

**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE
PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Cancun, Mexico, 6 to 16 December 2016

**MINUTES OF THE BUREAU MEETINGS HELD DURING THE UN BIODIVERSITY
CONFERENCE IN CANCUN****INTRODUCTION**

1. The Bureau of the Conference of the Parties (COP) met a total of twelve times during the Conference. The meetings were held in the Bureau Room in the Universal Building, Moon Palace, Cancun, Mexico. The minutes of the first meeting, held on 4 December, are provided separately¹.
2. This note summarizes the proceedings of the subsequent daily meetings held from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. from 6 to 9 December and 12 to 16 December, as well as additional meetings held in the afternoon and evening of 8 December.
3. The following members of the Bureau attended these meetings: Ms. Malta Qwathekana (South Africa); Mr. Mike Ipanga (Democratic Republic of the Congo); Ms. Fumiko Nakao (Japan); Mr. Yousef Al-Hafedh (Saudi Arabia); Dr. Senka Barudanovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina); Mr. Sergei Melnov (Belarus); Mr. Randolph Edmead (St. Kitts and Nevis); Ms. Maria Luisa del Rio Mispireta (Peru); Ms. Tia Stevens (Australia); and Ms. Mette Gervin Damsgaard (Denmark).
4. The following alternate members for the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols attended these meetings: Ms. Elvana Ramaj (Albania) as the substitute for the Nagoya Protocol for CEE; Mr. Norbert Bärlocher (Switzerland) as the substitute for the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols for WEOG; and Dr. B. Meenakumari and Dr. Amita Prasad (replacing Dr. Sujata Arora, India) as the substitute for the Nagoya Protocol for Asia.
5. Mr. Andrew Bignell (SBSTTA Chair) (New Zealand) attended these meetings as an observer.
6. The following nominees for the Bureau to be elected at the end of the meeting attended as observers, once nominated by their regional groups: Mr. Samuel Ndayiragije (Burundi); Mr. Mohamed Ali ben Temessek (Tunisia); Ms. Gwendalyn K. Sisor (Palau); Ms. Clarissa Nina (Brazil); Mr. Basile Van Havre (Canada); and Mr. Hayo Haanstra (Netherlands).

¹UNEP/CBD/COP12/Bur/2016/6/2

7. In addition, the following nominees for the role of alternate member for the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols to be elected at the end of the meeting attended as observers, once nominated by their regional groups: Ms. Ana Julia Gutierrez (Argentina) as the substitute for the Nagoya Protocol for GRULAC; and Ms. Tone Solhaug (Norway) as the substitute for the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols for WEOG (Juscanz).

8. The following members of UN Environment attended one or more of these meetings: Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director; Mr. Balakrishna Pisupati, Head of the Biodiversity, Land and Governance Programme, Law Division; and Mrs. Elizabeth Mrema, Director, Law Division.

9. The members of the Secretariat present at the meetings included: Mr. Braulio Dias (CBD Executive Secretary); Mr. David Cooper (Deputy Executive Secretary and Conference Secretary); Mr. Ravi Sharma; Mr. Charles Gbedemah; Mr. Robert Höft; Mr. Worku Damena Yifru; Ms. Valerie Normand; Ms. Manoela Pessoa de Miranda; Mr. Paulo Tagliari; Ms. Ailis Rego; Ms. Monique Chiasson; and Ms. Lydia Zemke.

10. The meetings were chaired by Mr. Enrique Lendo Fuentes, Director, Foreign Affairs, Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT), representing the newly-elected COP 13 Mexican Presidency. Other representatives of the Mexican Presidency in attendance included: Ambassador Juan Antonio Mateos, COP 13 National Coordinator (SEMARNAT); Mr. Hesiquio Benitez, Director, Liaison and Foreign Affairs, National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO); and Ms. Luz Maria Ortiz, Deputy General Director of Multilateral Agreements, International Affairs Unit (SEMARNAT).

11. The main purpose of the meetings was to keep the Bureau informed on progress in the Working Groups and respective Contact Groups and prepare for subsequent sessions, including plenary sessions. Updates on the status of nominations for the Bureau and Compliance Committees of the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols, and SBI and SBSTTA Chairs, were provided daily. Members were also advised of logistical matters requiring attention, as well as of any other matters calling for leadership and guidance from the Bureau.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK FOR THE THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES AND CONCURRENT MEETINGS OF THE PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA AND NAGOYA PROTOCOLS

12. On 7 December, COP 13 President, Minister Rafael Pacchiano, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Mexico, attended the Bureau meeting and delivered a message stating that he was available to provide assistance to the Bureau as necessary to facilitate the work of the Bureau and Parties during COP 13 and its concurrent meetings.

