



Convention on Biological Diversity

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MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Nairobi, Kenya, 20 to 29 May 2024

MINUTES OF THE BUREAU MEETINGS HELD DURING THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON IMPLEMENTATION, IN NAIROBI, KENYA

1. The Bureau of the Conference of the Parties met eight times during the fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-4). The Bureau meetings took place in Conference Room 7 of the United Nations Compound in Nairobi, Kenya.
2. This note summarizes the proceedings of the Bureau meetings held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on 20 May 2024; and from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. on 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28 and 29 May 2024.
3. The meetings were chaired by Mr. Ning Liu, the representative of the Minister of Ecology and Environment of China, Mr. Runqiu Huang, the COP 15 President.
4. The following members of the Bureau attended the above meetings:
Africa: Ms. Khangeziwe Mabuza (Eswatini); Mr. Moustafa Fouda (Egypt, substitute for Algeria for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol).
Asia-Pacific: Ms. Somaly Chan (Cambodia); Mr. Krishneel Nand (Fiji).
Eastern Europe: Ms. Teona Karchava (Georgia); Mr. Sino Tohirzoda (Tajikistan, substitute for Georgia for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol); Ms. Angela Lozan (Republic of Moldova).
Latin America and the Caribbean: Ms. Maria Teresa Becerra Ramirez (Colombia); Ms. Corina Sarli (Argentina, substitute for Colombia for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol); Ms. Gillian Guthrie (Jamaica); Mr. Jesus Guerra Bell (Cuba, substitute for Jamaica for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol).
Western Europe and Others: Mr. Eric Schauls (Luxembourg); Mr. Norbert Bärlocher (Switzerland);
Ex officio: Ms. Senka Barudanovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Matters (SBSTTA); Mr. Chirra Achalender Reddy (India), Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation.
COP Presidency: Ms. HU Yunfang; Ms. ZHAO Haishan; Ms. LIU Xiaqiong.
Observer: Mr. Neville Ash (UNEP).
5. The Secretariat was represented by Mr. David Cooper (Acting Executive Secretary), Mr. Neil Pratt (SBI-4 Secretary), Ms. Wadzanayi Mandivenyi (Head, Biosafety Protocol Unit), Mr. Taukondjo Shikongo (Head, ABS Unit), Ms. Sakhile Silitshena (Senior Programme Management Officer); Mr. Olivier Rukundo (Senior Programme Management Officer), Mr. Worku Yifru (Senior Legal Officer), Ms. Inonge Kwenda Mweene (Legal Officer), Mr. David Ainsworth (Information Officer), Ms. Joyce Bwalya (Staff Assistant), Ms. Gisela Talamas (Programme Management Assistant), Ms. Imane Sednaoui (Staff Assistant), Ms. Li Gu (Programme Management Officer), and Ms. Christine Estrada (Senior Programme Management Assistant).

6. The main purpose of the Bureau meetings was to provide guidance to the presiding officers and Secretariat and on the preparations and the conduct of the meeting.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

7. The first Bureau meeting held on 20 May 2024 was opened at 10:00 a.m. GMT+3 by Mr. Ning Liu, who chaired the meeting on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Runqiu Huang, Minister of Ecology and Environment of China and COP 15 President. Noting the recent hybrid Bureau meeting held a week before, the Chair welcomed the Bureau members and thanked everyone in anticipation for their support and hard work in the days ahead to ensure a successful meeting.

8. The Chair informed the Bureau that China was launching its seventh national biodiversity strategy and action plan and had carried out many consultations nation-wide, including many workshops with many provinces. He also informed the Bureau that China would be signing, over the course of the week, the Memorandum of Understanding with Inger Andersen, the Executive Director of UNEP to establish the Kunming Biodiversity Fund. The Chair then invited the Acting Executive Secretary (AES) to provide welcoming remarks.

9. In his opening remarks, the Acting Executive Secretary thanked the COP Presidency for its leadership and reiterated his apologies to the Bureau for the late publishing of documents. The AES offered a brief overview of the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Technical, Technological and Scientific Advice (SBSTTA-25) that had just taken place the week before. He also briefly reported back on the digital sequencing information (DSI) meeting held just prior and he provided an overview of the agenda items to be addressed at SBI-4. He highlighted that despite the challenges that countries were facing, there was a lot of momentum, and everyone had to continue the hard work and enthusiasm to implement the ambitious framework. The Acting Executive Secretary concluded by assuring the Bureau members that the Secretariat was fully prepared to provide them with necessary assistance in their deliberations during the week.

