

SB8j 1 Highlights: Wednesday, 29 October 2025

The Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) and Other Provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Related to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) (SB8j) continued its deliberation focusing, in afternoon and evening plenary sessions, on: the recommendations of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII); and conference room papers (CRPs) on the in-depth dialogue on resource mobilization and the process to review and update the glossary.

Delegates met in contact groups in the morning and afternoon to discuss the *modus operandi* of SB8j and elements for guidelines related to tasks of its programme of work (PoW).

Recommendations of the UNPFII

Delegates continued their discussions on the UNPFII recommendations emanating from its 23rd and 24th sessions. Many Parties, including Cameroon, for the AFRICAN GROUP, COLOMBIA, PANAMA, BRAZIL, and others, recognized the importance of the UNPFII as a consultative platform to ensure that Indigenous Peoples' rights are respected, further promoting self-determination and facilitating access to financing.

Many delegates, including the AFRICAN GROUP, Denmark for the EU, JORDAN, CANADA, and others supported that the draft recommendation to the Conference of the Parties (COP) take note of the UNPFII recommendations; and request the Secretariat to continue to inform the UNPFII on developments of mutual interest and to provide information about relevant activities. INDIA, COLOMBIA, and NIGERIA urged continued cooperation between the SB8j and the UNPFII. NORWAY stressed it is important to give UNPFII the opportunity to submit recommendations to SB8j.

The AFRICAN GROUP highlighted Decisions [XII/12](#) and [14/13](#), with JORDAN and BRAZIL, and invited Parties, with INDIA, HAITI, and others, not to divide the term "IPLCs."

JORDAN added that many Parties do not refer to Indigenous Peoples in their national legislation and that terminology questions should not be an obstacle to access financial mechanisms. BRAZIL expressed concerns over urging Parties to depart from agreed terminology; called for balanced and distinct representation of the two groups; and cautioned against relativizing the rights of local communities and their access to financial mechanisms. ZIMBABWE stressed that IPLCs should be treated "as one unit, in paper and in practice." The DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC) said that UNPFII recommendations hold within themselves "the seeds of the destruction of the Convention."

MEXICO urged not conflating Indigenous Peoples, as subjects of international law, and local communities. NORWAY noted flexibility on conducting a study into the "conflation issue." INDIA did not support direct funding mechanisms outside national systems, noting this would undermine national sovereignty.

COLOMBIA proposed encouraging Parties to take into account the UNPFII recommendations to strengthen the implementation of the PoW on Article 8(j). PANAMA urged reinforcing the relevant national and international legal frameworks.

Lamenting "negative trends" in the work of UNPFII, including politization by Western countries, and interference in national sovereignty, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION urged that Indigenous representatives working with SB8j should have a recognized status according to national law and "real ties" to Indigenous Peoples.

UNPFII emphasized that Indigenous Peoples are rights holders to lands, territories, and resources, with distinct identities and specific rights that must be fully recognized and respected; and urged parties to uphold international human rights standards in all aspects of CBD implementation.

Following interventions by the DRC and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, requesting to note in the meeting report the divergences in the room, Co-Chair Gunn-Britt Retter (Arctic region) said that a CRP will be prepared.

In-depth Dialogue on Resource Mobilization

Acting Co-Chair Daniela Durán González, Colombia, introduced the CRP ([CBD/SB8J/1/CRP.1](#)).

CANADA, supported by Denmark for the EU, suggested that the organization and modalities of in-depth dialogues be improved in future.

On a preambular paragraph noting that the implementation of the PoW on Article 8(j) should follow a human rights-based approach, delegates decided to: bracket the reference to a "human rights-based approach," following a request by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION; include in brackets a reference to "international instruments," following a proposal by the EU; and bracket the qualifier "in accordance with national legislation," following a request by the EU.

On a provision encouraging Parties to take into account the dialogue's outcomes to: establish and implement mechanisms and strategies for the mobilization of financial resources for IPLCs, EGYPT called for addition of capacity-building and technology transfer. The EU proposed "strengthening" rather than "implementing" mechanisms and strategies and requested referring to financial resources "from all sources."

Following a lengthy discussion, Acting Co-Chair Durán suggested retaining the provision encouraging Parties to take into account the dialogue and include: the dialogue's title to reflect capacity-building and technical support; and the suggestions on "strengthening" mechanisms and on financial resources "from all sources." The RUSSIAN FEDERATION proposed adding the consideration of "specific challenges faced by developing countries," which was approved along with the Co-Chair's proposal.

On a paragraph encouraging "the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other multilateral funds, bilateral donors, and funding initiatives" to identify finance solutions and consider ways to facilitate direct access to IPLCs:

- JAPAN, AUSTRALIA, SWITZERLAND, and NORWAY stressed that GEF decisions lie outside SB8j's mandate;
- NIGERIA, supported by the DRC, noted the dialogue covered other actors and mechanisms, including the private sector; and
- CHINA added that not all mechanisms cited can establish simplified direct access procedures.

To address these concerns, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION proposed referring to “funding providers and initiatives.” Delegates accepted the compromise proposal and reference to the GEF, other multilateral funds, and bilateral donors was deleted.

Concerning a sub-paragraph inviting these funding providers and initiatives “to consider establishing or enhancing simplified procedures and dedicated funding windows to facilitate direct access to IPLCs,” PANAMA and MEXICO stressed the importance of direct access. SOUTH AFRICA suggested adding “taking into account the needs and priorities of IPLCs” and “persons with disabilities” to “women and youth.” The RUSSIAN FEDERATION proposed adding “accountable” to “transparent, fair, and equitable manner.”

