



Convention on Biological Diversity

BUREAU OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC,
TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE
Montreal, Canada
1 – 3 April 2025

MEETING MINUTES

INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting of the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) was attended by the following members of the Bureau: Mr. Jean Bruno Mikissa (Gabon, Chair), Mr. Mostafa Madbouhi (Morocco), Mr. Kenneth Uiseb (Namibia), Ms. Ruliyana Susanti (Indonesia), Mr. Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic), Mr. Francis O. Reyes Polanco (Dominican Republic), Ms. Paulina Stowhas Salinas (Chile), Ms. Ana Laura Mello Villamarin (Uruguay), Ms. Sanne Kruid (The Netherlands), Mr. Scott Wilson (Canada) and Ms. Jane Stratford (The United Kingdom). Mr. Md. Jahidul Kabir (Bangladesh) and Ms. Aria St. Louis (Grenada) attended via online platform, and apologies were received from Mr. Taulant Bino (Albania).

2. The meeting was opened by Ms. Astrid Schomaker (CBD Executive Secretary), supported by Ms. Jihyun Lee (SBSTTA Secretary), and was attended by Ms. Sakhile Silitshena (Head of Biodiversity, Science, Policy and Governance Unit), Ms. Jillian Campbell (Head of Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and Review Unit), Ms. Wadzanayi Mandivenyi (Head of Biosafety Protocol Unit), Mr. Olivier Rukundo (Head of People and Biodiversity Unit), Mr. Austein McLoughlin (Programme Management Officer for Risk Assessment and Synthetic Biology), Mr. Tristan Tyrrell (Programme Management Officer for Biodiversity and Climate Change and Drylands), Ms. Jamal Annagylyjova (Programme Management Officer for Ecosystem Restoration and Forest Biodiversity), Ms. Marianela Araya (Programme Management Officer for Invasive Alien Species and Biodiversity and Health), Ms. Monica Kobayashi (Programme Management Officer for Inland Waters and Agriculture Biodiversity), Mr. Joe Appiott (Programme Management Officer for Marine and Coastal and Island Biodiversity), Mr. Vincent Hulin (Expert on Mission), Mr. Q'Apaj Conde (Programme Management Officer for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities and Traditional Knowledge), Ms. Inonge Mweene (Legal Officer), Ms. Jacqueline Grekin (Programme Assistant) and Ms. Myriam Samya (Programme Assistant) of the CBD Secretariat.

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING

3. The meeting was opened at 9 a.m. local time (GMT -4) on Tuesday 1 April 2025 by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Chair of SBSTTA.

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4. In her opening remarks, Ms. Astrid Schomaker, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, welcomed the members of the Bureau to Montreal, noting it was the first time she had the privilege of hosting them at the Secretariat. She noted that the main business at hand was to plan for the 27th and 28th meetings of SBSTTA, which would consider a range of scientific and technical agenda items, including providing advice for the preparation of the global review of progress made in implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. She highlighted the importance of the body's mandate, to ensure that national efforts contribute effectively to the global achievement of the goals and targets of the Framework. Ms. Schomaker noted that the agenda of both SBSTTA 27, to be held in October 2025, and SBSTTA 28, tentatively scheduled for the summer of 2026, would be finalized at this meeting, and listed some possible agenda items for each of these meetings. She then emphasized the importance of the timely reception of funding to the delivery of the expected inputs to these SBSTTA processes, as well as timely responses from Parties when the Secretariat calls for submissions of information, views and nominations of experts. She acknowledged the importance of the leadership of the members in their respective regions and encouraged them to work closely with the Secretariat to ensure that all necessary preparatory activities are carried out effectively and on time. In closing, she wished participants a successful and productive meeting.

