

## SBSTTA 27 Highlights: Friday, 24 October 2025

The 27th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 27) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) concluded its work, addressing conference room papers (CRPs) and adopting final recommendations on all agenda items.

Opening the day's deliberations, DENMARK, supported by FRANCE, NORWAY, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, MEXICO, SWITZERLAND, ICELAND, NEW ZEALAND, CHILE, the UK, and the NETHERLANDS, emphasized that bracketing entire sets of requests to the Secretariat in draft recommendations is not acceptable and sets an undesirable precedent, urging flexibility and a spirit of compromise.

### Biodiversity and Agriculture

Chair Jean Bruno Mikissa (Gabon) introduced document [CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.3](#).

MEXICO suggested inviting “the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), including through the framework of the [Global Soil Partnership](#) and the [Global Soil Biodiversity Observatory](#), to continue facilitating the implementation of the [Plan of Action \(2020–2030\)](#) for the International Initiative for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Soil Biodiversity, involving Parties, and others in alignment with the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (GBF), including through the explicit integration of soil biodiversity indicators in national reports and global assessments, through the provision of financial resources, capacity building, and technology transfer, in particular for developing countries, and to report on progress in SBSTTA prior to the 18th Conference of the Parties (COP 18).” In closing plenary, delegates approved Mexico's proposed text with a number of amendments.

JAPAN, supported by the COOK ISLANDS, suggested deleting the explicit integration of soil biodiversity indicators in national reports. ARGENTINA suggested “*inter alia* through national reports,” and further proposed, supported by MEXICO and opposed by COLOMBIA, referring to “Parties, other governments, and subnational governments.” The UK, supported by the COOK ISLANDS, proposed highlighting the needs of least developed countries, small island developing states (SIDS), and Parties with economies in transition. In closing plenary, delegates approved the paragraph with these amendments, deleting the reference to provision of financial resources.

On a provision encouraging Parties to integrate the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of soil biodiversity in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), and in climate and land policy instruments through biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning, ARGENTINA, opposed by BANGLADESH, suggested “in national plans,” as appropriate, to provide flexibility in implementation. In closing plenary, these alternatives were retained in brackets.

ARGENTINA noted that developing a mechanism for improved coordination among agricultural, environmental, and health sectors to mainstream soil biodiversity initiatives is policy prescriptive. SPAIN, supported by JAPAN, ARGENTINA, SWEDEN, and MEXICO, suggested as a compromise inviting Parties to enhance relevant coordination. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION requested bracketing the provision.

On inviting Parties to strengthen cooperation among national focal points for a list of environmental conventions and the FAO in order to implement coherent and integrated actions, ARGENTINA called to delete “integrated,” which was approved in closing plenary.

FRANCE, supported by the UK, called to “invite” rather than “urge” developed country Parties to provide financial resources and other means of implementation for soil biodiversity monitoring. The UK, supported by CANADA, SWITZERLAND, and SAUDI ARABIA, proposed language to invite Parties, other governments, and organizations “in a position to do so,” to provide resources. This was approved in closing plenary, along with bracketing a reference to providing financial resources.

On community-based monitoring, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION requested deletion of “free, prior and informed consent” (FPIC). NEW ZEALAND, supported by BANGLADESH and BRAZIL, wished to retain FPIC with the addition of “as appropriate.” In closing plenary, reference to FPIC was deleted.

BRAZIL, supported by INDIA, suggested that phasing out or reforming harmful incentives be done “in a proportionate, just, fair, effective, and equitable way.” The UK, supported by CANADA and SWITZERLAND, proposed inviting Parties to “increase positive incentives,” with JAPAN suggesting to “scale up positive incentives.” JORDAN requested bracketing the paragraph. In closing plenary, the paragraph was bracketed.

The DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC), supported by ARGENTINA and BANGLADESH, suggested adding “other agricultural research institutions,” to a list of actors invited to address soil biodiversity knowledge gaps, which was approved in closing plenary.

ARGENTINA, supported by INDIA, called to specify that guidance on reducing pollution of soil biodiversity is “voluntary,” with JAPAN calling to address the FAO explicitly. TOGO requested reference of the FAO in a paragraph on genetic resources for food and agriculture. On a paragraph concerning strengthening the implementation of the [International Initiative for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Pollinators](#), FRANCE proposed adding “according to national legislation and circumstances,” which was approved in closing plenary.

