. For meetings of the COP/MOP, one technical expert and one ministerial official for high level segment is supported per eligible country. The expert must be the same person if also attending the meeting of the Implementation Committee under the Non-Compliance Procedure for the Montreal Protocol which is held before the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) meeting and the meeting of the COP/MOP. The same principle applies to the participant attending the meeting of the Bureaux held a day before the meeting of the COP/MOP. While the contributions to the trust funds for both the Convention and the Protocol are termed voluntary as per the Terms of Reference of the trust funds, the contributions are calculated based on the UN scale of assessment adjusted to provide that no one contribution shall exceed 22% of the total. The table of contributions, along with the adjusted scale of assessment, is annexed to each decision on the budget. Budgets for trust funds for both instruments include dedicated line items for participation support. In addition to the afore mentioned contributions, a few parties provide additional voluntary funding specifically for participation support.

|                                 | UNFCCC | CITES   | CMS     | Basel   | Rotterdam | Stockholm | Minamata   | Vienna Convention & Montreal Protocol | Ramsar  |
|---------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|------------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Status of participation support | (*)    | deficit | deficit | deficit | deficit   | deficit   | sufficient | sufficient                            | deficit |

\* UNFCCC: Contributions from donors to support participation generally cover the annual requirements for the year 2025, albeit not in a timely manner.

8. Donor contributions are mostly from traditional government donors. CITES has successfully engaged non-traditional contributors – a few foundations. CITES charges a fee for observer participation, which is also used to organise the meeting.

#### *Funding allocation policy and selection criteria*

9. As the number and the scale of official meetings organized by each conventions differ largely, this assessment focused on the number of delegates supported per eligible country to attend a meeting of the COP or COP/MOP. According to their respective COP decisions, UNFCCC is to support two delegates from each Party eligible for funding, plus an additional delegate for SIDS and the LDCs. Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm organize their respective COP meeting back-to-back and provide support one representative per party per convention and one Minister for the meetings with high-level segment. As described above, Vienna Convention and Montreal Protocol support one technical officer and one ministerial level delegate for meetings of the COP/MOP. CITES support is mandated to be provided for a maximum of two delegates from a developing country, depending upon the funds raised.

|                                                    | UNFCCC                  | CITES | CMS | Basel                                        | Rotterdam | Stockholm | Minamata | Vienna Convention & Montreal Protocol | Ramsar |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|-----|----------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Number of delegates supported per eligible country | LDC & SIDS 3<br>Other 2 | max 2 | 1   | Total 3 technical officers and<br>1 Minister |           |           | 1        | 1 technical officer and<br>1 Minister | 1      |

10. The selection criteria vary but generally prioritize least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS). The COP to CMS has decided to change the selection criteria in 2024, by removing a threshold of eligibility at 0.200 per cent on the United Nations scale of assessment. While it maintains its condition which excludes from such eligibility countries that have payments in arrears of three years or more.

11. UNFCCC and CITES have distinctive criteria. UNFCCC criteria present its own ceilings of eligibility of receiving support and CITES's criteria is used in their specific selection process.

(a) UNFCCC applies a GDP per capita threshold—less than USD 14,000 for general Parties and USD 18,000 for SIDS based on statistics provided in 2011;

(b) CITES uses a tiered system based on Human Development Index (HDI)<sup>1</sup> rankings. One delegate per country is supported starting from the lowest HDI scores upward until funds are exhausted. It takes into consideration other factors such as LDC and SIDS, Parties under compliance processes, Parties with fewer than 6 delegates at the previous meeting of the COP, among others.

*Gap reducing efforts and visibility of the trust funds*

12. To reduce funding gaps and sustain support for participation, communication with donors is being strengthened by some conventions, for example, in addition to regular notifications, CMS conducts targeted appeals to individual potential donors to make voluntary contributions. Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions make available an overview of concept notes for voluntary contributions to their trust funds for the implementation of the programmes of work of the three conventions including participation support for developing countries. Securing stability of convention and continued delivery of its mandates including providing support for the participation, reducing gap between the required total amount and the actual contributions received is crucial. In this regards, targeted appeals to parties with persistent arrears were also pointed out as important.

13. The timing of the initiation and completion of fundraising activities, followed by the timely receipt of contributions, are also cited as essential. CITES has made notable efforts to improve transparency and predictability in disbursement timelines. It disseminates information about the Sponsored Delegates Project one year before each meeting of the COP, sets clear deadlines for donor pledges and support requests, and provides delegates with travel arrangements well in advance<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> HDI, developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), measures a country's average achievements in: Health, Education, and Standard of living. Countries are classified into four tiers: Very High Human Development, High Human Development, Medium Human Development, and Low Human Development.

<sup>2</sup> The CITES Secretariat is called on to disseminate information about the Sponsored Delegates Project to all CITES Parties at least one year before each meeting of the COP and the general timeline of CITES is as follows:

1 year before COP: launch of SDP; call for request for support and solicitation of donors

3-4 months before COP: deadline for donor pledge and support requests; sponsored delegates vetted and prioritized; travel arrangements begin

2 months before COP: delegates receive air ticket, submit visa request

1 month before COP: delegates obtain visa

## Annex

### Survey questionnaire

1. General
  - 1-1. General description of the convention
  - 1-2. Number of the contracting parties
2. Foundation of the participation support
  - 2-1. Please provide the convention articles that provide the legal basis for participation support to developing country parties (hereafter, “participation support”).
  - 2-2. Are there any funds dedicated to participation support?

If yes, please provide details including the legal basis for the fund, such as articles from the convention and decisions, in addition to the answer to Q2-1.

If no, please provide details regarding the voluntary fund used for supporting participation.
3. Status of the Convention’s participation support
  - 3-1. What is the general trend of the estimated required amount and the contribution from the donors for the participation support? Please explain.
  - 3-2. Please provide the data of the general trend mentioned in 3-1
  - 3-3. Are there any non-traditional contributors, in addition to the traditional ones (e.g., country party)? Please provide a list of contributors.
  - 3-4. Does the trust fund for mandatory contributions from parties, have a role to play in participation support? If so, please provide the relevant decisions.
4. Funding allocation policy
  - 4-1. Please describe the funding allocation policy for participation support, including the following: Which countries are supported? What are the selection criteria and selection process? How many countries will be supported? How many delegates per country will be supported?
  - 4-2. What is the timeline from the call for applications to the disbursement of the fund/flight ticket to each country before the Conference of the Parties meeting?
5. Gap reducing efforts and other modalities
  - 5-1. Is there a specific plan and/or ongoing efforts to reduce the gap between the required total amount and the contribution? If so, please give us the information.
6. Please provide your name, title and contacts information so we can follow-up.