

## SBSTTA 27 Highlights: Thursday, 23 October 2025

The 27th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 27) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) continued consideration of conference room papers (CRPs) discussing invasive alien species (IAS) and biodiversity and health. Delegates met in five contact groups in the morning and evening to deliberate on issues requiring further discussions.

### Invasive Alien Species

Chair Jean Bruno Mikissa (Gabon) introduced [CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.2](#) on the IAS draft recommendation.

On preambular paragraphs:

- SAUDI ARABIA, supported by ARGENTINA, and opposed by MEXICO, SOUTH AFRICA, BELGIUM, and CHILE, requested deleting reference to the connection between climate change and IAS;
- ARGENTINA proposed deletion of paragraphs addressing the [Global Action Plan on Biodiversity and Health](#), and implementation of the [One Health](#) approach as referenced in decision [16/18](#); and
- BELGIUM, supported by CANADA, called to delete the importance of sustained financing to advance IAS work.

These paragraphs were deleted.

Concerning operative paragraphs, BELGIUM asked to “note with appreciation” the work done by the [Inter-Agency Liaison Group on IAS](#).

On encouraging Parties and other actors to act, INDIA requested adding “capabilities,” along with “national circumstances and priorities.” GUATEMALA requested adding “women and youth” to the list of actors, while the RUSSIAN FEDERATION preferred adding “and other stakeholders.”

On improving the collection, analysis, availability, and sharing of data, the DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC) suggested adding “storage.”

On collaborative approaches, BELGIUM suggested encouraging actors “to use” collaborative approaches, opposed by ARGENTINA, and explicitly mentioning the private sector; and EGYPT, supported by SOUTH AFRICA and BELGIUM, suggested deleting “cross-sectoral committees.”

On strengthening cross-sectoral and cross-border collaboration, JAPAN suggested adding collaboration “among countries, and countries and other regional mechanisms.” ARGENTINA, opposed by PANAMA, requested deleting reference to One Health implementation.

On a request to the Secretariat to collaborate with the Liaison Group on a list of actions, delegates agreed to refer also to other conventions and organizations, proposed by VIET NAM, and to specify avoiding duplication of efforts, proposed by AUSTRALIA. They agreed to add to the list:

- enhancing technical capacity and facilitating technology transfer for developing countries, proposed by VIET NAM and supported by MEXICO; and
- organizing an online forum for exchange of experiences and lessons learned on existing tools and guidance under the CBD,

proposed by CANADA and supported by CHILE, NORWAY, and MEXICO.

On developing training materials for a list of emerging tools, delegates agreed requesting such materials on “predictive modeling of range shifts and the identification of areas most vulnerable to invasion in the context of climate change,” proposed by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and supported by MEXICO and SOUTH AFRICA. PANAMA, opposed by BELGIUM, proposed adding synthetic biology, which was bracketed.

On a request to the Secretariat to continue improving the IAS portal, delegates approved specifying that improvements include enhancing availability of information on globally significant IAS and on national IAS lists, proposed by RUSSIAN FEDERATION and supported by MEXICO.

ARGENTINA, supported by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, proposed bracketing an entire paragraph listing requests to the Secretariat. CHILE, NORWAY, EGYPT, MEXICO, BELGIUM, SOUTH AFRICA, and AUSTRALIA opposed. Delegates approved the paragraph without brackets, with ARGENTINA requesting adding to the meeting report their concerns regarding resource availability, and a request to the Secretariat to provide information on administrative and financial implications of requested work before Conference of the Parties (COP) 17.

The CRP was approved with these and other minor amendments.

### Biodiversity and Health

Chair Mikissa introduced [CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.4](#).

On a SBSTTA request to the Secretariat to adjust the timeline of the development of indicators, SWEDEN, supported by GERMANY, FRANCE, and the EU, and opposed by ARGENTINA and BRAZIL, suggested also considering relevant processes. The addition remained bracketed. The EU proposed including the draft list of indicators in the progress report on the activities for COP 17 consideration.