EGYPT, JORDAN, and INDIA underscored the importance of national contexts, with INDIA reiterating all funding must “go through national governments.” Acting Co-Chair Durán suggested adding “in accordance with national circumstances and legislation.” With these amendments the paragraph and subparagraphs were accepted.

Parties agreed that the next dialogue’s theme will be “Enhancement of the contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in line with a human rights-based approach.”

A final recommendation will be prepared.

Process to Review and Update the Glossary

Acting Co-Chair Durán introduced the CRP on the process to review and update the [Voluntary Glossary](#) of Key Terms and Concepts Within the Context of Article 8(j) ([CBD/SB8J/1/CRP.2](#)).

BRAZIL noted that several of its suggestions were not included in the CRP.

The plenary engaged in a lengthy discussion over the first step contained in the process for reviewing and updating the glossary, outlined in Annex I, according to which the Secretariat shall invite Parties and others to submit views and experiences on possible elements of the glossary to be updated.

COLOMBIA, supported by BRAZIL, URUGUAY, and PANAMA, suggested adding reference to “people of African descent, comprising collectives embodying traditional lifestyles” in line with [Decision 16/6](#). Querying the proposal, Denmark, for the EU, noted that the term “IPLCs” may include people of African descent, while the DRC and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION also pointed to “relevant stakeholders.”

With delegates unable to reach a compromise, Acting Co-Chair Durán invited interested Parties, including the EU, Colombia, the DRC, China, and the Russian Federation to discuss informally with a view to reaching consensus.

Discussions continued in the evening plenary. COLOMBIA reported compromise text inviting “relevant Parties, in line with national legislation and circumstances, to include views and experiences of people of African descent, comprising collectives embodying traditional lifestyles, in their submissions.”

Parties accepted minor edits on the third step regarding convening an *ad hoc* technical expert group (AHTEG) as proposed by CANADA. They bracketed suggested additions by ZIMBABWE on the availability of resources, and by INDONESIA regarding legal and cultural contexts.

Delegates agreed to include in brackets a Co-Chair’s proposal, based on suggestions by BRAZIL and the DRC, on an additional step for a peer review of the AHTEG’s technical advice.

Parties began discussions on the AHTEG’s terms of reference. CANADA suggested language to clarify the two-step process of first reviewing the glossary and then advising on which elements should be updated. Discussions will continue Thursday.

Contact Group on the Modus Operandi of the SB8j

Co-chaired by Lucy Mulenkei, IPLC representative, Africa region, and Pernilla Malmer, Sweden, the group resumed its work on document [CBD/SB8J/1/3](#), focusing on provisions addressing the Bureau and co-chairs, budgetary matters, focal points, and documentation, as well as on the draft recommendation.

On the section addressing the Bureau and co-chairs, several paragraphs remained fully bracketed, with key divergences on:

- whether to use the seven sociocultural regions acknowledged by the UNPFII or the five UN regions when nominating the co-chairs;
 - whether IPLC nomination processes should be carried out “endorsed by Parties” and if those representatives should belong to IPLC organizations “officially registered” by “their own respective countries” or “at the national level”;
 - SB8j co-chair qualifications, including experience and time availability;
 - whether IPLC Bureau nominees “should have strong connections with IPLCs at national and local level in their respective countries”; and
 - ensuring balance between Indigenous Peoples’ and local communities’ representatives.
- On budgetary matters, delegates, among other things:
- provisionally approved that SB8j would meet once in each intersessional period, back-to-back with other subsidiary bodies’ meetings;
 - discussed the need to ensure the full and effective participation of IPLCs, particularly from developing countries, as well as from developing country Parties;
 - diverged on whether to specify that SB8j may use mechanisms established under the CBD “subject to the availability of resources”; and
 - diverged on SB8j establishing “open-ended working groups.”

Divergent views ensued on the designation process for focal points and on the documentation section.

On the draft recommendation, delegates bracketed text adopting the *modus operandi* and a paragraph inviting other CBD subsidiary bodies to support SB8j’s work.

Contact Group on Proposed Elements for the Guidelines Related to Tasks 1.1 and 1.2 of the PoW on Article 8(j) Related to IPLCs to 2030

The group, co-chaired by Jennifer Tauli Corpuz, IPLC representative, Asia region, and Sikeade Egbuwalo, Nigeria, finalized their consideration of the annex of the [non-paper](#).

Discussions focused, among others, on:

- consultative and collaborative mechanisms with legitimate IPLC bodies and organizations, and IPLC self-determination;
- using “protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures” rather than “area-based conservation” throughout the text;
- how to advance direct access funding mechanisms for IPLCs, while ensuring Party oversight;
- whether to include references to a global registry for Indigenous traditional territories or use/broaden existing ones, such as the [ICCA Registry](#); and
- approaches for Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact.

The draft recommendation remained bracketed.

In the Corridors

Delegates arrived prepared to spend the day skirting back and forth between contact groups and plenary sessions. While there was a feeling of optimism that the relatively lighter agenda of SB8j and the “refreshingly smooth” deliberations would facilitate progress, there were also indications that certain “sticky issues” would prove challenging.

The spanner in the works was the discussion of the recommendation on the in-depth dialogue on resource mobilization, which lasted longer than most expected. Despite repeated calls to bracket divisive text and move forward, the unavoidable issue of whether and how to differentiate between Indigenous Peoples and local communities surfaced in the late evening. While the UNPFII took the floor to state that “Indigenous Peoples’ rights are not negotiable,” some delegates insisted that equality prevail. This is among one of many issues that SB8j will have to address to successfully conclude its inaugural meeting.