



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

Distr.: GENERAL
6 May 2026

Original: English

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

Ninth meeting
16 April 2026
Videoconference

**MINUTES OF THE NINTH 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 16 April 2026 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (EST).

2. The main purpose of the meeting was for the Bureau to reflect on the proceedings of the sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-6) that took place in Rome from 16 to 19 February 2026, including discussing the outcomes of the survey on the pilot modalities for the early submission of statements used in the meeting, as well as other measures applied for effective meeting management, and discuss strategies and approaches to best organize the work of the Bureau to further enhance the effectiveness of the forthcoming intergovernmental meetings of the Convention scheduled for this year.

3. The meeting was conducted online and attended 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 5 President: Ms. Nneka Nicholas (Antigua and Barbuda);

Africa: Ms. Joséphine Thérèse B. Eloundou (Cameroon);

Asia and the Pacific: Mr. Bilal Qtishat (Jordan);

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. Eliana Saissac (Argentina);

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

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

Observers: Ms. Catalina Haydar (COP 16 Presidency); Mr. Mher Margaryan, Mr. Davit Knyazyan, 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; Ms. Inonge Mweene, Senior Legal Officer; Ms. Lucy Halogo, Head of Administration; Mr. Olivier Rukundo, Head of the Peoples and Biodiversity Unit; Ms. Nada Matta, Head of Finance Unit; Ms. Maria Morgado, Special Assistant to the Executive Secretary; and Ms. Christine Estrada, Senior Programme Assistant.

ITEM 1. Opening of the Meeting

5. The meeting was opened at 9:00 a.m. (EST) 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, the Chair thanked the Bureau members for their efforts to coordinate their feedback to UNEP on the reappointment of the Executive Secretary and announced that Ms. Astrid Schomaker had been reappointed for another two years. The Chair congratulated the Executive Secretary and highlighted looking forward to continuing the close collaboration for the next couple of years. The Chair also congratulated the Chair of SBI, Ms. Clarissa Nina, for her leadership and excellent chairing of SBI-6.

6. The Executive Secretary also welcomed the Bureau members and thanked the Chair and the Bureau for their trust and support for her reappointment. She reiterated her commitment to continue serving the Parties and the biodiversity community and to continue pushing for increased ambition for the accelerated implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). The Executive Secretary then provided a few updates, including informing the Bureau of the visit of the Armenian delegation to the Secretariat in early March, a brief overview of her mission to the CMS COP in Brazil and informing the Bureau on the outcomes and discussions held during the meeting of the Steering Committee of the Cali Fund that had recently been held in South Africa. She also provided a brief update on the AHSTAG meeting for the preparation of the global report on collective progress in the implementation of the KMGBF that was held in Montreal and informed the Bureau that to date, 129 countries had submitted their seventh national report, and 90 countries had submitted revised NBSAPs. The Executive Secretary encouraged the Bureau members to continue working with their regions to submit as much information as they can.

ITEM 2. Adoption of the Agenda

7. The Chair invited the Bureau to adopt the provisional agenda for the meeting. There being no objections, the agenda was adopted.

ITEM 3. Reflections on the sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-6) in the context of effective meeting management, including the survey results on the pilot modalities of early submission of statements during SBI-6

8. The Chair informed the meeting that in the absence of the SBI Chair, she would moderate the discussion under this agenda item.

9. The Chair invited the Secretary of SBI, Mr. Asad Naqvi, to provide a brief overview on the strategies used to improve the efficiency of SBI-6.

10. The Secretary of SBI began by transmitting regrets from the SBI Chair as she could not attend the meeting. He then provided a brief presentation to the Bureau which summarized the strategies used for SBI-6 to improve efficiency of the meeting, some of which included the shortening of the length of documents, briefing webinars, costing of draft recommendations, time limits and use of bell, the early submission of statements and no side-events. The SBI Secretary also provided a brief overview of the substantive discussions and key lessons learned from some of the strategies put in place, including that some measures such as the early submission of statements might need to be improved, and the need to reconsider parallel contact groups.

11. The Bureau thanked the SBI Chair and Secretariat for implementing various measures to improve the efficiency of meetings. As general feedback, some Bureau members noted that although some of the measures were really appreciated, there is room for improvement. It was suggested that better planning of how to handle some difficult agenda items may result in a more efficient use of time. The use of informal settings was highly appreciated as well. The importance of a clear scenario note was emphasized so that all Parties and regions are on the same page and clear on the expectations for the meeting. Some Bureau members noted that the 90-minute slots for contact groups, in consecutive order, were not that effective and requested that parallel contact groups be considered for the future.