MEXICO proposed deleting a request to the Secretariat to establish an inter-agency liaison group.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION called to bracket paragraphs containing requests to the Secretariat. DENMARK, supported

by NORWAY, CANADA, and the NETHERLANDS, indicated their “strong preference” not to bracket operative elements on which there is consensus, suggesting reflecting concerns in the meeting report. ARMENIA, supported by SWITZERLAND, the NETHERLANDS, and MEXICO, cautioned against overburdening COP 17.

A small group was unable to resolve the matter and the paragraphs were approved with brackets in closing plenary.

The CRP was approved with these amendments.

In view of the limited time available to conclude consideration of CRPs and adopt the documents, Chair Mikissa invited plenary to approve the CRP as an L.document. Plenary adopted the final recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.11).

### **Global Review of Collective Progress in the Implementation of the GBF**

Chair Mikissa introduced the relevant document ([CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.6](#)), and reminded delegates that financial and capacity-building issues fall under the mandate of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI). Discussions centered on the remaining bracketed paragraphs of the annotated outline.

On a paragraph outlining the global report’s preparation, ARGENTINA, CHINA, and INDIA called to retain language stating that the report “will be undertaken in a facilitative, non-intrusive and non-punitive manner respecting national sovereignty and avoiding placing an undue burden on Parties, in particular developing countries, with no focus on individual Parties and respecting their policy space.” HUNGARY, MEXICO, FRANCE, and FINLAND preferred deletion but expressed flexibility and the brackets were lifted.

On a paragraph outlining the synthesis of the global status of, and trends in, biodiversity, NEW ZEALAND and SWEDEN, opposed by CHINA, sought to retain reference to drivers of biodiversity loss. Chair Mikissa tasked a small group to find compromise language, and BRAZIL later reported agreement to delete the reference and add “in line with the GBF.”

On a provision describing the synthesis of approaches to address issues identified in the global report, the UK presented compromise text agreed by a small group. The text referenced “a synthesis of non-prescriptive approaches for addressing the challenges, gaps, and opportunities identified in the global report with a view to making collective progress in implementation of the GBF.” The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, supported by BRAZIL, welcomed the text, but requested limiting the information sources to those identified in paragraph 18 of [Decision 16/32](#). SOUTH AFRICA, supported by SWITZERLAND, suggested “including” such sources, which was agreed.

Delegates agreed to a paragraph regarding information on successes, challenges, and gaps in means of implementation for Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs), women, youth, and other stakeholders, following a proposal by COLOMBIA, supported by PANAMA.

On the draft recommendation, the DRC, supported by COLOMBIA, FIJI, EGYPT, and FINLAND, proposed requesting the Secretariat to “provide support for an informal technical dialogue among Parties and others, to collect input to the global review including sharing of best practices, challenges, gaps, and solutions.” JAPAN added “subject to the availability of financial resources.” Both suggestions were agreed.

ARGENTINA, supported by SOUTH AFRICA and the NETHERLANDS, requested deletion of a paragraph encouraging Parties to complete all sections of the national report and, where possible, include relevant information on other actors.

With these modifications and other minor amendments, the paragraph was accepted and the CRP was approved. In closing plenary, the final recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.4) was adopted with no further changes.

### **Biodiversity and Climate Change**

Delegates addressed document [CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.9](#) on biodiversity and climate change. Noting that the SBSTTA recommendation had clean text, and bracketed parts refer to the COP recommendation, Chair Mikissa invited delegates to approve the CRP as a whole.

ARGENTINA requested adding to the meeting report that some Parties were not in a position to participate in the relevant contact group and thus retain their prerogative to discuss the topic at COP.

Noting the agreed peer-review process for the supplement to the voluntary guidelines, ARGENTINA, supported by BRAZIL, requested that the annex be bracketed.

On the SBSTTA recommendation, ARGENTINA opposed mentions to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification, adding that the requests for the Secretariat to invite the secretariats of the other Rio Conventions to collaborate on the organization of technical information exchanges to further discuss options to enhance cooperation, policy coherence, and synergies, and to develop a multilevel road map, could be considered under SBI.

JAPAN expressed concern about referring to advisory opinions. SOUTH AFRICA sought clarification on the omission in the CRP of references to customary rights of IPLCs, and with BRAZIL, on the absence of alternative text proposed during the contact group regarding the prioritization of ecosystems that contribute to carbon storage and sequestration, and adaptation.

