



Convention on Biological Diversity

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**Meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the
Convention on Biological Diversity
Third meeting
15 May 2025
Videoconference**

**MINUTES OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE
PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

1. A meeting of the Bureau of the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties was held online by videoconference on 15 May 2025 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (GMT-4).

2. The purpose of the meeting was for the Bureau to review the potential items to be addressed by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) in 2026, as previously presented by the Secretariat at its meeting held on 22 April, and to decide whether two SBI meetings would be required in 2026. The Bureau also considered the possible scheduling of the meetings.

3. The meeting was attended online by the following members of the COP Bureau and substitutes:

COP 16 and COP-MOP 11 President Representative: Ms. Ana María García (Colombia);

COP-MOP 5 President: Ms. Nneka Nicholas (Antigua and Barbuda);

Africa: Ms. Joséphine Thérèse B. Eloundou (Cameroon); Mr. Jonas Anthé (Togo);

Asia and the Pacific: Mr. Bilal Qtishat (Jordan), Ms. Ilham Mohamed (Maldives);

Eastern European States: Ms. Adla Kahrić (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ms. Ditta Greguss (Hungary, substitute for Bosnia and Herzegovina for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol), Mr. Jakhongir Talipov (Uzbekistan);

Latin America and the Caribbean: Ms. Gillian Guthrie (Jamaica), Mr. Jeremiah Edmund (Saint Lucia substitute for Jamaica for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol), Ms. Corina Sarli (Argentina);

Western Europe and Others: Mr. Eric Schauls (Luxembourg), Mr. Gaute Hanssen (Norway);

Ex-officio: Ms. Clarissa Nina (Brazil), Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation; Mr. Jean Bruno Mikissa (Gabon), Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice;

Observers: Mr. Davit Knyazyan and Ms. Voskehat Grigoryan (Representatives from Armenia as COP 17 incoming hosts); and Mr. Neville Ash (United Nations Environment Programme);

COP Presidency: Ms. Catalina Haydar.

4. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was represented by Ms. Astrid Schomaker, Executive Secretary; Ms. Jihyun Lee, Director of the Science, Society and Sustainable Futures Division; Mr. Asad Naqvi, Director of the Implementation Support Division; Ms. Wadzanayi Mandivenyi, Head, Biosafety Unit; Mr. Taukondjo Shikongo, Head ABS Unit; Ms. Fumiko Nakao, Principal Coordination Officer, Japan Biodiversity Fund; Mr. Ide Ahmed, Head of Administration; Mr. Olivier Rukundo, Head of the Peoples and Biodiversity Unit; Ms. Jillian Campbell, Head of the Monitoring, Review and National Reporting Unit; Mr. Erie Tamale, Head of Capacity Building and Knowledge Management Unit; Ms. Inonge Mweene, Legal Officer for the Convention; Ms. Kathryn Garforth, Legal Officer for the Protocols; Ms. Maria Morgado, Special Assistant to the Executive Secretary; Mr. Nader Ibrahim, Conference Services Unit; and Ms. Christine Estrada, Programme Assistant.

ITEM 1. Opening of the Meeting

5. The meeting was opened and chaired at 9:35 a.m. (GMT-4) by the representative of the COP 16 President, Ms. Ana María García from Colombia. After a warm welcome to the Bureau and a brief summary of the discussion held in the previous meeting, the Chair highlighted the crucial role that SBI would play in ensuring successful implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). She invited the Bureau to make a decision on the number of open-ended meetings required for SBI in 2026, and after inviting all Bureau members to promote the upcoming International Day for Biological Diversity, invited the Executive Secretary to take the floor.

6. The Executive Secretary welcomed the Bureau members and expressed optimism that a decision would be made in the meeting so the Secretariat could begin official preparations. She noted that she would address some pending issues under agenda item 4, Other Matters.

ITEM 2. Adoption of the Agenda

7. The COP President invited the Bureau to adopt the provisional agenda for the meeting. After agreeing to include the discussion of the calendar of activities during the intersessional period and the impact on the Secretariat of UNEP's administrative decisions under agenda item 4, as raised by a member of the Bureau, the Chair adopted the agenda.

ITEM 3. Organization of Work of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation

8. The COP President invited the Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, Ms. Clarissa Nina from Brazil, to chair this agenda item. Referring back to the Bureau's discussion held on its last meeting of 22 April, the Chair of SBI noted that Bureau members should have had sufficient time to consult their regions and anticipated they were ready to make a decision on the number of meetings needed for SBI before COP17 during this meeting. She recognized the burden that a first meeting in early February 2026 would have on delegates who observed Ramadan and reiterated the constraints the Secretariat had in finding a balance between a cost-efficient venue elsewhere in the calendar and its workload during that period. The SBI Chair then highlighted that posting meeting documents in a timely manner would place a heavy burden on the Secretariat in 2026, therefore she noted that Parties would need to show some flexibility with these deadlines, in particular regarding the global review process. She then opened the floor and invited the Bureau for comments or questions.

9. After thanking the Chair of SBI and the Secretariat for the information provided, the Bureau held a productive discussion on the issue at hand. Regarding the volume of agenda items to be addressed by SBI, while the majority of Bureau members expressed favor in holding two meetings of SBI as that would alleviate the workload for the Parties, the Bureau requested that a clear division of agenda items should be done in a way to ensure that discussions on an issue should not be repeated at both meetings and recommendations made at SBI-6 should go, as much as possible, directly to the COP, without extending its consideration to SBI-7. On the proposed date and venue of a first meeting of SBI in early 2026, the Bureau expressed concern for the Muslim delegates observing the holy month of Ramadan and the difficulties Parties would have in relation to national reporting as the global deadline would be at the end of February and requested the Secretariat to consider alternate dates in April or May.

10. In response to some of the concerns and comments raised by the Bureau, both the SBI Chair and the Secretariat reassured the Bureau that the distribution of agenda items for a scenario with 2 meetings of SBI would be organized in such a way as to minimize repeating discussions. It was also noted that despite the proximity of an SBI-6 meeting to the global deadline on national reporting, SBI would still be in a good position to provide guidance on the global review process. Regarding the proposed date of a first SBI-6 to be held starting the week of 16 February in 2026, the Secretariat reiterated that it would not be in a position to service a meeting in the months of April or May due to the intense timeline for document preparations it faced for that year, including towards SBI-7, SBSTTA 28 and COP 17 itself. In addition, the Secretariat indicated that the timing of the afternoon sessions at SBI-6 could be slightly modified to accommodate a proper break for iftar and would ensure adequate meals would be provided in the delegates' cafeteria in FAO HQ.

11. After further exchange of views, the Bureau agreed to hold two meetings of SBI in 2026. The Bureau requested an additional week to make a decision regarding SBI-6 starting on the week of 16 February 2026 in Rome and requested the Secretariat to provide a list of potential agenda items under SBI-6 and SBI-7 to facilitate consultations with their regions in this regard. The Chair thanked the Bureau for their valuable inputs and indicated she would work with the Secretariat to provide further information. She proposed the Bureau hold a 2-day in-person retreat on 31st October and 1 November 2025 in Panama City, immediately following SB8J-1, to discuss on further details of the organization of work for these two meetings of SBI and relevant intersessional activities that will contribute to these meetings. The Bureau agreed to the proposal as long as significant preparatory work would be undertaken virtually ahead of the retreat, so that discussions can be efficient during those two days.

12. The COP President thanked the SBI Chair and the Secretariat for their efforts in preparing for the discussion and thanked the Bureau for their decision.

ITEM 4. Other Matters

13. Under this item, the Bureau requested an update be provided on the calendar of activities for the intersessional period and further clarification on how the UN liquidity crisis may affect the Convention and its planned work. In response, the Executive Secretary noted that although the Convention's budget and assessed contributions were separate from UNEP's regular budget, the Secretariat was administered by UNEP and therefore subject to policies the organization applied in order to adapt to the current financial situation, such as the issue of fixed-term limited appointments. A member of the Bureau noted that there was concern among Parties regarding the legality of administrative decisions made by UNEP in relation to what the COP has agreed to. The Executive Secretary indicated that the Secretariat would continue to be in close communication with UNEP on these issues.

14. Referring to the UN's liquidity crisis and the ongoing UN reform efforts (UN80), the Executive Secretary acknowledged that resulting uncertainties could impact staff morale and committed to keeping the Bureau informed on how discussions were progressing.

15. Regarding the calendar of activities for the intersessional period, the Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that the Secretariat had explored possible options for the development of an online calendar and invited the Bureau to a webinar on 28 May at 9:30am to present some of the interface proposals.

ITEM 8. Closure of the Meeting

16. The representative of the COP President thanked the Secretariat and the Bureau for the fruitful discussions and indicated the next meeting would take place in August virtually, unless a pressing matter arose before. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the meeting was closed at 12:00 p.m.