12. The Chair then invited the Senior Legal Officer of the Secretariat, Ms. Inonge Mweene, to present to the Bureau the results of the survey issued to Parties and other participants regarding the pilot modalities for the early submission of statements used during SBI-6.

13. Ms. Mweene provided a summary of the results of the survey, highlighting that the feedback was largely positive, with broad recognition that early submission applied for SBI-6 and SBSTTA-27 has proved its potential for significantly improving the meeting efficiency, facilitating focused discussions, and allowing earlier preparation of negotiated texts. However, she noted that there were also some concerns expressed by Parties, including on possible uneven participation, lateness of the deadline, lack of clarity on modalities, equity and language barriers, all which limited effectiveness of the modalities. She also provided a quick overview of the feedback from observers, whose main concern was the lack of clarity of Party support, among others. To facilitate the discussion, the Secretariat provided a list of questions to help Bureau members in undertaking consultations with their regions on ways to improve the modalities.

14. The Chair thanked the Secretariat for the presentation and invited the Bureau to provide comments or questions. The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for the feedback and discussed some important lessons learned and possible ways to improve the pilot modalities. Firstly, it was highlighted that it was very important for all Parties to well understand, and abide by, the rules in order to avoid inconsistent participation, and this included Parties refraining from taking the floor if they had submitted their statements in advance. The lateness of the deadline was noted, but it was also mentioned that some Parties did not feel comfortable with their statements being visible to everyone in advance. Some Bureau members noted that a few iterations might be required to get the modalities right. They were generally supportive to continuing with the early submission but noted that consistency and discipline were key. Some Bureau members highlighted the difficulty of going through various submissions from observers to identify the support from

Parties in a short period of time. It was also noted that some regions did not have the institutional structure to coordinate beforehand and therefore had difficulties submitting statements early. It was further noted that smaller delegations did not have time to review all submissions in advance which made it harder to understand positions of different Parties for negotiation, leading to uneven participation for some countries.

15. The Chair thanked the Bureau for the fruitful exchange and encouraged Bureau members to further consult their regions on what elements could be improved for SBI-7. Bureau members were also requested to provide the feedback from their regions on the modalities via email by 1 May 2026.

ITEM 4. Approaches to further increase effectiveness of the seventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, and to plan effective work by the Bureau in preparing for these meetings

16. For this agenda item, the Chair invited the Executive Secretary to provide a brief overview of the status of the BZ and VB Funds.

17. The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that the situation remained critical and that despite several Parties stepping up and making new pledges, there was still a shortfall of USD 3.5 million to cover the travel costs of eligible delegates to the meetings for the rest of the year, as per the budget decision. She noted, with appreciation, that the additional pledges were made by Denmark, Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The Executive Secretary noted that if the funding gap continued, the Secretariat could explore the possibility of having two days of regional consultations to help regions better coordinate their positions and allow for parallel contact groups to take place, as it does in other fora.

18. The Chair thanked the Executive Secretary for the update and then invited the Deputy Executive Secretary to provide a brief overview of how the organization of work for SBI-7 and COP17/CP COP-MOP12 and NP COP-MOP 6 would be prepared.

19. The Deputy Executive Secretary, Ms. Jihyun Lee, after inviting the Secretary of SBI to provide a quick overview of the preparations for SBI-7, made a brief presentation and proposal to the Bureau on how to work better together as we inch closer to the Nairobi meetings and COP. The Deputy Executive Secretary presented a planning table that highlighted key actions to be taken by the Bureau and their timelines in preparation for each meeting. Some of these actions included:

- a. frequent on-line Bureau meetings (tentatively proposed for mid June, mid July, early and late September, in addition to in-session Bureau meetings in Nairobi), noting that organizing a stand-alone in-person Bureau meeting in Montreal would not be feasible;
- b. identification of candidates for working group chairs and contact group co-chairs for COP to be undertaken in batches, rather than all at once;
- c. preparation of draft scenario notes based on analysis of specific agenda items, by effectively and closely working with the Bureau members, including through an informal Bureau task team that can support the Secretariat in preparing various draft documents for the Bureau's consideration and decision-making at its official meeting.
- d. engagement of the incoming COP17 Presidency team at the early planning stages for COP, including through an informal task team described above, together with the candidates for the working group chairs,
- e. informing the Bureau of the progress of activities through the SharePoint planning table that had been previously shared with the Bureau.

20. The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for the various updates and fully supported the proposal made by the Secretariat to ensure a closer and more dynamic consultation process, noting the willingness to work in an informal setting and to involve the COP17 incoming Presidency early on.

21. At the request of the Chair and the Bureau, the representatives of the Armenian COP17 Presidency provided a brief update on the preparations for the Leaders' Summit and High-Level Segment, mainly noting that they were closely working with the Secretariat to issue the invitations and concept notes as soon as possible. The Bureau noted with appreciation the commitment of the incoming host and the political importance of Leaders' Summit for biodiversity and the KMGBF.

22. The Chair thanked the Bureau and Secretariat for the valuable discussion and encouraged the regions to respond to notification [2026-036](#) and submit views on the modalities for a possible Party-led process to further improve the effectiveness of the processes and meetings under the Convention and its Protocols.

ITEM 5. Other Matters

23. Under this agenda item, the Chair invited the Executive Secretary to provide a few updates on the website migration and Swiss Bankers DSA cards.

24. The Executive Secretary briefly started by informing the Bureau that the Secretariat was actively engaging with China for a technical dialogue on the implementation of the KMGBF to take place in Kunming in early September and would inform the Bureau at a later stage, once additional information was available. Regarding the functional review, the Executive Secretary highlighted that the Secretariat had been implementing the recommendations of the functional review, including revising and updating the structural arrangements of different Divisions and units. She noted that these activities had been undertaken as guided by the COP decisions and SBI-6 recommendation and the implication of the functional review would be reflected in the budget documents for COP 17. An information session on the progress would be convened prior to SBI-7 as requested by SBI-6.

25. On the website migration, the Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that several technical bugs and performance issues surfaced during and after the launch of the new website, which required immediate attention. She noted that all technical issues were being systematically resolved, with a focus on performance, resilience and reliability. The new version of the website would undergo two weeks of comprehensive stress testing to identify and fix potential issues before it is re-launched. The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that an informal presentation on the website may be made to them soon, to obtain further feedback.

26. Regarding the Swiss Bankers cards, the Secretariat reiterated the issue, as provided in writing to the Bureau, of the Swiss Bankers closing all prepaid cards and returning any residual balances to UNEP without any prior consultation or notification, with the Secretariat having no control over the situation. The Executive Secretary expressed regret on the matter and assured the Bureau that the Secretariat would be following up closely with UNEP to proceed on the refund process and would be communicating updates to the delegates and Bureau as soon as possible.

27. At the invitation of the Chair, the Secretary of SBSTTA, Ms. Sakhile Silitshena, provided a quick recap on the issue of a possible amendment to the meeting agenda of SBI-7 arising from a recommendation from SBSTTA-27. The Secretary of SBSTTA noted that the Secretariat had prepared a draft approach and indicative timelines, focusing on alignment with KMGBF targets, identification of gaps and coherence across programmes of work, using a consistent evaluation methodology, which would be circulated to the Bureau for its consideration by early May. To address some of the concerns raised by the Bureau in writing, the Secretary of SBSTTA clarified that the multi-year programme of work would not be covered by SBI-7, but that it would be addressed only by COP17 through a document to be prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the Bureau, in line with decision 16/36.

28. Bureau members, however, did not express further views, beyond prior comments shared via email indicating concerns regarding the addition of an agenda item to SBI-7. It was therefore decided to proceed with posting the annotated agenda of the SBI-7, as was originally agreed by the Bureau.

29. The Chair thanked the Secretariat for the update and invited the representative of UNEP, Mr. Neville Ash, to provide an overview of the process of reappointment of the Executive Secretary. Mr. Ash provided a quick overview of the timeline of consultations and exchanges held between the Executive Director of UNEP and the Colombian COP President and thanked the Bureau for their support and coordination on the matter.

ITEM 6. Closure of the meeting

30. The Chair thanked the Secretariat and the Bureau for the discussions and noted that as an in-person meeting ahead of SBI-7 was unlikely, she would convene another videoconference meeting as soon as possible and would be confirming the date soon. The Chair closed the meeting at 11:10 (EST) on 16 April 2026.