In closing plenary, delegates resumed the discussion.

Chair Mikissa noted that informal consultations had been conducted and proposed to:

- bracket the annex on the supplement voluntary guidelines;
- move to the COP recommendation a bracketed paragraph that notes the relevance of work conducted under the United Arab Emirates-Belém work programme on indicators;
- delete the requests for the Secretariat to invite the secretariats of the other Rio Conventions to collaborate on the organization of technical information exchanges and to develop a multilevel road map; and
- delete a provision related to the requests to the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions to develop a potential joint workplan and a multilevel road map as a mechanism to support Parties in enhancing synergies and policy coherence at the national and international levels.

BRAZIL proposed as a compromise, with the support of CANADA, to delete the request to the Joint Liaison Group and maintain the one for the secretariats of the other Rio Conventions. ARGENTINA supported the proposed compromise.

GERMANY suggested taking key elements from the Joint Liaison Group paragraph and incorporating them into the paragraph on the secretariats of the other Rio Conventions paragraphs.

With no consensus, Chair Mikissa tasked a small, informal group with finding a compromise.

ARMENIA reported that the small group agreed that the SBSTTA recommendation would:

- delete references to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification;
- delete the paragraph related to the requests to the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions; and
- request the Secretariat “to share relevant decisions of the COP and recommendations of the SBSTTA and invite the executive secretaries of the other Rio Conventions, and the current and incoming presidencies of the COP of the three Rio Conventions, to collaborate on the organization of technical information exchanges to further discuss options to enhance cooperation and policy coherence and synergies across the

Rio Conventions, and subsequently develop a multilevel road map with short, medium, and long-term actions, including a mapping study to help to identify concrete actions, on the headline options for enhancing policy coherence provided in document CBD/SBSTTA/27/4, as well as possible gaps and overlaps in existing national and international policies and existing coordination bodies that address the implementation of the Rio Conventions, and to report its finding to Parties at COP 17.”

Delegates approved the amended CRP and adopted the final recommendation CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.5.

### ***Invasive Alien Species***

Chair Mikissa introduced CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.2. Denmark, for the EU, supported by NORWAY, the UK, MEXICO, SWITZERLAND, and EGYPT, expressed frustration with the brackets on a list of requests to the Secretariat. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION insisted on retaining the brackets, arguing that all attempts to reach consensus on the way forward had failed.

The final recommendation was adopted with the remaining brackets.

### ***Biodiversity and Health***

Chair Mikissa introduced CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.3.

On a request to the Secretariat in the SBSTTA recommendation to adjust the timeline of the development of the integrated science-based indicators, metrics, and progress measurement tools, GERMANY reported that an informal small group decided deleting the bracketed text “and to consider relevant processes.”

MEXICO requested to lift the brackets on the request to the Secretariat to resume the activities of the Inter-Agency Liaison Group on Biodiversity and Health. Chair Mikissa noted that further discussion will take place at COP 17. The final recommendation was adopted.

### ***Risk Assessment and Risk Management of Living Modified Organisms***

Chair Mikissa introduced document [CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.8](#).

FINLAND, supported by HUNGARY, highlighted work in an informal group and suggested developing “concise supplementary guidance for voluntary use that provide specific, clear, and focused information” for the selected topics, “operationalizing protection goals into relevant assessment and measurement end points, and of the use of living modified organisms in centers of origin and in traditional agricultural systems in accordance with annex III to the Cartagena Protocol and avoiding duplication with existing guidance materials, for consideration by SBSTTA at a meeting held before the 13th meeting of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol (COP/MOP 13).” FINLAND added that “the guidance may include procedural or practical elements or points to consider during risk assessment.” Following interventions by BRAZIL, TOGO, and PANAMA, the suggestion was included in the draft recommendation in brackets. PANAMA requested recording in the meeting report their concern that they did not have the opportunity to review the proposal in written form.

The CRP, containing a number of brackets, was approved with this modification and adopted as the final recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.6).

