On 7 December 2016, several partners of the Biodiversity and Community Health (BaCH) Initiative - a consortium of organizations, led by United Nations University, established at the CBD eleventh Conference of the Parties to support biodiversity and human health activities at the community level - convened a parallel event at the Thirteenth Conference of the Parties. Speaker and panellists convened the event to emphasize opportunities to increase awareness of, the multiple contributions of biodiversity and ecosystems to the health and wellbeing of local communities, including indigenous peoples.

It also sought to identify innovative opportunities for collaborative action to support community health. Discussions also focused on identifying ways forward to strengthen synergies between biodiversity, well-being, and development and potential contributions of the BaCH Initiative to this work at the local level, in ways that also strengthen global commitments such as the SDGs.

Speakers: Obijifor Aginam (UNU-IIGH), Catherine Machalaba (EcoHealth Alliance), Marieta Sakalian (UNEP), Alejandra Pero (UNDP – Equator Initiative), Yolanda Teran (IIFB and Red de Mujeres Indígenas en Biodiversidad), Unnikrishnan Payyappalli (UNU-IAS), Suneetha M Subramanian (UNU-IAS)

Panelists: Clarissa Arida (ASEAN Center for Biodiversity), Thomas Elmquist (Stockholm Resilience Center), Andreas Drews (GIZ ABS Capacity Development Initiative), Fumiko Nakao (Min of Environment, Japan), Balakrishna Pisupati (UNEP), Cristina Romanelli (SCBD)

*Since 2012, the BaCH initiative has been working closely with multiple stakeholders at the community level, donor agencies, policy bodies and nongovernmental organizations to raise awareness and identify cross-sectoral opportunities for collaboration (including food and nutrition, medicines, therapeutic landscapes, livelihood security, new product development), and their consequent implications for other cross cutting areas such as equitable access and sharing of benefits, in line with the Convention’s objectives.