5. In his opening remarks, the Chair of SBSTTA, Mr. Jean Bruno Mikissa, expressed his appreciation to the Executive Secretary and her team for organizing this meeting efficiently, including by preparing the necessary documentation. He also extended his congratulations to all present on the successful conclusion of COP 16 in Rome. He noted that the collaborative spirit demonstrated in Rome was remarkable—a true testament to teamwork and trust-building among Parties, proving that, even when faced with significant differences, common ground can be found, and Parties can move forward together through dialogue and open exchange of views. He emphasized that this success reaffirms that multilateralism must be firmly rooted in science-based decision-making, and that this is where SBSTTA plays a critical role, as enshrined in the text of the Convention. Mr. Mikissa indicated that he looked forward to this opportunity to plan the work of SBSTTA for the biennium, in close collaboration with the Secretariat, and to gain a deeper understanding of upcoming intersessional activities, their planned implementation, and any potential challenges and opportunities along the way. He noted that discussions this week would help to identify how the Bureau can facilitate the preparatory process for the successful organization of the two upcoming SBSTTA meetings, including setting the meeting agenda for both. In conclusion, he shared his hope for a strengthened scientific and technical foundation necessary to advance collective efforts in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The Chair introduced the provisional agenda for the meeting. The SBSTTA Secretary recalled that meeting documents, including draft elements for the provisional agenda of SBSTTA 27 and SBSTTA 28, draft organization of the work for both meetings, and list of intersessional activities that contribute to the both meetings, had been circulated to assist with deliberations under items 3 and 4.

7. Bureau members suggested some topics that could be discussed under item 5 on Other Matters. It was also noted that the deliberations under items 3 and 4 would be undertaken in an iterative and integrated manner.

8. The Secretariat provided a presentation on the role and functions of the SBSTTA Bureau.

9. There being no objections, the agenda was adopted.

III. PREPARATIONS FOR THE TWENTY-SEVENTH MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE, INCLUDING INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES, AND

IV. PREPARATIONS FOR THE TWENTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE, INCLUDING INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

10. Under these items, the Bureau members, with the support of the Secretariat, reviewed the draft elements for the provisional agenda and the draft organization of work for the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth meetings of the SBSTTA, to be held in October 2025, in Panama City, Panama and July/August 2026 at a location to be decided, respectively.

11. The Chair invited the Secretariat to provide presentations to the Bureau members regarding the intersessional preparatory activities for SBSTTA 27 and 28, together with a tentative timeframe.

12. The draft elements for the provisional agenda and draft organization of work as well as an updated table of associated intersessional activities, were provided to the Bureau in advance of the meeting.

13. After exchanging their views and insights on the proposed agenda items for SBSTTA 27 and 28, the SBSTTA Bureau approved the provisional agenda for each of these meetings, as follows:

(a) SBSTTA 27:

- (i) Planning, monitoring, reporting and review: global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
- (ii) Matters related to the work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services;
- (iii) Biodiversity and climate change;
- (iv) Scientific and technical needs to support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework:
 - Strategic review and analysis of the programmes of work under the Convention in the context of the Framework;
 - Strategic review of and updates to the expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity;
 - Areas of potential further work;
- (v) Risk assessment and risk management;
- (vi) Invasive alien species;
- (vii) Biodiversity and agriculture;
- (viii) Biodiversity and health.

(b) SBSTTA 28:

- (i) Planning, monitoring, reporting and review;
 - Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
 - Monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
- (ii) Matters related to the work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services;
- (iii) Synthetic biology;
- (iv) Sustainable wildlife management;

- (v) Scientific and technical needs to support the implementation of KMGBF: Strategic review and updates to the programme of work on protected areas;
- (vi) Marine and coastal biodiversity.

14. Through extensive deliberations, the SBSTTA Bureau provided guidance and advice to the Secretariat in terms of finalizing the annotations to the provisional agenda for SBSTTA 27 and 28 and the respective organizations of work, undertaking various intersessional activities and preparing the meeting documents.

