



Convention on Biological Diversity

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Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity Sixteenth meeting

Cali, Colombia, 21 October–1 November 2024

Item 12 of the provisional agenda*

**Capacity-building and development, technical and
scientific cooperation, clearing-house mechanism
and knowledge management**

Further information relevant to the operationalization of the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. By its decision [15/8](#), the Conference of the Parties adopted a long-term strategic framework for capacity-building and development, as contained in annex I to the decision, to support priorities determined by Parties in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. In the same decision, it established a mechanism comprising a network of regional and/or subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centres and a global coordination entity.
2. At its fourth meeting, pursuant to requests made by the Conference of the Parties in the same decision, the Subsidiary Body on Implementation considered a note by the Secretariat, prepared with advice from the Informal Advisory Group on Technical and Scientific Cooperation, and adopted recommendation [4/5](#), which included a draft decision for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at the present meeting. In the draft decision, which is reproduced in the compilation of draft decisions,¹ the Subsidiary Body recommended that the Conference of the Parties welcome the indicators proposed by the Informal Advisory Group for monitoring progress in the implementation of the long-term strategic framework and the mechanism to strengthen technical and scientific cooperation in support of the Framework,² and included modalities for the operationalization of the global coordination entity of the mechanism in annex II to the draft decision.
3. In the same recommendation, the Subsidiary Body on Implementation requested the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, to support the entities and organizations selected to host the regional and subregional support centres in the mobilization of resources for delivering support to Parties, and to report on progress to the Conference of the Parties at the present meeting. It also requested the Executive Secretary to prepare an estimate of the required resources for various options for hosting and operationalizing the global coordination entity, including scalable options,

* CBD/COP/16/1.

¹ CBD/COP/16/2.

² Decision [15/8](#), annex II.

also for consideration at the present meeting. The Subsidiary Body further requested the Executive Secretary, with support from the Informal Advisory Group on Technical and Scientific Cooperation, to prepare guidance to address the specific capacity-building and development needs identified by Parties, for use by the support centres in the development of their workplans, and to make such guidance available for consideration at the present meeting.

II. Progress report on the steps undertaken to operationalize the regional and subregional support centres of the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism

4. Pursuant to decision 15/8, the Executive Secretary, with the support of the Informal Advisory Group on Technical and Scientific Cooperation, established a process for selecting entities and organizations to host regional and/or subregional technical and scientific support centres based on the criteria specified in section III of annex II to the decision. During the fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, in May 2024, the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties selected 18 entities and organizations to host subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centres, and the Secretariat issued notification No. [2024-058](#) on 21 June 2024 to announce the selected centres.

5. Following the announcement of the selected support centres, the Secretariat invited Parties, through their national focal points, to confirm the centre that they would like to work with. The Secretariat carried out introductory online consultations with all the selected centres and will organize the first joint meeting of the 18 centres on 20 October 2024 in Cali, Colombia. The meeting will provide an opportunity for the representatives of the centres to get acquainted, to better understand the roles and responsibilities of the centres, to share progress made so far in operationalizing the centres and to discuss next steps. The Secretariat is currently in the process of developing host agreements with the selected entities and organizations.

6. The Secretariat, with support from the Bio-Bridge Initiative, has also taken a number of steps to mobilize resources and strengthen partnerships in support of the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism, including by leading consultations with partners, such as the International Climate Initiative and the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership. The Secretariat secured funds from the European Union to hire a consultant to support the operationalization of the support centres, including by conducting appraisal missions and providing technical advice and capacity-building support to the selected host entities and organizations. The Secretariat also prepared and submitted a proposal to the Kunming Biodiversity Fund to, inter alia, enable the selected centres to organize kick-off planning and consultative meetings with Parties and partners in their respective subregions, set up the necessary institutional governance and management arrangements, conduct rapid needs assessments and develop their first biennial business plan and programmes of work on the basis on identified needs and priorities.