13. Updates on the status of credentials was provided to the Bureau by Ms. Maria Luisa del Rio Mispireta (Peru), Representative of the Bureau responsible for the review of credentials, supported by the Senior Legal Officer, on 4 December, 7 December and 16 December. A report on credentials was provided in an information document (UNEP/CBD/COP/13/INF/43) available on the CBD website which was updated as necessary.

14. The Bureau was updated on the status of nominations for the officers to be elected during the course of the meeting, including members of the Bureau, the Compliance Committees of the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols, and the SBI and SBSTTA Chairs, at each meeting.

15. Planning for plenary sessions was considered at the meetings on 9 December, 12 December, 13 December, 14 December, 15 December and 16 December.

16. The Bureau held a number of discussions concerning the offers from Egypt and Turkey to host COP-14. Legal guidance was provided by the Secretariat on procedural matters and the role and responsibility of the Bureau in determining a way forward. The COP President proposed a solution that was submitted to plenary on 13 December and adopted without amendment.

17. The Chair of the contact group on budget, Mr. Spencer Thomas (Grenada), provided updates on progress made in the Budget Group on 9 December and 14 December.

18. Updates on progress in the two Working Groups and the respective Contact Groups were provided by the Working Group Chairs, supported by the secretaries of each group, at each of the daily meetings of the Bureau. At these meetings, members of the Bureau re-emphasized the need to streamline work, and avoid the unnecessary opening of issues that had already been agreed at meetings of the subsidiary bodies. The use of informal groups was discussed with a view to limiting the number of groups meeting concurrently, ensuring participation of representatives to the two Protocols as well as the Convention, and clarifying the distinction between open-ended “contact groups” to address issues of general concern, and more limited “friends of the chair” to address specific concerns of a more limited number of Parties. The constraints on small delegations regarding their attendance in informal groups should always be taken into account when scheduling meetings. The Bureau noted that, consistent with the Rules of Procedure, draft decisions (“CRP” and “L” documents) should be made available the day before their consideration in the meetings (in the Working Group and Plenary, respectively), and that this had generally been the case in the present meetings. Accommodation of organizations’ requests to make statements was also considered. It was noted that proposals for text changes from observers need to be endorsed by a Party, if they are to be taken into account.

19. Representatives of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities and of Civil Society were invited to attend the Bureau meeting on 8 December. The representatives welcomed this opportunity and offered their views on the proceedings. They expressed general satisfaction with the modalities for their participation in the Conference. However, they expressed concern about the lack of time given to them to bring up issues on Article 8(j) in the Working Groups. They also raised the importance of addressing issues in a cross-cutting manner and hearing diverse perspectives on biodiversity conservation. The issue of the private sector appearing at discussion group meetings was also of concern. Mainstreaming within ministries (e.g. justice ministry) was viewed as a requisite to implementation of the Strategic Plan. However, it was noted that a consolidated national position was rare. Representatives were also interested to know how the outcomes of the High Level Segment contributed to Working Group discussions. A Bureau member agreed that mainstreaming at the ministerial level varies greatly among countries and that aligning activities with the SDGs presented a viable opportunity for biodiversity mainstreaming. Another Bureau member advised that group statements might be more impactful than single statements. The Chair of the Bureau Meeting reminded the representatives that there would be additional opportunities to continue this type of discussion over the course of the Mexican presidency.

20. Matters raised with respect to logistics were promptly addressed by the COP 13 Presidency and the Secretariat. Shuttle bus schedules were adjusted appropriately, the sound quality (microphones) improved in meeting rooms (particularly in the Sunrise Building), and larger rooms made available for Contact Groups. A Bureau member also raised the issue of the importance for some delegations, in particular, to receive visa and funding letters from the Secretariat at the earliest possible opportunity to facilitate the timely issuance of visas.

21. The Executive Secretary informed members that a questionnaire was being prepared by the Secretariat which would be distributed to participants to solicit feedback on the organization of the meetings.

OTHER MATTERS

22. The term of office of the incoming Executive Secretary was considered by the Bureau. The Secretariat clarified that the first term of an Executive Secretary has consistently been for three years. It was noted that the UN Environment Executive Director regularly evaluates the performance of the Executive Secretary. The Secretariat further clarified that a renewal for a subsequent period could be made on the recommendation of the Bureau. The Bureau agreed to recommend to the Conference of the Parties that the term of office be three years.

23. The Chair noted that the Presidency would host a meeting of the new Bureau which could consider the lessons from the experience of the COP 12 Bureau, as compiled by the outgoing President. The Secretariat would prepare and circulate guidance documents on the functioning of the Bureau.

24. A joint lunch for the outgoing and incoming Bureau members was held on 17 December.