### ***Matters Related to the Work Programme of IPBES***

Delegates resumed consideration of [CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.1](#)

Chair Mikissa noted that the small informal group, despite delegates’ efforts, could not arrive at consensus regarding: “welcoming” or “taking note of” the Nexus Assessment and the Transformative Change Assessment; and on “encouraging”

or “inviting” Parties to promote and implement a synergistic and holistic approach to biodiversity issues in line with the assessments, as well as the relevant list of actors and subparagraphs therein. He proposed maintaining the brackets.

Chair Mikissa also noted that the paragraphs addressing requests to the Secretariat; requests to the regional and subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centers; and the invitation to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) to consider how to further facilitate the uptake of the key messages identified in the assessment by Parties and other actors, were not discussed in plenary, and due to the lack of time, he proposed bracketing them. Delegates approved the CRP and adopted it as the final recommendation CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.10.

### ***Strategic Review and Analysis of the Programmes of Work (PoW) under the Convention***

Chair Mikissa introduced the CRP ([CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.7](#)).

SOUTH AFRICA reported that the small group had resolved to delete references to “other areas of work” and “cross-cutting issues” in the recommendation, retaining only reference to PoW. SOUTH AFRICA further reported agreement to reflect, in the draft COP recommendation, a new paragraph “appreciating the evaluation methodology contained in the annex to the present decision prepared by the Secretariat and noting its potential for future use in reviewing the work of the Convention.”

In view of these agreed changes, Chair Mikissa proposed, supported by ARGENTINA, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, and PANAMA, deleting a bracketed paragraph in the SBSTTA recommendation that requests the Secretariat to forward the strategic review and analysis of the PoW under the CBD in the context of the GBF, referencing [CBD/SBSTTA/27/5/Add.1](#) and [CBD/SBSTTA/27/INF/6](#), and the report on the strategic review, to the SBI for consideration. BELGIUM, CANADA, the UK, SWITZERLAND, the EU, and NORWAY opposed.

As a compromise, CANADA proposed deleting the paragraph, and adding language “noting the work undertaken to date,” to a paragraph requesting the Secretariat to propose a systematic approach for the review, supported by ZIMBABWE. This proposal was approved, with ARGENTINA, supported by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, requesting to reflect in the meeting report that the mention of work already done does not refer to CBD/SBSTTA/27/5/Add.1 or INF/6.

Plenary approved the CRP with these amendments, and adopted it as the final recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.8).

### ***Expanded PoW on Forest Biodiversity***

Chair Mikissa introduced the fully bracketed [CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.5](#) and asked for Parties’ cooperation to forward the draft recommendation and annex on complementary activities to the expanded PoW on forest biodiversity to the COP without further discussion.

ARGENTINA noted that a request to bracket an activity on encouraging and supporting business and financial institutions to monitor, assess, and transparently disclose forest biodiversity-related risks in their sustainability reporting, was not reflected in the CRP. The brackets were reintroduced.

NAMIBIA requested reintroducing a provision to protect and conserve “all” forests in the activities related to area-based targets. JAPAN requested bracketing an activity related to eliminating, phasing out, or reforming subsidies harmful to forest biodiversity.

The CRP was approved without amendments. The fully bracketed CRP was adopted as the final recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.7).

**Areas of Potential Further Work in the Context of the GBF**

Chair Mikissa introduced the CRP ([CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.10](#)).

Discussions focused on the draft SBSTTA recommendation, composed of two sections.

On the section addressing equity, gender equality, and the human rights-based approach relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION objected and tabled a compromise proposal, which was not accepted. The section was deleted.

On the section addressing pollution and biodiversity, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION called to delete paragraphs containing requests to the Secretariat to invite actors to submit information in relation, among other things, to the impacts of pollution on biodiversity. MEXICO, supported by the EU, URUGUAY, CHILE, FINLAND, and TOGO, urged retaining these paragraphs, noting that the workload is small and does not require an expert group to be convened. SWEDEN requested noting in the meeting report that only one Party called for the deletion. CHILE, supported by FINLAND, stated that it is not a good precedent to send a document with no recommendations to the COP.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION supported retaining a paragraph containing a set of requests to the Secretariat to extend an invitation to a list of pollution-related bodies and organizations to provide information on their activities on the interaction of chemicals and waste with biodiversity and ecosystem services, and to make the information available to SBSTTA 28 or COP 17. CHILE, URUGUAY, FINLAND, and TOGO advocated maintaining the paragraph, which was approved.