III. Estimated resource requirements for various options for hosting and operationalizing the global coordination entity

7. At its fourth meeting, the Subsidiary Body on Implementation considered two options for the hosting of the global coordination entity, which were that it would be hosted either by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity or by an international organization with a global mandate. In document CBD/SBI/4/INF/7, the Secretariat provided the estimated costs for the operationalization of the entity if it were to be hosted by the Secretariat in Montreal, Canada. The estimates covered the core and operating costs of the entity, comprising staff costs, office equipment and supplies, staff travel, the establishment and operation of an online collaborative platform for the support centres and the convening of an annual meeting of the centres. The configuration of the

staffing and other components of cost was made on the basis of an assessment by the Secretariat of the minimum capacity required to fulfil the functions of the entity, as set out in decision 15/8.³

8. In its recommendation [4/5](#), the Subsidiary Body on Implementation requested the Executive Secretary to prepare an estimate of the required resources for various options for hosting and operationalizing the global coordination entity, including scalable options, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting. In the present note, two scenarios of a differing scale each are described for operationalizing the entity, with differences mostly in staffing, and the estimated costs of each are provided in the table below. The estimates cover core and operating costs for the entity, as outlined in paragraph 7 above, and are based on staffing costs at the Montreal duty station.

9. The first scenario, which was submitted at the fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on implementation,⁴ includes costs for three staff at the P5, P4 and G7 levels, respectively. However, in view of the selection of 18 support centres, which is a larger number than originally anticipated, scenario 1 may not be adequate to fully deliver all of the functions of the global coordination entity, such as the provision of help desk services and the mobilization of resources for the technical and scientific cooperation programmes of the centres. The second scenario provides for a level of staffing more adequate to discharge effectively all the functions of the global coordination entity, with four staff at the P5, P4, P3 and G7 levels, respectively.

10. The functions and cost components of the global coordination entity would be the same whether the entity is hosted by the Secretariat or by an international organization with a global mandate. Differences in costs would arise principally from differences in staff costs at the duty station where the entity would be located. By way of comparison, if the entity were to be hosted by a Nairobi-based international organization that applies the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) salary scales and post adjustment, it is estimated that, as a result of differences in staff costs, the total cost for scenario 1 would be approximately 4 per cent lower than in Montreal and that for scenario 2 approximately 1 per cent lower. If the entity were to be hosted by a Geneva-based international organization that applies the ICSC salary scales and post adjustment, it is estimated that the total cost for scenario 1 would be approximately 32 per cent higher than in Montreal and that for option 2 approximately 33 per cent higher.

11. The transaction costs incurred by the global coordination entity and the Secretariat in their liaison with each other would be relatively higher if the entity were located at another international organization than if it were located within the Secretariat. This relates to the role of the Secretariat in providing guidance, facilitating the alignment of the work of the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism with the processes under the Convention and its Protocols and facilitating reporting.

Biennial budget estimates for two scenarios for the operationalization of the global coordination entity

(United States dollars)

<i>Budget item</i>	<i>Amount</i>	
	<i>Scenario 1</i>	<i>Scenario 2</i>
Staff		
1 P5 (coordinator) ^a	508 000	508 000
1 P4	—	440 000
1 P3	340 000	340 000
1 G7	140 000	140 000
Consultants	120 000	90 000
Staff travel ^b	160 832	160 832

³ The estimate took into account the costs of similar mechanisms and processes, such as the support provided by the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to the regional centres and the Climate Technology Centre and Network.

⁴ See CBD/SBI/4/INF/7.

<i>Budget item</i>	<i>Amount</i>	
	<i>Scenario 1</i>	<i>Scenario 2</i>
Activities		
Annual coordination meetings ^c	80 832	80 832
Collaborative platform for the regional and subregional centres ^d	60 000	60 000
Office and operating costs ^e	26 000	28 000
Subtotal	1 535 664	1 847 664
Programme support costs (13 per cent)	199 636	240 196
Total	1 735 300	2 087 860

^a In view of the regular interaction of the head of the global coordination entity with the directors of the support centres and other senior staff of their hosting organizations, it seems appropriate for the incumbent to be at a senior Programme Management Officer level (P5) or higher.

^b Staff travel includes staff missions to the support centres and other related travel.

^c Including airfare and daily subsistence allowance for representatives of the regional centres to attend at least one in-person meeting per biennium.

^d Following the design and set-up of the online platform in the first biennium, its operating costs in subsequent bienniums would be lower.

^e Office and operating costs would cover the core office costs (including computers for staff, Internet connection, office supplies and office space).

IV. Guidance on capacity-building and development needs identified by Parties for use by the subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centres in developing their workplans

12. In several of their decisions, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and 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 have called for support to address the needs of Parties in terms of capacity-building and development. In addition, those bodies have adopted action plans, strategies and programmes of work that contain information on capacity-building and development related to specific issues, as well as guidance on the principles, strategies and approaches to capacity-building and development for the effective implementation of the Convention, its Protocols and the Framework. An awareness of those decisions would benefit the support centres in developing their workplans.