ITEM 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

10. The Chair introduced the provisional agenda during the meeting of 20 May, and the Bureau adopted it as presented.

ITEM 3. ORGANIZATION OF WORK DURING SBI-4

11. Throughout the meetings, the Chair invited Mr. Chirra Achalender Reddy, Chair of SBI to preside over the discussions related to SBI-4. In the meeting of 20 May, the SBI Chair proposed that Ms. Angela Lozan from the Republic of Moldova serve as rapporteur of the meeting, which the Bureau accepted. He then provided the Bureau a general overview of how he planned to organize the work and agenda items, outlined the items he thought would need particular attention by the Bureau, including those that would perhaps require the establishment of contact groups or friends of the chair. Some of these included possible contact groups on resource mobilization, financial mechanism, planning, monitoring, reporting and review, among others. He also indicated the need for the Bureau to identify potential Chairs for the contact groups or friends of the Chair and invited the Bureau to consider and nominate candidates.

12. During the discussion on 20 May, the Bureau reiterated the importance of taking into consideration the challenges faced by small delegations vis a vis the large number of agenda items to cover for SBI-4. In this regard, the Bureau requested that contact group sessions on key issues, especially those on resource mobilization and on planning, monitoring, reporting and review, not be held in parallel throughout the meeting. The Bureau deliberated on ways to ensure all agenda items would get addressed and requested the SBI Chair and Secretariat to prepare a document on the organization of work for the meeting. On the appointment of potential Chairs for contact groups or friends of the Chair, the Bureau requested the SBI Chair and Secretariat to prepare an initial list of candidates

they could endorse. In response to these requests, the AES circulated the two documents to the Bureau later that evening.

13. In subsequent days, the Bureau received daily reports from the SBI Chair on the advances of negotiations on the agenda items of SBI-4. On 22 May, the SBI Chair announced the likely establishment of the contact group on planning, monitoring, reporting and review and requested the Bureau to endorse Ms. Gillian Guthrie from Jamaica and Ms. Carolina Caceres from Canada to be co-chairs of the contact group and to focus on the process of the global review of collective progress, reporting by non-state actors and the modus operandi of the open-ended forum for voluntary country review, which the Bureau accepted. The Bureau reiterated its request to ensure that no overlap of contact groups on key issues would take place and requested the timely upload of non-papers.

14. On 23 May, the SBI Chair announced the establishment of the contact group of resource mobilization under the leadership of Ms. Salima Kempenaer from Belgium and Mr. Shoni Munzhedzi from Republic of South Africa as co-chairs. On 24 May, a contact group, co-chaired initially by Martha Mphatso Kalemba of Malawi and Holly Kelley-Weil of the United Kingdom, was established to discuss the modalities of the global coordinating entity of the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism (Annex 1) and related parts of the recommendation on technical and scientific cooperation and capacity building. Upon the medical indisposition of Ms. Kalemba to continue as co-chair, the Bureau endorsed Mr. Jesus Guerra of Cuba to replace her as co-chair for the capacity building contact group. The Bureau discussed ways to tackle the slow pace of some discussions, including on resource mobilization.

15. On 26, 27, and 28, the Bureau continued to receive daily reports from the SBI Chair, as well as the co-chairs on the different contact groups established. A Friends of the Chair group on the review of effectiveness of the processes of the Convention was established, chaired by Joaquin Salzberg from Argentina. Due to the slow pace and the pending heavy workload left over the remaining few days, the Bureau deliberated on ways to be more efficient with time, including forming smaller consultation groups, moving to bracket text where there was clear disagreement to avoid long discussions, and once bracketed, avoiding re-opening discussions within that text. The Bureau also discussed how to tackle intersessional work, especially on resource mobilization.

