



## **Convention on Biological Diversity**

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### **BUREAU OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE**

Online

11 December 2025 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:43 a.m.

### **MEETING MINUTES**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

1. The meeting of the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) was attended by the following members of the Bureau: Mr. Jean Bruno Mikissa (Gabon, Chair), Mr. Mostafa Madbouhi (Morocco), Mr. Dickson Chitupa (Zimbabwe), Mr. Karl Fellenius (Marshall Islands), Ms. Ruliyana Susanti (Indonesia), Mr. Karen Khachatrian (Armenia), Ms. Kishma Primus-Ormond (Antigua and Barbuda), Ms. Paulina Stowhas Salinas (Chile), Mr. Niklaus Wagner (Switzerland), and Ms. Sanne Kruid (The Netherlands). Apologies were received from Mr. Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic), and Ms. Camille Inatio (Federal States of Micronesia).

2. Also attending were Ms. Sakhile Silitshena (Head of Science Society and Sustainable Futures Division, SBSTTA Secretary), Ms. Jillian Campbell (Senior Programme Management Officer), Ms. Jamal Annagylyjova (OIC Head of Biodiversity, Science, Policy and Governance Unit), Ms. Marianela Araya Quesada (Programme Management Officer for IAS and Health and Biodiversity), Mr. Tristan Tyrrell (Programme Management Officer for Climate Change), Mr. Joseph Appiott (Programme Management Officer for Marine and Coastal Biodiversity), Ms. Monica Kobayashi (Programme Management Officer for Inland Waters and Agriculture Biodiversity), Mr. Kieran Noonan Mooney (Programme Management Officer), Mr. Mariano Castro Jimenez (Consultant), Mr. Austein McLoughlin (Programme Management Officer), Ms. Regina Kipper (Programme Assistant), Ms. Jacqueline Grekin (Programme Assistant) and Ms. Myriam Samya (Staff Assistant) of the CBD Secretariat.

#### **I. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

3. The meeting was opened at 9 a.m. local time (GMT -5) on Thursday 11 December 2025 by Mr. Mikissa, the Chair of SBSTTA and Ms. Jihyun Lee, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

4. In her opening remarks Ms. Lee welcomed Bureau members, introduced the newly appointed members, and thanked the outgoing members for their contributions. She emphasized the importance of reflecting on lessons learned from SBSTTA-27, noting that implementation of COP decision 16/25 underscored the need for early planning, consistent approaches across agenda items, and disciplined workload management. Looking ahead, she highlighted that SBSTTA-28 will have a particularly heavy

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agenda due to mandates under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and stressed the need for focused discussions and efficient contact group work. She informed the Bureau that the Secretariat is advancing preparations for SBSTTA-28 and underscored the importance of the Bureau's strategic guidance on documentation and organization of work. She concluded by thanking members for their dedication and wishing them a restful end-of-year break.

5. In his opening remarks, the Chair of SBSTTA, Mr. Jean Bruno Mikissa, welcomed participants to the meeting, particularly the new Bureau members, noting the importance of their perspectives and expertise. He emphasized the central role of the Bureau in guiding preparations for SBSTTA meetings and highlighted that the session would serve both to reflect on the outcomes and lessons learned from SBSTTA-27 and to provide strategic direction for preparations for SBSTTA-28, including upcoming intersessional work. He encouraged members to offer clear and practical guidance to support the Secretariat's work on annotations, organizational arrangements, and planning. He concluded by thanking Bureau members for their continued commitment and the Secretariat for its support, expressing his readiness to work closely with all members in the period ahead.

## **II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

6. The Chair introduced the provisional agenda for the meeting, and there being no objections, the agenda was adopted without changes.

## **III. OVERVIEW OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE**

7. Under this item, the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, reviewed key matters arising from SBSTTA-27 and elements requiring attention in preparation for SBSTTA-28.