13. In response to the request by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation in its recommendation 4/5 to prepare guidance for the support centres, the Secretariat has conducted a review of such decisions and compiled the specific capacity-building and development needs identified by Parties and specific operational guidance that they contained, to assist the support centres in fulfilling their mandate.

A. Normative and thematic guidance emanating from decisions of the Conference of the Parties and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties to the Protocols

14. The frameworks, strategies, action plans and programmes of work adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties to the Protocols contain in-depth guidance on principles, approaches and strategies related to

capacity-building and development for the implementation of the Convention, its Protocols and the Framework.⁵ Such guidance include the following:

- (a) The long-term strategic framework for capacity-building and development (decision [15/8](#), annex I);
- (b) The capacity-building Action Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (decision [CP-10/4](#), annex);
- (c) The Gender Plan of Action (2023–2030) (decision [15/11](#), annex);
- (d) The Plan of Action (2020–2030) for the International Initiative for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Soil Biodiversity (decision [15.28](#), annex);
- (e) The Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity (2023–2030) (decision [15/12](#), annex).

15. In addition, sections of the Framework, especially section C, on considerations for the implementation of the Framework, contain additional information related to the principles to guide the implementation of the Framework.

16. The support centres are invited to consult the aforementioned normative documents for guidance on capacity-building and development under the Convention and its Protocols, noting that the long-term strategic framework on capacity-building and development contains guidance on specific principles, strategies and approaches in that regard.

17. To complement those frameworks, the Secretariat has also identified the needs for capacity-building and development, technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer expressed in the decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its fifteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol at its tenth meeting and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol at its fourth meeting.

18. In those decisions, capacity-building and development are aimed at developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, and Parties with economies in transition. In several decisions, mention is also made to supporting the capacity needs and priorities of indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth organizations.

19. Requests to the Executive Secretary and invitations to Parties and international organizations to support capacity-building and development, technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer contained in those decisions can be considered as needs and priorities identified collectively by Parties. Such requests and invitations have been compiled in information document CBD/COP/16/INF/24, organized on the basis of the targets of the Framework. General requests for capacity-building and development to support the implementation of the Framework that lack sufficient detail have not been included in the compilation.

20. It should be noted that the fact that some targets of the Framework are not reflected in the compilation does not imply that Parties to the Convention and its Protocols do not have needs for capacity-building and development in relation to those targets. It should also be noted that the compilation would not be the only guidance to be provided to the support centres. Requests for capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation made in previous decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties to the Protocols that are still valid should also be taken into consideration. Parties may

⁵ Further such information is also included in draft strategies, action plans and programmes of work to be considered by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its sixteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol at its eleventh meeting and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol at its fifth meeting, and the present list will be updated in the light of the decisions adopted by the respective bodies at those meetings.

benefit from reviewing such requests when determining their needs and priorities to be communicated to their respective support centres.

21. Given the overarching principle that work undertaken by the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism must be demand-driven, the support centres are expected to reach out to the Parties in their respective subregions to identify concrete capacity-building and development needs related to the implementation of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans on which to base their workplans.

B. Operational guidance to be prepared for the subregional support centres

22. The Secretariat and the global coordination entity will develop specific operational guidance to assist the support centres in fulfilling their mandate, such as:

- (a) Guidance on the establishment and operationalization of the governance and administrative arrangements of the centres;
 - (b) Guidelines and methodology for the assessment of capacity needs and priorities at the national level;
 - (c) Guidelines for the preparation of biennial workplans by the centres;
 - (d) Guidelines and templates for the preparation of biennial activity reports by the centres;
 - (e) Guidance on the planning, organization and conduct of the meetings of the steering committees of the centres or equivalent governance structures;
 - (f) Guidelines for facilitating coordination and collaboration among the centres;
 - (g) Guidelines on mobilizing financial and technical resources for the work of the centres;
 - (h) Guidelines on setting up and operationalizing small grants programmes, including purpose, scope, eligibility and selection criteria, and their operational procedures;
 - (i) Guidance on fostering the sustainability of the centres;
 - (j) Guidance on and criteria for the evaluation of the performance of the centres.
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