



**Statement by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity,
Astrid Schomaker, at the opening of the twenty-seventh meeting of the Subsidiary
Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice**

Panama City
20 October 2025

Distinguished delegates,

I am delighted to welcome you to the twenty-seventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.

First and foremost, I wish to express our sincere gratitude to His Excellency José Raúl Mulino, President of Panama, His Excellency Juan Carlos Navarro, Minister of Environment of Panama, Gloria de León, Administrator-General of the Tourism Authority of Panama, and the people of Panama for their generous hospitality in hosting us in this beautiful city. Special thanks also go to PROMTUR Panamá

I believe I speak for all of us when I say that the commitment of our hosts to facilitating our discussions is deeply appreciated and should inspire our work.

I also wish to thank the Governments of Canada, Finland, Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland for their generous financial support that has enabled the participation of delegates from 92 Parties. Not all delegates who applied for funding could be supported for this event.

Inclusivity and broadest possible representation matter for our global endeavour. We thus call upon all countries in a position to do so, including new donors, to do their utmost as we move towards 2026 with three meetings of subsidiary bodies, in addition, of course, to the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol and the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol.

Dear delegates,

We are convening at a critical time. We are almost three years into the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

These years have not been easy. While recognition of the Framework is steadily growing, determination is not always keeping pace, deadlines have been missed, and resource mobilization remains challenging.

Our task this week is thus to ensure that the ambition of the Framework is matched by rigorous and actionable scientific and technical advice to drive and accelerate implementation.

To achieve this, we must be exceptionally efficient. I wish to acknowledge the considerable work that lies ahead of us, as well as the constraints currently faced by our community, especially small delegations.

We owe it to them to make the most of the time available to us here in Panama City.

In this context, I would like to express appreciation for the efforts made to introduce pilot modalities for the early submission of statements. It is my sincere hope that this experience will contribute to the identification of more efficient and inclusive ways of working, as we move forward.

The success of our meeting will depend on our collective commitment to focused, constructive and pragmatic engagement.

We have a heavy agenda ahead. I want to highlight two central items that will define the path to the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in Yerevan.

For the global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Framework, the work of the Subsidiary Body to provide the scientific and technical basis for the global report on collective progress is vital. It is how we will measure our trajectory, identify gaps and maintain the confidence of the international community in our collective ability to achieve the 2050 vision for biodiversity.

Since the adoption of the Framework, Parties and stakeholders have been working diligently to translate global ambition into national action. I am pleased to note that progress is being made.

Fifty-five Parties have submitted updated or revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans, incorporating national targets.

To date, a total of 3,300 national targets have been submitted by 140 Parties, to align with the Framework.

These efforts demonstrate the resolve of Governments to make the Framework a living instrument, guiding policies and actions that address the drivers of biodiversity loss, restore ecosystems and ensure that biodiversity continues to provide benefits essential to people and the planet. But the numbers also indicate that we are not on track.

As we strive to become more impactful, we must acknowledge that biodiversity loss and climate change are the defining challenges of our era and must be tackled in tandem. We must, therefore, accelerate our discussions on synergies and integrated action.

The Framework provides the mandate; the Subsidiary Body must provide the evidence-based guidance to ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, restoration and sustainable use and climate mitigation and adaptation are mutually reinforcing, not conflicting, efforts.

We cannot solve one crisis without addressing the other. In these and many other areas, the work of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services is tremendously important, and the implications of its latest assessments must be reviewed carefully.

Beyond those core items, your expertise is equally essential across the entire agenda:

You must also provide clear guidance on the scientific and technical needs to support the implementation of the Framework, including through the crucial strategic review of our programmes of work and the expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity, and the consideration of new areas of work under the Convention.

You need to advance the critical work on the scientific and technical basis for the risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms, which underpins responsible innovation under the Convention and its Protocols.

Your recommendations on invasive alien species must strengthen our ability to prevent and control one of the most significant drivers of biodiversity loss.

Last, your recommendations on soil biodiversity and on biodiversity and health will help us to advance in areas that are key for the achievement of the Framework.

And so, therefore, let us commit to a week of constructive engagement, focused dialogue and mutual respect.

I thank you for your dedication to the Convention and look forward to a highly productive meeting.

Thank you.