Regarding the draft recommendation to the COP, ARGENTINA, opposed by FIJI, SOUTH AFRICA, SPAIN, SWEDEN, and EGYPT, suggested deleting a paragraph taking note of the [Nexus Assessment](#) of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), including its summary for policymakers and key messages, and noting its relevance to the CBD’s work and to the implementation of the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (GBF) and the Global Action Plan on Biodiversity and Health.

FIJI, supported by SPAIN, SWEDEN, and EGYPT, suggested “welcoming” rather than “taking note of” the Nexus Assessment. SPAIN and SWEDEN proposed “highlighting” rather than “noting” the assessment’s relevance to CBD’s work. SOUTH AFRICA and SPAIN noted that ongoing work should be considered. SWEDEN suggested adding reference to the 71 response options included in the assessment. The whole paragraph remained bracketed.

On a provision welcoming the adoption of the [World Health Organization Pandemic Agreement](#) and noting the potential for synergies with GBF implementation, ARGENTINA, opposed by SWEDEN, BANGLADESH, EGYPT, GERMANY, SWEDEN, NIGERIA, and FRANCE, suggested deletion. The paragraph remained bracketed.

Regarding the provision of financial resources to support the implementation of the Global Action Plan, CHINA, opposed by the EU, SWEDEN, and NORWAY, suggested adding “particularly developed State Parties” and bracketing “Parties in a position to do so.” INDIA, supported by CHINA and opposed by SWEDEN, suggested adding a reference to CBD Article 20 (financial resources). FIJI proposed “urging” rather than “inviting” Parties to provide financial resources. All the suggestions were bracketed.

On a provision urging Parties to apply the One Health approach, EGYPT suggested deleting “with scientific rigor, considering sanitary and phytosanitary measures.” TOGO suggested applying “the One Health approach taking into account sanitary and phytosanitary measures and environmental measures, as appropriate, as well as international guidelines, where applicable.” ARGENTINA proposed applying the approach “based on scientific evidence, including completed risk assessments and promoting the use of internationally agreed standards and guidelines.” The whole paragraph remained bracketed.

FRANCE, NORWAY, SWEDEN, BANGLADESH, AUSTRALIA, CANADA, and CHINA suggested “encouraging” the Global Environment Facility to provide financial support to implement the Global Action Plan, while EGYPT, BRAZIL, GUATEMALA, and JORDAN supported “requesting” it. Both options were kept in brackets.

The CRP was adopted.

### **Contact Group on the Global Review of Collective Progress in the Implementation of the GBF**

Co-chairs Sanne Kruid (the Netherlands) and Hesiquio Benítez (Mexico) resumed discussions based on a revised [non-paper](#) of the annotated outline of the global report.

The group made progress, including on the sources of information to be used in assessing the contributions of relevant multilateral environmental agreements, international organizations, and processes to GBF implementation; and on ways to maintain the Convention’s principles in the analysis of means of implementation, distinguishing Parties’ responsibilities.

Disagreements remain regarding whether information on successes, challenges, and gaps in means of implementation specific to Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth, and other stakeholders should be included; and how to ensure the report’s findings remain non-prescriptive.

Co-Chair Kruid noted that a CRP will be prepared.

### **Contact Group on the Strategic Review and Analysis of the Programmes of Work (PoW) under the Convention in the Context of the GBF**

The group, co-chaired by Scott Wilson (Canada) and Senka Barudanović (Bosnia and Herzegovina), resumed their consideration of the draft SBSTTA recommendation on the basis of a revised [non-paper](#).

The group retained in brackets a paragraph requesting the Secretariat to forward to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) the strategic review and analysis of the PoW of the CBD in the context of the GBF contained in [CBD/SBSTTA/27/5/Add.1](#) and [CBD/SBSTTA/27/INF/6](#), with one delegation stating that these documents are not a good basis for further discussion.