### **Secretariat briefing on outcomes of SBSTTA-27**

- a) The Secretariat reported that SBSTTA-27 was successfully concluded, with draft recommendations adopted for all agenda items, even though brackets remain in all the draft COP decisions. The meeting outcomes have been posted online, in all official United Nations languages.
- b) The Secretariat provided an overview of lessons learned from the implementation of COP decision 16/25 on improving efficiency of processes. Several elements of the decision were applied and tested during SBSTTA-27 as discussed in the following paragraphs.
- c) The early identification of contact group co-chairs proved to be effective. The list of co-chairs was shared with the SBSTTA Bureau in June 2025 and finalized in August 2025. Online and in-person trainings for contact group co-chairs was conducted in collaboration with the Centre for Multilateral Negotiations.
- d) The scenario note for SBSTTA-27 was prepared in September 2025. Its preparation was delayed due to the delay in adopting the pilot modalities on the early submission of statements. The Secretariat aims to finalize the scenario note for SBSTTA-28 well in advance of the meeting.
- e) The Secretariat will publish and regularly update the online table of intersessional activities. An updated version will be made available for SBSTTA-28 following the meeting.
- f) Early submission of statements resulted in some successes; however, there is a need to refine the approach to improve efficiency, including means of addressing the volume of amendments submitted by Parties and observers.
- g) The meeting schedule followed the guideline of a maximum of 13 hours from the start of the first session of the day. The conduct of parallel contact groups was challenging.

- h) The annotated agenda for SBSTTA-28 is under preparation, however because the editorial team is currently focused on SBI documents, and the annotated agenda for SBSTTA-28 will only be finalized in January.
- i) The Secretariat noted that, as a new development relevant to planning, starting with SBSTTA-28, cost implications will be included with draft recommendations.

### **Observations and suggestions from Bureau members**

- a) Bureau members noted that some progress was achieved on several agenda items, but the high number of brackets being forwarded to the COP highlighted the need for improved efficiency in discussions at SBSTTA-28. Additional time for consideration of technical items may be required.
- b) Some members expressed concern that unresolved issues from SBSTTA-27 may place additional burden on COP-17 and COP-18. Strengthening time management and focusing discussions on scientific content were emphasized.
- c) SBI recommendations related to the effectiveness of processes may need to be taken into account in planning for SBSTTA-28. This will be discussed further in a SBSTTA Bureau meeting after SBI 6.
- d) SBSTTA Bureau members noted that all agenda items under SBI 6 would be subject to early submission of statements modality, and noted that this could be desirable for SBSTTA-28.
- e) Early identification and training of contact group co-chairs were considered essential. Members reiterated the importance of widening the pool of trained contact group co-chairs and ensuring they are prepared well in advance of the meeting. It was suggested that training be provided earlier and, if useful, repeated.
- f) Publishing documents earlier was also highlighted as a priority.
- g) Regarding the scheduling of contact groups, it was noted that the experience of SBSTTA-27 demonstrated difficulties in completing all work with the issues raised regarding parallel groups. This may need reconsideration.
- h) Bureau members expressed concern regarding the limited amount of speaking time available to observers. They noted the usefulness of the early submission of statements for observers to receive support from Parties.
- i) The need to maintain clear procedural steps when moving from CRPs to L-documents was emphasized to ensure that all amendments are correctly reflected.
- j) Bureau members observed that limiting national statements may help maintain the technical and scientific nature of SBSTTA, distinguishing it from the COP. Encouraging Parties to nominate delegates with appropriate scientific and technical expertise was considered important.
- k) Members also noted concerns regarding equitable speaking time among Parties, and the possibility of increasing transparency on the distribution of speaking time per session was raised.
- l) The online planning table was considered useful. Members suggested that the Secretariat include the date of the last update to avoid confusion.

## **IV. PREPARATIONS FOR THE TWENTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF SBSTTA, INCLUDING INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- 8. Under this item, the Secretariat presented in detail the table of intersessional activities, which will be published online at the SBSTTA preparation webpage.

## **V. ENHANCING THE SCIENTIFIC RIGOR OF SBSTTA**

- 9. Under this item, Ms. Sanne Kruid presented the outcomes of the side-event on “Enhancing the Scientific Rigor of SBSTTA” held with representatives from all regions. The outcomes have been shared by email and a meeting will be held in January to further consider which elements could be implemented for SBSTTA-28. It was also noted that a document may be prepared for the consideration of SBI 6.

## **VI. OTHER MATTERS**

10. The Chair noted that no additional issues will be discussed due to time constraints.
11. The action points for this meeting are provided in the annex to this report.

## **VI. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

12. The meeting concluded with appreciative remarks by the SBSTTA Chair towards Bureau members and Secretariat.
13. The Bureau meeting closed at 10:43 am (Eastern Time)

### **Action Items**

1. Secretariat to finalize and publish the updated intersessional activities table.
2. Secretariat to share the draft annotated agenda for SBSTTA-28 with the SBSTTA Bureau for approval.
3. SBSTTA Bureau to revisit recommendations for improving effectiveness of SBSTTA following the SBI 6.
4. The small group on enhancing the scientific rigour of SBSTTA will meet to further discuss the outcomes of the side event and prepare a document for SBI-6.

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