



Press Release

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Central role of Traditional Knowledge in protection and sustainable use of biodiversity is reaffirmed at United Nations Biodiversity Convention meetings in Geneva, Switzerland.

Geneva 17 November 2023. A weeklong meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity affirmed the need for further enhancing the role and participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the work of the Convention and the implementation of its [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#).

The twelfth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Inter-Sessional Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the Convention closed on November 16 in Geneva.

The Working Group took up the call by governments made in Montreal, Canada at the United Nations Biodiversity Conference in December of 2022, to develop a new programme of work on provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity related to indigenous peoples and local communities that will align with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Delegates made progress, but more discussions will be needed at the upcoming meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16), to be held in 2024.

“This week we took significant steps towards an inclusive implementation of the Framework as governments fully engaged with indigenous peoples and local communities, towards taking action in support of implementation. This meeting has been a catalyst to accelerate the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.” David Cooper, Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Under the Convention on Biological Diversity, traditional knowledge, the innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities, are central to meeting the objectives of the Convention, for the achievement of conservation, sustainable use, equitable sharing of benefits, the implementation of the Framework, and the three objectives of the Convention.

The Working Group this week looked at how these provisions and the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities could be further expanded across the work of the Convention and to reprioritize elements and tasks to ensure that it is supportive of human rights-based and gender-based approaches, coherent with the goals and targets of the Framework.

The review of the programme of work for Article 8(j) and related provisions developed detailed proposals but further discussions are needed at COP 16 to finalise a new programme of work related to indigenous peoples and local communities for adoption.



The Working Group provided updates to the knowledge management component of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, adding elements related to the role of traditional knowledge and its relationship to science and other knowledge systems. This update will be reviewed by the next meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation that will meet in May 2024, in Nairobi.

The Working Group also looked at options for institutional arrangements covering Article 8(j) and other provisions of the Convention, and their modus operandi, including the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the work of the Convention.

Options that were considered included continuing the Working Group with a revised mandate focused on the Global Biodiversity Framework, establishing a permanent subsidiary body on Article 8(j) and related provisions with a mandate to provide advice to the Conference of the Parties, and applying the enhanced participation mechanisms already used by the Working Group for the participation of representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities in other subsidiary bodies of the Convention, such as the scientific (SBSTTA) and implementation (SBI) bodies when addressing matters of direct relevance to those groups.

The meeting did not reach a conclusion on these arrangements, and discussions will be continued at COP 16.

Final Documents for the meeting can found at: <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/geneva-2023/wg8j-12/documents>

About the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, and entering into force in December 1993, the CBD is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources.

With 196 Parties, the CBD has near universal participation among countries. The CBD seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous peoples and local communities, youth, women, NGOs, sub-national actors and the business community.

The programme of work on [Article 8\(j\)](#) and related provisions is the main instrument that Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity have given themselves to achieve the commitments in Article 8(j) to respect, preserve and maintain the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, to promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge. The Conference of the Parties established a working group, open to all Parties, and indigenous peoples and local communities' representatives, specifically to address the implementation of Article 8 (j) and related provisions of the CBD.

The [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework \(GBF\)](#) was adopted during the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) following a four year consultation and negotiation process. This historic Framework, which supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and builds on the Convention's previous Strategic Plans, sets out an ambitious pathway to reach the global vision of a world living in harmony with nature by 2050. Among the Framework's key elements are 4 goals for 2050 and 23 targets for 2030.

The [Nagoya Protocol](#) entered into force 12 October 2014. It provides a transparent legal framework for the effective implementation of one of the three objectives of the CBD: the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. The Nagoya Protocol also covers traditional knowledge (TK) associated with genetic resources. More information on the Nagoya Protocol and traditional knowledge can be found on the [Traditional Knowledge](#) programme of work webpage.

The [Cartagena Protocol](#), entered into force 11 September 2003. is an international agreement which aims to ensure the safe handling, transport and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health.

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