Parties diverged on the scope of the strategic review, in particular on whether it should address only PoW, or also “other areas of work,” or “cross-cutting issues.” Delegates supporting a broader scope underlined that the Convention’s work extends beyond the PoW. Delegates opposing this noted that COP decisions [15/4](#) and [16/12](#) addressed only PoW. A few delegates noted flexibility on addressing other areas of work or cross-cutting issues in the future. Co-Chair Wilson established a small group to resolve differences.

Delegates agreed to request the Secretariat to propose a “systematic approach, timeline and schedule” of review and potential updating of PoW, “identifying efficiencies and improving consistency in their implementation, using a consistent evaluation methodology.” They further agreed that the Secretariat convey this to the COP Bureau to consider the issue at SBI 7 under the multi-year PoW.

### **Contact Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management of Living Modified Organisms (LMOs)**

Co-chaired by Martha Kandawa-Schulz (Namibia) and Werner Schenkel (Germany), the group resumed discussions of the [non-paper](#).

Delegates discussed terminology issues around “guidance materials” and “technical notes,” deciding to address it under the terms of reference of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group (AHTEG). They agreed to reflect both the development of additional guidance materials and capacity building in the draft recommendation.

Regarding capacity building, delegates provisionally agreed to expand capacity-building efforts on risk assessment and risk management of LMOs. They discussed alternative language regarding the use of existing information and guidance materials on risk assessment of LMOs, and the approach to risk assessment of LMOs used in Biosafety Technical Series 07. The alternative texts were bracketed.

Delegates provisionally agreed to develop a maximum of two additional voluntary guidance materials in accordance with Annex III to the Cartagena Protocol out of the seven topics identified by the AHTEG. Many underscored their preferences, highlighting: living modified fish, microorganisms, and algae; operationalizing protection goals into relevant assessment and measurement end points; and the use of LMOs in centers of origin and in traditional agricultural systems. Prioritization remained pending and the relevant provisions bracketed. A Party opposed the development of any additional guidance material.

Delegates could not reach agreement, among others, on:

- establishing a new AHTEG on risk assessment, pending the outcome of an informal group discussing the terms of reference;
- inviting Parties and others to submit information relevant to the work of the AHTEG;
- extending the open-ended online forum; and
- requesting the Secretariat to convene AHTEG meetings and discussions in the open-ended online forum.

### **Contact Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change**

Co-chaired by Sikeade Egbuwalo (Nigeria) and Clarisse Kehler Siebert (Sweden), the group resumed discussions of a [non-paper](#), focusing on an outstanding footnote in the draft SBSTTA recommendation, concerning how to reference the Paris Agreement, before resuming consideration of the outstanding elements of the draft COP recommendation, including requests to the Secretariat. Discussions continued into the evening.

### **Contact Group on Areas of Potential Further Work in the Context of the GBF**

Focusing their deliberations on a [non-paper](#) developed by Co-Chairs Senka Barudanović (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Scott Wilson (Canada), delegates met to discuss five potential areas of further work: biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning; pollution and biodiversity; sustainable biodiversity-based activities, products, and services that enhance biodiversity; equity, gender equality, and the human rights-based approach; and different value systems. Discussions continued into the evening.

### **In the Corridors**

While the day began with ambition and determination, the toll of plenary sessions and contact group negotiations began to show as the day progressed. Prepared for this, the Co-Chairs of the contact group on the global review announced that candy would be distributed when brackets were lifted. Despite progress, time ran out as delegates began to enter the room for the next contact group. The risk assessment contact group was not as lucky, perhaps not only due to a lack of candy, with many of the recommendations remaining bracketed despite the Co-Chairs’ efforts. Tensions amassed in an afternoon plenary, after a frustrated delegate expressed that if a Party cannot uphold the UN principles and guidelines for international negotiations, “they should reconsider their membership in this Convention.”