Plenary approved the CRP with these changes, and with no amendment to the draft COP recommendation, and then adopted it as the final recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.9).

**Adoption of the Report**

Rapporteur Ruliyana Susanti, Indonesia, introduced the meeting report [CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.1](#).

The Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) expressed concerns about delegations' limited ability to participate effectively in parallel contact groups due to inadequate funding, requesting this be reflected in the report.

Following clarifications and minor amendments, delegates adopted the report.

**Closing of the Meeting**

In closing remarks, Astrid Schomaker, Executive Secretary, CBD, highlighted progress made despite difficult negotiations and, stressing that less than a year remains until COP 17, urged the biodiversity community to "make the time count."

Denmark, for the EU, highlighted progress made on the annotated outline on the global review of collective progress in the implementation of the GBF and broad support for the two IPBES assessments. They expressed concerns over the remaining bracketed text, stressing it should not become a common practice.

Canada, for JUSCANZ, highlighted progress on IAS, forest biodiversity, and the annotated outline of the global report of collective progress. They lamented that "political interventions not of a scientific nature" had resulted in the bracketing of entire paragraphs, and stressed the need to prioritize those decisions with the greatest impact in delivering the GBF.

The Federated States of Micronesia, for ASIA-PACIFIC, expressed concerns over financial and logistical constraints, emphasizing the need for adequate, predictable, and accessible funding for eligible Parties. They underscored the need to strengthen scientific and technical cooperation, capacity-building, and financial support to achieve the GBF's goals and targets, accompanied by necessary funding.

Stressing that delays in submissions of NBSAPs reflect limited resources, not lack of commitment, Antigua and Barbuda, for the SIDS, called for continued strengthening of regional and subregional data and knowledge-sharing systems; increased investment in ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions; and retaining island biodiversity as a standalone PoW.

PANAMA, as the host country, thanked participants for their constructive engagement in discussing the most pressing biodiversity and resource use issues, hoping they could "enjoy Panama beyond the meeting rooms."

Senegal, for the AFRICAN GROUP, encouraged Parties that have not done so to submit their updated NBSAPs and seventh national reports; and expressed concerns over remaining brackets and limited financial support for participation of eligible Parties.

Chile, for GRULAC, reaffirmed commitment to biodiversity conservation and the Convention's work, highlighted the need for more funding and equitable regional representation, and wished Armenia success in hosting COP 17.

Paying respect to the Guna, Embera, Waunan, Gnobe, Bugle, Bri bri, and Naso Tjer-Di Indigenous Peoples of Panama and their traditional territories, the INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY urged for the implementation of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach and the full and effective participation of IPLCs, women, and youth in CBD meetings, implementation, and in national and global monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

The CBD WOMEN'S CAUCUS urged Parties to stop postponing decisions and "stop addressing symptoms," calling instead to tackle "root causes" threatening the rights of women, girls, and IPLCs.

The GLOBAL YOUTH BIODIVERSITY NETWORK urged delegates to become "good future ancestors," by listening to science, evidence, and each other; and learning from past mistakes and Mother Earth.

The CBD ALLIANCE highlighted concern about the exclusion from the strategic review of PoW of certain cross-cutting issues, including monitoring, indicators, and emerging issues; and regretted that agreement could not be reached on developing new guidance concerning risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms.

The ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES emphasized as a priority for Caribbean SIDS the need for decisive action to conserve, restore, and sustainably use biodiversity, strengthen resilience, and address IAS.

Acknowledging the difficult negotiations, Chair Mikissa thanked delegates for their spirit of compromise, and emphasized the need for scientific solutions to inform policymaking in order to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. He gavelled the meeting to a close at 11:02 pm.

**In the Corridors**

Delegates had their work cut out for them, with a significant workload tabled for a final day of scheduled plenaries. Repeated frustrated calls to stick to scientific and technical matters and not bracket lists of requests to the Secretariat did not prevent sending recommendations loaded with brackets to COP 17. "This sets a bad precedent for this body," sighed one delegate, suggesting that concerns about the Secretariat's workload and resources are better addressed in other ways. Another insisted, "we have offered compromises, but they have not been taken on board." "Time is never on our side at COP," grunted a third. As exhausted participants left the venue, some emphasized that despite all challenges, significant progress was made, and held high hopes for the historic week that lies ahead for Indigenous Peoples and the biodiversity community, with the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j).