16. On 27 May, the Bureau welcomed the brief participation in its meeting of representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities, including Mr. Ramson Karmushu of Africa, Ms. Abigail Kitma from Asia, Mr. John Cheechoo from Arctic, Ms. Yolanda Teran from Latin America and Caribbean, and Mr. Viachaslav Shardin from Central and Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia. The IPLC representatives thanked the Bureau for the opportunity to voice their main interests and concerns, which included the following points: (i) they informed the Bureau of the fruitful discussions held during an informal dialogue on the new programme of work for Article 8(j) on Saturday, 25 May. While acknowledging the importance of this dialogue, they stressed that such meetings should not be scheduled on a rest day, as delegates need time to rest due to the heavy agenda of the CBD meetings. (ii) they requested that the Bureau invite Contact Groups Co-chairs to give the floor to IPLC representatives during Contact Group sessions. (iii) They asked the Bureau and the Secretariat to double its efforts to ensure the participation of IPLC representatives at COP16. This includes increasing contributions to the Voluntary Fund, providing specific accommodation for IPLC representatives, and supporting their needs, such as the provision of yellow fever vaccine if required. (iv) They requested that a dedicated room for IPLC representatives be ensured at COP 16. (v) They thanked the Bureau and the Secretariat for their inclusion in the NBSAP dialogues but requested more representation in these dialogues. The Bureau welcomed their participation and feedback and reiterated its support.

17. Furthermore, also on 27 May, related to the issue of administrative and budgetary matters and proposal by some GRULAC countries to introduce a draft recommendation to COP regarding the future appointment of Executive Secretaries, the Bureau discussed a note presented to them by the Principal Legal Officer of UNEP, Mr. Stadler Trengove, providing a legal opinion on COP's authority regarding the selection and term of appointment of Executive Secretaries to the Convention, as well as a legal opinion on what "consultation" with the Bureau entailed. During the discussion, members of the Bureau expressed their dissatisfaction with the analysis provided

in the document, arguing it did not clarify what the role of the Bureau was regarding the appointment of an Executive Secretary. The Bureau also expressed frustration and concern over the lack of transparency that occurred in the process of the appointment of the Executive Secretary carried out by UNEP, noting the negative impacts that it had on the candidates and ultimately the work of the Convention. Members of the Bureau also indicated they would like to have a more prominent role of the Bureau in the future appointments of the Executive Secretaries. In this regard, the Bureau requested UNEP to provide in writing, evidence (date, time and acknowledgment of receipt) that their concerns throughout the process were transmitted to the Secretary General.

ITEM 4. UPDATE AND SELECTION OF REGIONAL AND/OR SUBREGIONAL TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION SUPPORT CENTERS

18. On 20 May, the Chair invited the AES to provide an overview of the work carried out by the Secretariat and the Informal Advisory Group (IAG) on Technical and Scientific Cooperation regarding the selection of regional and/or subregional technical and scientific cooperation (TSC) support centres. The AES reminded the Bureau that in decision 15/8, the COP had established a mechanism comprising a network of regional and/or subregional TSC centres to be coordinated by a global coordination entity, to assist Parties with the implementation of the GBF. He noted that the Bureau was invited to consider the report of the IAG as well as the compilation of views of Parties to select the most suitable entities and organizations to host the regional and/or subregional TSC centres. The AES highlighted that the success of this initiative would mainly depend on the facilitating role of the centres and in all of them working in a cooperative way. He also noted that much more work and progress would be needed in the future on this matter and would depend on funding.

19. The Secretariat then provided a presentation and overview of the relevant documents circulated to them prior to the meeting, including the summary of advice of the IAG, key points from the views submitted by Parties, and a proposed list of regional and/or subregional TSC support centres.

20. The Bureau expressed appreciation to the IAG and the Secretariat for the work carried out and highlighted the importance of this matter to support Parties with implementation. It also emphasized that adequate resource mobilization for the centres should be in place in order to ensure success. Over the course of the days, the Bureau refined the proposed list of regional and/or subregional TSC support centres to ensure that countries and regions felt properly represented and that countries would have the flexibility to decide which centre within their regions would be more suitable for them. In this regard, the Secretariat assured the Bureau that no country would be forced to be coordinated or supported by a certain institution, and those countries currently not covered would be given the opportunity to choose which centre they would like to work with. After a few iterations of the list, on 29 May the Bureau selected eighteen TSC support centres (list in Annex 1).

ITEM 5. PREPARATION FOR THE SECOND MEETING OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON BENEFIT-SHARING FROM THE USE OF DIGITAL SEQUENCE INFORMATION ON GENETIC RESOURCES

21. On 20 May the Chair invited the Co-Chairs of the Committee of the Whole of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources (WGDSI), Mphatso Kalemba (Malawi) and William Lockhart (United Kingdom), to provide the Bureau with an update on their work.

