

**Statement by Astrid Schomaker, Executive Secretary of the Convention on
Biological Diversity**

**International Mother Earth Day
22 April 2025**

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Today is International Mother Earth Day: an opportunity to reflect on nature and the many ways in which it is perceived and celebrated by people around the world.

Mother Earth is life-giving, nurturing, complex and beautiful.

Indigenous peoples and local communities, including youth, women and children, have lived in harmony with Mother Earth for millennia. But today they are among those most affected by the environmental crises afflicting the planet.

The practices and innovations of indigenous peoples and local communities constitute a wealth of traditional knowledge that is crucial for global efforts to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and to address climate change.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework—the KMGBF, adopted at COP 15 in Montreal in December 2022— acknowledges indigenous peoples and local communities as custodians of biodiversity and as partners in its conservation, restoration and sustainable use.

The KMGBF has four overarching goals: protect and restore nature, prosper with nature, share benefits fairly, and invest and collaborate for nature.

At the recently concluded COP 16, *La COP de la gente*, the Parties adopted a new subsidiary body on Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and other provisions that will elevate the role and contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities to new heights.

COP 16 also adopted a new and ambitious Programme of Work aligned with the KMGBF with the aim of advancing the implementation of Article 8(j) and related provisions of the Convention.

The full implementation of the 23 action targets of the KMGBF by 2030, through a global mosaic of national and local whole-of-government, whole-of-society endeavors, will take the world closer to living in harmony with nature.

We owe this to nature and to all people on Earth.

Today and every day, let us reflect on and act for Mother Earth: humanity's precious common home and the foundation of our common future.