15. Some of the important discussion points, which apply to the consideration of agenda items for both SBSTTA 27 and 28, are summarized below:

- a. Priorities for the forthcoming meetings of SBSTTA should be given to the global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework as well as providing necessary scientific and technical tools and options that will enable Parties and partners to expedite their implementation activities;
- b. Bureau members looked for options to move agenda items foreseen for SBSTTA 28 forward to SBSTTA 27, so as to maximize time at SBSTTA 28 to focus on the global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
- c. The Bureau and the Secretariat reviewed the relevant COP decisions on each proposed agenda item for SBSTTA 27 and SBSTTA 28 to ensure their alignment. Some Bureau members also highlighted for each agenda item whether or not the relevant decisions were “subject to the availability of resources”, as well as whether or not requested actions were timebound and/or required for COP 17.
- d. It was noted that an information workshop on the findings of two recent assessments by the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) will be organized by the Secretariat in collaboration with the IPBES Secretariat on 18 October prior to the opening of SBSTTA 27.
- e. The Bureau also entered into a discussion about the strategic review and analysis of the Convention’s programmes of work, as requested in decisions 15/4 and 16/12. The Secretariat and Bureau members discussed various approaches to responding to these decisions. It was clarified that a strategic analysis and review of the Convention’s set of programmes of work as a whole needs to be completed before entering into a process of updating individual programmes of work. However, given that an intersessional process had already been initiated to update the extended programme of work on forest biodiversity, it was agreed to leave this on the agenda for SBSTTA 27 as well as the review and updating of the protected areas programme of work on the agenda for SBSTTA 28. The results of the strategic analysis and review of the Convention’s programmes of work at SBSTTA 27 would help clarify the path forward on updating individual programme of work in the future. The Bureau asked Mr. Kabir, Ms. Stratford and Mr. Wilson to develop this agenda item with the Secretariat.
- f. Bureau members also noted that consideration of the items on biodiversity and climate change and on risk assessment and risk management may require more time at SBSTTA 27, as will consideration of the items on synthetic biology and sustainable wildlife management at SBSTTA 28.

- g. Bureau members noted that items on invasive alien species and biodiversity and health would require only taking note of the progress, and emphasized that extensive negotiations on these items should be avoided, so that the time for consideration by SBSTTA can be allocated to other items for consideration that may require more time.
 - h. Furthermore, the SBSTTA Bureau noted some challenges in undertaking the work proposed for its 27th and 28th meetings. For example:
 - The Bureau needs to find ways to manage the heavy workload for both SBSTTA 27 and 28, including improving the working modalities of SBSTTA. It was suggested that statements could be submitted prior to the opening of the SBSTTA meeting as a time-saving measure, as per decision 16/25. Bureau members suggested the possibility of applying this modality to one or two agenda items on trial basis at SBSTTA 27 and requested that the Secretariat prepare draft options to enable a trial on this modality for SBSTTA 27, to be further discussed by the Bureau.
 - The Bureau also noted the Secretariat's urgent need to identify available financial resources to support intersessional activities;
 - The Bureau noted the urgent need to facilitate active and timely engagement of Parties in their respective regions, by responding to the notifications from the Secretariat, e.g., submitting nominations for ad hoc scientific and technical advisory groups (AHSTAGs) or on-line forums, submitting views and information.
16. Regarding the organization of work for forthcoming meetings of the SBSTTA, the Bureau members recalled paragraph 33 of decision 16/28 and noted that no more than two parallel contact groups would be established accordingly. Bureau members also shared views on possible items that may require discussion in contact groups.
17. Recalling paragraph 8 of decision 16/25, the Bureau agreed to identify, well in advance of the meetings, a pool of representatives from Parties to serve as co-chairs of contact groups or facilitators of friends of the Chair groups for the forthcoming meetings of SBSTTA on the basis of their skills in building trust and consensus among those with differing views and their demonstrated knowledge of the issues to be addressed by the groups. For SBSTTA 27, the Bureau decided to work on this matter at its next meeting, to be held in late June 2025.
18. Bureau members highlighted that COP, in paragraph 9 of decision 16/25, requested the Executive Secretary to facilitate an orientation or training session ahead of the meetings for those identified as co-chairs of contact groups in order to familiarize them with the rules of procedure and established practices, techniques and skills in the area of managing multilateral negotiations and facilitating consensus, with a view to ensuring ethical approaches and impartiality, in accordance with United Nations standards and principles, including through United Nations-based training modules. The Bureau asked Ms. Stratford and Mr. Wilson to work with the Secretariat on options to implement this initiative, to be further discussed at the next SBSTTA Bureau meeting in June 2025.
19. Recalling paragraph 14 of decision 16/25, the Bureau will publish, with the support of the Secretariat, scenario notes for each of the forthcoming meetings of the SBSTTA at strategic points in the process.
20. Recalling paragraph 7 of decision 16/25, the Bureau emphasized that no session be scheduled beyond 13 hours from the start of the first open-ended meeting of the day, at the forthcoming meetings of the SBSTTA.

21. In view of the priorities identified for both SBSTTA meetings, it was emphasized that the pre-session documents and draft recommendations should be prepared in a timely manner, at least six weeks before the opening of the respective meeting, in accordance with paragraph 13 (a) of decision 16/25.

22. In view of the above-noted timeline, the Bureau members also noted that the Secretariat has limited time to secure necessary financial resources and arrange intersessional activities (e.g., organizing meetings, commissioning consultancies, receiving submissions, facilitating peer-review processes) that need to be finalized by the end of June 2025, in order to produce meeting documents in a timely manner. Some Bureau members responded by highlighting that there should be more transparency when discussing the CBD budgets and the financial implications of each of the draft proposed decisions, including those presented to and recommended by SBSTTA, as Parties discuss them at CBD meetings, so as to properly consider and make decisions that take into account any financial needs.

23. Based on the discussion at this Bureau meeting and building on the table of intersessional activities for both meetings of SBSTTA circulated to the Bureau members, the Secretariat was requested to prepare a clear schedule for the preparation for SBSTTA 27, including through updating the table circulated before this meeting, and also possibly for SBSTTA 28 with currently available information, and make it available to the Bureau members, in accordance with paragraph 13 (b) of decision 16/25, by April 30, 2025. Some Bureau members also highlighted paragraph 13 (c) of decision 16/25 to remind the SBSTTA Chair and the Secretariat to provide national focal points at the end of each year, starting in 2024, with a calendar of activities and actions expected in the course of the following year, so as to rationalize intersessional activities and facilitate workflow management.

V. OTHER MATTERS

24. The Bureau members addressed the following matters under this item:

- a. Bureau meeting schedule until SBSTTA 27, agreeing to including online meetings in June and September as well as an in-person meeting on 19 October and in-session daily meetings during SBSTTA 27, from 21 – 24 October;
- b. Agreed on the timing of the reception event for SBSTTA 27, to be organized in the evening of the first day of the meeting, subject to funding availability;
- c. Shared good practices amongst the Bureau members in engaging Parties in their respective regions during the intersessional period, via e-mail, mobile phone group chats or regular meetings;
- d. Discussed the potential to organize regional briefings to enhance the awareness of Party representatives on the preparation for SBSTTA meetings;
- e. Discussed how to enhance the scientific and technical nature of SBSTTA discussions, including through further strengthening of cooperation between the CBD Secretariat and the IPBES Secretariat, amongst other options. Bureau asked Ms. Kruid, Ms. Salinas, Ms. Susanti and Mr. Plesnik to work with the Secretariat to further develop ideas in time for the June 2024 Bureau meeting.
- f. Discussed options for the schedule for online forums and webinars, and potential contribution by some Bureau members in moderating the discussion. It was noted that Ms. Villamarin would facilitate the online forum on risk assessment and risk management, Ms. Salinas would help facilitate the online forum on invasive alien species and Mr. Uiseb would moderate the online forum on synthetic biology.
- g. Bureau members were reminded that they would be needed in April 2025 to quickly review and agree upon the selection of the experts for the Ad Hoc Scientific and Technical Advisory Group for the Preparation of the Global Report on Collective Progress in the Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.. Bureau members were advised that they would receive a package of information and a proposal from the Secretariat to consider.

- h. Discussed how to better sensitize newly elected national focal points for SBSTTA at both national level and through the Secretariat's website;
 - i. Discussed organizing a potential side event by the Bureau with strategic objectives in line with the respective agenda items of the SBSTTA. Bureau agreed to further discuss possible options at its June 2025 meeting;
 - j. Presentation by one Bureau member on relevant national initiatives in support of the global review of progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
 - k. Discussed the more active role that SBSTTA Bureau members could play in supporting the preparation of SBSTTA meetings. Bureau members presented what agenda items they would be interested in supporting, and the Chair and Secretariat was urged by Bureau members to use them as resources, including as potential contact group co-chairs.
25. A list of follow-up activities was prepared and annexed to this document.

VI. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

26. The meeting concluded with appreciative remarks by the SBSTTA Chair towards Bureau members for their active participation and willingness to support the Secretariat in organizing the forthcoming meetings of SBSTTA. Emphasis was placed on teamwork, mutual support and the importance of maintaining a balanced, neutral approach in all activities. Bureau members were encouraged to remain engaged and proactive in their roles to ensure the success of upcoming SBSTTA 27 and 28 meetings and related intersessional activities.

27. The Bureau meeting closed at 3:30 p.m. local time (GMT -4) on Thursday 3 April 2025.

Annex. List of follow-up activities

Task	Actors	Due Date	Notes
Weekly circulation of notifications relevant to SBSTTA to Bureau members	Secretariat		Ongoing
Facilitating nominations for online forum on invasive alien species	Bureau Members	4/7/2025	Time sensitive
Moderating online forum on invasive alien species	Ms. Salinas	4/7/2025	Time sensitive
Facilitating AHSTAG nominations	Bureau Members	4/11/2025	Urgent
Reviewing the list of selected nominees for the AHSTAG	Bureau Members	4/18/2025	Urgent
Facilitating nominations for online forum on risk assessment and risk management	Bureau Members	4/21/2025	Time sensitive
Moderating online forum on risk assessment and risk management	Ms. Villamarin	4/21/2025	Time sensitive
Facilitating strategic review of PoWs	Mr. Wilson, Ms. Stratford, Ms. Kruid, Mr. Kabir and any other Bureau members	4/30/2025	Time sensitive
Share list and emails of NFPs in the region	Secretariat	4/30/2025	Time sensitive
SBSTTA preparation plan and inputs to overall calendar	Secretariat	4/30/2025	Time sensitive
Preparing draft modalities for expediting first reading for review by the Bureau members	Secretariat	5/15/2025	Time sensitive
Preparing pool of potential co-chairs for contact groups	Bureau members, Secretariat	5/31/2025	Time sensitive

Information for new SBSTTA focal points on the website	Secretariat	5/31/2025	Time sensitive
Side event planning, to be organized by the Bureau	Bureau members	May – June 2025	Time sensitive
Regional briefings for SBSTTA 27 and 28	Bureau members, Secretariat	6/30/2025	Ongoing
Preparing options to enhance Science for SBSTTA 27	Ms. Kruid, , Ms. Salinas, Ms. Susanti, Mr. Plesnik, Secretariat	Before next Bureau meeting in June 2025	Ongoing
SBSTTA Bureau online meeting in June	Bureau members, Secretariat	June 2025	Time sensitive
Identifying co-chairs for contact groups	Bureau members, Secretariat	At the next Bureau meeting in June 2025	Time sensitive
Facilitating training of potential contact group co-chairs	Ms. Stratford, Mr. Wilson, Secretariat	8/31/2025	Time sensitive
Moderating online forum on synthetic biology	Mr. Uiseb	Q4 2025	Time sensitive
SBSTTA Bureau online meeting in September	Bureau members, Secretariat	Sept 2025	Time sensitive
Posting of SBSTTA pre-session documents	Secretariat	9/8/2025	Time sensitive
