



Convention on Biological Diversity

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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Fifteenth meeting – Part II
Montreal, Canada, 7-19 December 2022
Agenda item 17

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

15/18. Review of the effectiveness of processes under the Convention and its Protocols

The Conference of the Parties,

A. Experience with concurrent meetings

Recalling decisions XII/27, XIII/26 and 14/32,

Having reviewed the experience in holding concurrently meetings of the Conference of the Parties, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol, using the criteria agreed in decisions XII/27 and XIII/26,

Taking into account the views of Parties and observers that participated in the concurrent meetings held in 2016 and 2018 as synthesized and presented in the notes by the Executive Secretary on the review of experience in holding concurrent meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and meetings of the Parties to the Protocols,¹

1. *Notes with satisfaction* that the concurrent meetings were overall considered to have allowed for increased integration among the Convention and its Protocols, and improved consultations, coordination and synergies among the respective national focal points;

2. *Notes* that most of the criteria were considered as being met or partially met, and that further improvements in the functioning of the concurrent meetings are desirable, in particular to improve the outcomes and effectiveness of the meetings of the Parties to the Protocols;

3. *Reiterates* the importance of ensuring the full and effective participation of representatives of developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States among them, and countries with economies in transition, in the concurrent meetings, and the importance, in particular, of ensuring adequate participation of representatives in meetings of the Parties to the Protocols by making funding available for such participation, and, in this regard, recalls decision 14/37, paragraphs 36 to 46;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau, to further improve the planning and organization of future concurrent meetings on the basis of the experience gained to date and the views expressed by Parties and observers;

¹ See [CBD/SBI/2/16/Add.1](#) and associated information notes ([CBD/SBI/2/INF/1](#) and [INF/2](#)).

B. Experience with virtual meetings

Recalling decision XII/29, paragraph 2, in which the Executive Secretary was requested to explore ways to increase the efficiency of meetings, including convening meetings through virtual means, and further developments in that regard,

Recognizing the restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020, which rendered in-person meetings impracticable,

5. *Notes* the expeditious adjustments and arrangements made by the Secretariat, and the understanding and flexibility demonstrated by presiding officers and participants, which allowed the convening of a number of meetings and consultations in a virtual setting in response to the limitations caused by the pandemic situation, notwithstanding the inconveniences arising from such a setting, and the limitations that were agreed with regard to decision-making;

6. *Agrees* that the convening of formal meetings in a virtual setting, while important in terms of responding to the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, does not set a precedent for the future organization of similar meetings under the Convention;

7. *Encourages* Parties and observers to continue to participate in hybrid meetings, when applicable, and in extraordinary circumstances, in virtual meetings, while recognizing the need to ensure the full and effective participation of Parties, especially developing country Parties, in particular the least developed and small island developing States among them, and Parties with economies in transition, to promote transparent and inclusive processes under the Convention, as long as no final decisions are taken virtually, with the exception of budgetary and procedural matters;

8. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to compile views from Parties and relevant stakeholders, and the experience and relevant studies available, especially within the United Nations system, on conducting virtual and hybrid meetings held in 2021 and 2022, and to prepare options for procedures for such hybrid meetings, and under extraordinary circumstances for virtual meetings, taking into account the specific challenges faced by delegations with network and connectivity difficulties, especially by developing country Parties, in particular the least developed and small island developing States among them, and Parties with economies in transition, as well as indigenous peoples and local communities and observers, and by those delegations from countries where meetings are scheduled at difficult times, addressing issues about equity, participation and legitimacy for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its fourth meeting;

9. *Requests* the Subsidiary Body on Implementation to consider the compilation of views, analysis and options referred to in paragraph 8 above and to make recommendations to address the issues to the governing bodies of the Convention and the Protocols for consideration at their next meeting;

C. Other areas to improve effectiveness

10. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to prepare, in consultation with Parties, Bureau members, partners and stakeholders, an analysis of options to further improve the effectiveness of meetings under the Convention on Biological Diversity, including, inter alia, options to improve negotiating processes, to better follow up on previous decisions, to benefit from innovations in decision-making methods and technologies, and to explore modalities for the engagement of observers in processes under the Convention on Biological Diversity, while ensuring that the rules of procedure of the Convention are respected, and to submit such analysis of options to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation for consideration at its fourth meeting.