22. The Co-chairs briefed the Bureau on the intersessional work done and on the preparations for the second meeting of the Working Group to be held in Montreal in August. They informed the Bureau of an informal discussions on DSI that had been held on 19 May in Nairobi at the margins of SBSTTA-26 and SBI-4 where, amongst other things, draft studies had been presented to participants at the discussions. They requested the Bureau to encourage Parties to participate in the peer review, as this would be key for the meeting in August. The

peer review request had been published 3 days earlier in notification 2024-048. The Co-chairs also provided an overview of the annotations to the agenda of WGDSI-2 and noted that a revised version would be circulated to them based on the deliberations under item 3 of SBSTTA-26. The revised annotations to the WGDSI-2 agenda were then circulated to the Bureau on 22 May.

23. The Bureau expressed appreciation to the WGDSI Co-chairs for their work and their report and engaged in a brief discussion regarding the annotated agenda. After receiving the revised annotations, the Bureau approved the annotated agenda which the Secretariat would then proceed to publish. On logistics, the Bureau emphasized the importance of visa facilitation to Canada for delegates.

ITEM 6. UPDATE ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE UN BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE 2024 (COP 16) AND THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON IMPLEMENTATION (SBI-5)

24. On the meeting of 20 May the Chair invited His Excellency Pedro Leon, Ambassador of Colombia to Kenya and Ms. Ana Maria Hernandez, High-Level Adviser for COP 16, to make a presentation to the Bureau on COP 16 preparations. Ambassador Leon began by thanking the Secretariat and the Bureau for the support Colombia had received regarding the organization of the COP. He provided an overview of the main theme of “Peace with Nature” and invited the Parties, through the Bureau, to work as much as possible to adopt important decisions at COP. Ms. Hernandez provided an overview of the key logistical matters, including informing the Bureau that invitations to ministers for the High-Level Segment had been already dispatched through diplomatic channels. She provided updates regarding the hotel accommodation, visas and the activities that would take place in the green zone.

25. The Bureau, thanking the Government of Colombia for its hard work towards the preparations for COP 16, expressed its enthusiasm for the Conference to take place in Cali and discussed a few issues on logistics, including shuttle bus circuits, visa application deadlines, among others. On the issue of credentials, the Bureau requested that letters of support, where relevant, be issued as soon as possible to governments to ensure that credentials could be issued in a timely manner.

26. Regarding the agendas for COP 16 and the concurrent COP/MOPs, the Secretariat circulated provisional agendas for the meetings on 16 and 17 May and requested the Bureau consider and approve them during the SBI-4 meeting so that it could proceed to prepare the annotations, which would be informed by the outcomes of SBI-4 and WGDSI-2. After consulting with their respective regions, a member of the Bureau requested that the section-headings of the COP 16 agenda be removed and the GRULAC region requested they be given until 10 June to provide feedback on the COP 16 agenda.

ITEM 7. OTHER MATTERS

27. A number of other matters were raised at the various meetings of the Bureau as set out in the following paragraphs.

28. The representative of Eastern Europe raised an issue regarding the inability of some countries of the region to work under the Chairmanship of the Russian Federation of any negotiating group and requested the Bureau take this into consideration.

29. At the request of clarification from the Bureau, the Secretariat informed the Bureau that the newly appointed Executive Secretary would start her duties at the beginning of July 2024.

30. On 28 May, the Chair announced that the Minister of Environment of China and the Executive Director of UNEP had officially signed the agreement for the Kunming Biodiversity Fund. He informed the Bureau that China would be transferring a first tranche of \$7.5 million to the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office that would be

managing the funds. He provided a brief overview of how the Fund would operate and invited the Bureau to an information side-event that would share more details with delegates of SBI-4.

ITEM 8. CLOSURE OF THE MEETINGS

31. The first Bureau meeting held on 20 May 2024 was closed at 3:00 p.m. The last meeting held on 29 May 2024 was closed at 9:30 a.m.

ANNEX 1**Selected sub-regional technical and scientific cooperation support centres****Africa**

- Central African Forest Commission
- Ecological Monitoring Centre
- Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development
- Sahara and Sahel Observatory
- South African National Biodiversity Institute

Americas

- Alexander von Humboldt Biological Resources Research Institute
- Caribbean Community
- Central American Commission on Environment and Development

Asia

- ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity
- International Union for Conservation of Nature Asia Regional Office
- International Union for Conservation of Nature Regional Office for West Asia
- Nanjing Institute of Environmental Sciences
- Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia

Europe

- European Commission Joint Research Centre
- International Union for Conservation of Nature Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation
- International Union for Conservation of Nature Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia
- Royal Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences

Oceania

- Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme