



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**

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**Meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the  
Convention on Biological Diversity**

**Seventh meeting**

14 and 15 January 2026

Videoconference

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

1. A meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties was held online by videoconference on 14 and 15 January 2026 from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. (GMT-5) and 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. (GMT-5), respectively.

2. The main purpose of the meeting was for the Bureau to discuss preparations for the sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-6) that will take place in Rome from 16 to 19 February 2026.

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. Daniela Durán González (Colombia);

*COP-MOP 6 President:* Ms. Nneka Nicholas (Antigua and Barbuda) (15/01 only);

*Africa:* Ms. Joséphine Thérèse B. Eloundou (Cameroon); Mr. Jonas Anthé (Togo) (14/01 only);

*Asia and the Pacific:* Mr. Belal Qtishat (Jordan) and Mr. Midhath Rasheed (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);

*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 (14/01 only);

*Observers:* Ms. Catalina Haydar (COP 16 Presidency); Mr. Mher Mermaryan and Mr. Davit Manukyan (Representatives from Armenia as COP 17 incoming Presidency); Mr. Neville Ash (United Nations Environment Programme);

4. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was represented by Ms Astrid Schomaker, Executive Secretary, Ms. Jihyun Lee, Deputy Executive Secretary; Mr. Asad Naqvi, Director of the Implementation Support Division; Ms. Sakhile Silitshena, Director of the Science, Society and Sustainable Futures Division; Ms. Wadzanayi Mandivenyi, Head, Biosafety Unit; Mr. Taukondjo Shikongo, Head ABS Unit; Ms. Fumiko Nakao, Principal Coordination Officer, Japan Biodiversity Fund (a); Ms. Inonge Mweene, Senior Legal Officer; Ms. Martine Christin, Officer-in-Charge of Administration; Mr. Markus Lehmann, Head of the Biodiversity Economy Transformation and Innovation Unit; Mr. Olivier Rukundo, Head of the Peoples and Biodiversity Unit; Ms. Jillian Campbell, Head of the Monitoring, Review and National Reporting Unit; Ms. Elisabeth Bernhardt, Head of Communications; Ms. Maria Morgado, Special Assistant to the Executive Secretary; Mr. Samuel Shimba, Programme Officer; Ms. Christine Estrada, Senior Programme Assistant; and Ms. Maria Crespo, Administrative Assistant.

#### **ITEM 1. Opening of the Meeting**

5. The meeting was opened at 8:00 a.m. (GMT-5) and chaired by the representative of the COP 16 President, Ms. Daniela Durán González, Head of the Office for International Affairs of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia. After a warm welcome to the Bureau with good wishes for the New Year, the Chair recalled the work and progress made in the meetings in Panama and highlighted the importance of the issues to be discussed, particularly in preparation for SBI-6. She then invited the Executive Secretary, Ms. Astrid Schomaker, to deliver opening remarks.

6. The Executive Secretary also welcomed the Bureau members with new year greetings and expressed the Secretariat's commitment and motivation to support the Parties in the exciting and busy year ahead. The Executive Secretary provided updates to the Bureau regarding the timely posting of documents for SBI-6 meetings, recognizing and thanking donors who offered contributions to the BZ fund to support SBI-6 meeting and contributions to the BE fund to support the Resource Mobilization workshop just ahead of SBI-6. She thanked the Bureau for their inputs to the agendas and annotations of COP 17, CP COP-MOP12 and NP COP-MOP 6 that had been recirculated for final comments, if any. The Executive Secretary also encouraged the Bureau to finalize the list of potential co-chairs for the possible contact groups that may be established at SBI-6. She thanked the Bureau for their participation and support in the functional review process and noted that the report was made available for SBI-6. She also provided a brief overview of UNEA and the strong presence of MEAs. The Executive Secretary concluded by thanking the COP16 Presidency, the SBI Chair, and the Bureau for their guidance and reiterated the Secretariat's continuous support for the work ahead.

#### **ITEM 2. Adoption of the Agenda**

7. The Chair invited the Bureau to adopt the provisional agenda for the meeting. After a request to include a discussion of a possible workshop on Article 8(j) matters at the margins of an open-ended meeting of the Convention, and a discussion on the appointment of the Executive Secretary under "Other Matters", the agenda was adopted.

### **ITEM 3. Preparations for the sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-6)**

8. The Chair invited Ms. Clarissa Nina (Brazil), the Chair of SBI, to preside over the discussion under this item.

9. The SBI Chair thanked the Presidency and welcomed the Bureau members. She began by providing a strategic overview of preparations for SBI-6 and identifying key issues for the Bureau's consideration. These included time-management during SBI-6, implementation of the pilot modalities on early submission of statements for first readings, and the organization of contact groups, including the list of possible co-chairs for the contact groups that could be established. The SBI Chair then invited the Secretary of the meeting, Mr. Asad Naqvi, to provide the Bureau with an update on several aspects of the preparations and management of the meeting.

10. The Secretary of SBI firstly informed the Bureau that all pre-session documents for the meetings had been made available by the deadline but noted that the Secretariat had to issue a revision to the Financial Mechanism document just the night before to correct a few errors. He informed the Bureau that all information documents would also be provided well ahead of the meeting.

11. He also shared some options that the Bureau may consider for efficient time management during the meeting, based on the ideas shared during the Bureau retreat held in October 2025, in view of the heavy agenda for the four-day meeting. These options included not having opening statements from regions, major groups or Parties. He highlighted that the application of pilot modalities for the early submission of statements would help save time. He mentioned that the Secretariat would support the Chair and the Bureau to encourage Parties to provide succinct interventions during the sessions (including contact group meetings), considering also the importance of providing all delegates with the opportunity to intervene.

12. On the scenario note and organization of work, the Secretary proposed that after further consideration, the Bureau might like to decide that the afternoon sessions be held from 2:30pm to 5:30pm as this timing would help best those delegates observing Ramadan.

13. He concluded with a brief overview of the contact groups that will likely be established. In case many contact groups were established, there would be a need to hold some contact groups in parallel sessions due to the few time slots available. He mentioned that Item 3a on resource mobilization, 8 on ABS and 9 on effectiveness would likely need a contact group and potentially item 4 on planning, monitoring, review and reporting. The other items could likely be handled in plenary or through small group discussions. This means that there could be 3, potentially 4, possible contact groups. Based on the current organization of work, there are 4 time slots available for contact groups.

14. Before opening the floor for comments and suggestions to the Bureau, the SBI Chair expressed her support to adjust the afternoon session to accommodate the delegates observing Ramadan, to which there was no objection by the Bureau. She also appealed to the Bureau to request the Parties from their regions to keep their interventions short and focused, avoiding multiple interventions. The SBI Chair highlighted that there would likely be a need to have parallel contact group sessions and invited the Bureau to provide their views.

15. Expressing good wishes for the new year, members of the Bureau firstly thanked the SBI Chair and the Secretariat for the detailed update and hard work and expressed their appreciation for the timely posting of documents. The Bureau then engaged in an active discussion and exchange of ideas on how best to use of the limited time available, including considering applying some of the suggestions that were made during the Bureau's retreat in Panama. These suggestions included focusing the discussions on operative paragraphs, cutting off microphones after the allocated time, shortening the time for interventions

in plenary, and ensuring orderly conduct during the meetings, including providing fair opportunities for intervention by different delegates, amongst other suggestions.

16. Regarding holding parallel contact group sessions, some members of the Bureau noted that this posed a real issue for smaller delegations and risked the efficient discussion in plenary, as some might bring their concerns to plenary if they do not have the chance to participate in some of the contact groups. After a brief exchange, the SBI Chair proposed that if no sessions could be held in parallel, contact groups would have to be held during lunchtime, where delegates would have approximately 30 minutes for lunch only. The Bureau did not object to this proposal but requested that efforts be made to coordinate with the catering services at the cafeteria of the Food and Agriculture Organization to avoid long queues during lunchtime for delegates, if possible. The Bureau also considered holding consecutive contact group sessions in order to cover two items during the evening time slot.

17. On the effectiveness of the meeting, after a fruitful exchange, the Bureau agreed to reduce allocated time for interventions from regions, Parties and observers by 1 minute from the usual practice in plenary. For discussions in contact groups, some Bureau members suggested that the co-chairs be trained or encouraged to focus on operative paragraphs and to ensure short and balanced interventions by participants. The Bureau noted it could agree with other methods such as cutting off microphones in plenary, as long as delegations were made aware of the rules well in advance. Some members of the Bureau also emphasized the importance of giving sufficient time to Parties and major groups to intervene and suggested finding alternative ways of including statements of other observers, e.g. early submission of statements.

18. Due to a lack of time, the Bureau suspended its discussion on 14 January 2026 at 9:05am (GMT-5) and agreed to resume the discussion of the remaining items, mainly on the list of possible contact group co-chairs and pilot modalities, the following day.

19. The Bureau resumed its discussion the day after on 15 January 2026 at 7:00am (GMT-5). After opening the meeting, the COP President representative invited the SBI Chair to continue presiding over the discussion on SBI-6 preparations.

20. The SBI Chair thanked the COP Bureau Chair and presented the status of the selection of co-chairs for possible contact groups that could be established at SBI-6. She began by providing a summary of the discussions that had taken place in the informal meeting the Bureau held on 17 December 2025, indicating that there had been a suggestion by a Bureau member that the contact group on resource mobilization be co-chaired by Bureau members and that the discussions on resource mobilization and financial mechanism to be taken up together. She noted that other Bureau members preferred to keep these discussions separate for the moment. For the selection of co-chairs, it was emphasized that the main criteria for candidates should be expertise in the subject matter and experience, with regional and gender balance also as important considerations. The SBI Chair then provided some additional updates on the list of potential co-chairs, including suggestions submitted by the Bureau and screening out names of those candidates who were not nominated and had not registered for SBI-6.

21. During the discussions, some Bureau members emphasized the importance of subject matter knowledge and experience in moderating the discussions while others highlighted that if Bureau members co-chair contact groups, it could improve the flow of information between the Bureau and the contact group co-chairs.

22. After some deliberation, the Bureau agreed on the following pool of co-chairs for potential contact groups: Mr. Shonisani Munzhedzi (South Africa) and Ms. Ines Verleye (Belgium) for item 3a on Resource Mobilization; Ms. Xin Jing (China) and Ms. Inka Gnittke (Germany) for item 3b on Financial Mechanism; Ms. Sanne Kruid (Netherlands) and Ms. Gillian Guthrie (Jamaica) for item 4 on Planning, monitoring, reporting and review; Ms. Martha Mphatso Kalemba (Malawi) and Ms. Clarisse Siebert (Sweden) for item 7 on Cooperation; Ms. Merry Ciacci (EU) and Ms. Patience Gandiwa (Zimbabwe) for

item 8 on Specialized international access and benefit-sharing instruments; and Mr. Jonas Anthe (Togo) and Mr. Gaute Hanssen (Norway) for item 9 on Review of effectiveness of processes.

23. Regarding the pilot modalities for early submission of statements, the SBI Chair invited the Senior Legal Officer of the Secretariat, Ms. Inonge Mweene, to provide clarification to the Bureau on some procedural aspects. The Senior Legal Officer noted that in decisions 16/25, CP-11/5 and NP-5/10, the Bureau was mandated by the COP and COP-MOPs to explore the early submission of statements. The modalities for the early submission of statements align with the rules of procedure as follows: On rule 52, the early statements would be submitted in any of the six UN languages; on rule 53, the issue of interpretation did not arise as the early statements would be in writing; and on rule 54, statements were not official documents and were not translated, even during formal meetings. It was expected that the information document containing the list of statements submitted during the informal process would be posted in the morning of the first day of the meeting, before its opening. All statements published on the online portal would be available for viewing by all Parties and observers in advance of the meeting. Parties and observers that submitted statements in advance could also submit additional statements during the formal meeting if necessary. During the first reading of a particular agenda item, the Chair was expected to open the floor for statements by Parties. However, as stated in the modalities, the early submission of statements was intended to be a time-saving measure. Parties and observers that participated in the pilot should thus consider not delivering a detailed oral statement during the first reading. The modalities constituted an informal and voluntary process, to be implemented on a trial basis, which is not intended to pre-empt the decision of the Conference of the Parties.

24. The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for providing these clarifications and requested that they be sent by e-mail to all Bureau members as some of the members had left the meeting. It was noted that due to the political nature of the discussions, there might be some reluctance from Parties to submit their statements in advance. Some Bureau members also mentioned that it might be difficult to submit statements before regional groups have met. The SBI Chair acknowledged these issues but encouraged using the pilot modalities for SBI-6 to see what may need to be adapted for the future.

25. The SBI Chair then invited the Executive Secretary to provide an overview of the status of funding of the BZ Trust Fund and for SBI-6. The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that after the SB meetings in Panama, the Secretariat had received some funding for participation of delegates from developing countries for the meetings in 2026, in the order of nearly USD 820,000. Out of this, almost half was being used to fund delegates to SBI-6. Therefore, 78 out of 102 Parties that had requested funding were offered financial assistance. The Executive Secretary noted that this information had also been provided in a written note for the Bureau, with updates provided during her briefing.

26. The Executive Secretary emphasized that the financial situation of the BZ Fund remained dire with important meetings and COP still ahead. She shared her intention of continuing outreach to donors as part of her efforts to raise fund. She noted that given all the headwinds, insufficient funding is likely to continue to be an issue. She requested the Bureau's support in navigating this situation and to explore innovative approaches. In particular, she suggested that the Bureau could continue to encourage Parties in their regions, who are in a position to do so, to contribute to the BZ fund, and refrain from requesting support from BZ Fund for participation of delegates.

27. The SBI Chair thanked the Executive Secretary and the Bureau members for the fruitful discussion and handed back the meeting to the COP Bureau Chair.

#### **ITEM 4. Other Matters**

28. Under this agenda item, the Chair invited the Bureau to firstly discuss the idea of holding a workshop on Article 8(j) on the margins of a meeting in 2026, before COP17.

29. In the discussion, some Bureau members agreed that a workshop would create a good opportunity to hold informal discussions and information sessions on sensitive issues that were still in brackets coming from the Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j), should funding be made available. Given that organizing such a workshop around SBI-6 is not feasible, a suggestion was made to hold this workshop on the margins of SBI-7 in Nairobi.

30. Due to the lack of time, the Bureau could not fully engage in discussion regarding the process of appointment/reappointment of the Executive Secretary and it was agreed that the explanation provided via the meeting chat by the representative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) be circulated to the Bureau by email. The Chair then indicated that if needed, the Bureau may meet again at a later stage, ahead of SBI-6, to discuss this matter.

#### **ITEM 5. Closure of the meeting**

31. The Chair thanked the Secretariat and the Bureau for the discussions and wished all participants a good day and year ahead. The Chair closed the meeting at 8:30am (GMT-5) on 15 January 2026.

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