



**Transcript: Opening Press Conference for the 27th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on
Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA)
20 October 2025
Panama City, Panama**

Lis Bernhardt

Welcome to the opening press conference for the 27th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Today's press conference follows an online briefing we held a few weeks ago, on September 29. The recording is available under the *Media* tab on the official SBSTTA-27 website.

My name is Lis Mullin Bernhardt, and I'm the new Head of Communications at the CBD Secretariat. I'm joined today by our Executive Secretary, Astrid Schomaker, along with colleagues leading processes related to the global review and SBSTTA-27.

Later this morning, at 10 a.m., CBD's 196 Parties will open SBSTTA-27 in plenary. The meetings will continue through Friday, October 24. All plenary sessions and press briefings are being broadcast live on UN Web TV.

Next week, also here in Panama, we will hold the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) and Other Provisions Related to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (SB8J-1), from October 27 to 30. We'll host a separate opening press conference for that meeting on Monday, October 27, at 9 a.m.

Our Executive Secretary will now offer opening remarks and set the scene for this week's meeting — part of the road toward COP 17, which will take place one year from now, in October 2026, in Yerevan, Armenia.

Astrid Schomaker

Thank you all for being here today and for your interest in one of the most vital topics of our time — the life-support systems of our planet and the rich web of biodiversity that sustains us all.

As Lis mentioned, SBSTTA-27 begins today and will be followed next week by the inaugural SB8J-1 meeting. Together, these two meetings are key milestones on the road to next year's COP in Armenia, where Parties will conduct the first *global review of progress* in implementing the



Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). This framework is our collective blueprint for halting and reversing biodiversity loss and living in harmony with nature.

We are deeply grateful to the Government of Panama for hosting these important discussions and for their ongoing commitment to the CBD, its Protocols, and related processes. Panama is also taking meaningful steps in its own implementation of the Convention — notably by merging biodiversity and climate change reports into a single *Nature Pledge*. You’ll likely hear more about this throughout the meetings.

Now, turning to the work ahead: the intergovernmental negotiations here will address key themes for implementing the KMGBF and preparing for the global review.

First, Parties will aim to reach agreement on the scientific inputs from SBSTTA into the *Global Report on Collective Progress*, including its annotated outline, developed by an advisory group. This is vital to ensure that the global review is grounded in strong, science-based work.

Parties will also discuss advancing coherent approaches to addressing biodiversity and climate change, assessing risks related to living modified organisms, tackling invasive alien species, and strengthening links between biodiversity and health.

The agenda also includes advancing the Soil Biodiversity Action Plan and cooperation on pollinators. Later today, we’ll celebrate the 25th anniversary of the International Pollinator Initiative, at a side event hosted by Mexico and FAO.

In addition, SBSTTA will consider knowledge products from IPBES — the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services — including two major assessments: one on the *biodiversity nexus* and another on *transformative change*.

All these topics and more are covered in the annotated agenda, available on the CBD website. We encourage you to review it for a full understanding of the issues SBSTTA-27 will tackle over the next few days.

By Friday, we hope the outcomes will build momentum toward achieving the 23 targets of the KMGBF — the backbone of our collective effort to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.

Fulfilling the promise of the KMGBF requires engagement from everyone — across all sectors and walks of life — including you, the media. We thank you for your work in helping share why biodiversity matters, and we remain available to clarify or explain any part of this important process.

Lis Bernhardt

Thank you so much, Astrid.

While we wait for questions from the room and online, I’ll start us off with one for our colleague

Jillian:

Jillian, can you give us an example of how the global report being discussed this week will help show whether the world is truly *bending the curve* on biodiversity loss?

Jillian Campbell, CBD Secretariat

Thank you, Lis.

The Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, adopted at COP 15, represents the world’s shared ambition for biodiversity action. While the framework sets global goals, implementation happens at the national level.

When the KMGBF was adopted, Parties established a system for a midterm and final review to assess progress toward its global targets and goals. This mechanism includes examining national targets, the actions taken to achieve them, and indicators used to track progress.

All this information will feed into a *Global Report* that will inform discussions at COP 17. This week’s meeting is focused on shaping that report — what it will look like, how it will integrate different data sources, and how to ensure its scientific integrity.

We’re already seeing some progress, particularly in the setting of national targets. Information document INF/5 provides an analysis of this progress, while the annotated outline for the Global Report is available among the pre-session documents.

Lis Bernhardt

Thank you, Jillian.

My next question is for **Sakhile**. SBSTTA deals with the science and technology side of the Convention. How do we ensure that this science translates into real benefits for people and communities?

Sakhile Silitshena

Thank you, Lis.

SBSTTA was created to provide scientific, technical, and technological advice under the Convention. While it’s primarily a scientific body, its recommendations often have direct policy implications — helping countries translate science into policy, and policy into action.

In some cases, recommendations from SBSTTA are further developed by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, which turns them into concrete steps for national-level action.

For example, several agenda items this week could lead to real, tangible benefits if implemented in full — such as work on soil biodiversity, which underpins so many ecosystem functions, and voluntary guidelines on how to use ecosystems and biodiversity services to help people adapt to and mitigate climate change.

These efforts show how science, through SBSTTA, can directly inform better decisions — and ultimately improve lives.
