

Summary of the 27th Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the 1st Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) and Other Provisions Related to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities: 20–30 October 2025

“This is an unprecedented step toward greater environmental democracy within the United Nations.”

The words of Irene Vélez Torres (Colombia), Co-Chair of the inaugural meeting of 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) marked the celebratory environment that characterized the proceedings of the meeting. Many participants emphasized that SB8j’s establishment is not merely symbolic but paves the way for inclusive environmental governance. As CBD Executive Secretary Astrid Schomaker underscored, to achieve this goal, much more needs to be done: “This is only the beginning of the journey, we still have mountains to climb to make the full promise of SB8j a reality for our Convention.”

SB8j 1 was held back-to-back with the 27th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 27), with both meetings focusing on the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and monitoring its progress. These contributions are key for halting and reversing biodiversity loss and averting the biodiversity crisis as the GBF’s 23 targets for 2030 and four strategic goals for 2050 offer a viable path toward the global vision of a world living in harmony with nature.

In that respect, SBSTTA 27 approved the annotated outline of the global report on collective progress in GBF implementation, and requested the Secretariat, under the guidance of the Ad Hoc Scientific and Technical Advisory Group, to prepare the report. SB8j provided advice on traditional knowledge, innovations, and practices from IPLCs for the global report, requesting the Secretariat to utilize this advice when preparing the report.

Focusing on providing scientific and technical advice according to its mandate, SBSTTA adopted 10 recommendations to forward to the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 17), which is scheduled to take place from 19-30 October 2026 in Yerevan, Armenia.

Negotiations were at times challenging, revealing divergent views on, among other things: matters related to the work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and

Ecosystem Services (IPBES); risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms (LMOs); biodiversity and climate change; and areas of potential work in the context of the GBF.

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SB8j-1 adopted six recommendations to forward to COP 17 but was unable to agree on the modalities of its *modus operandi*, forwarding it to COP 17 entirely bracketed, reflecting diverging views on the balance between a Party-led process and the full and effective participation of IPLCs. Terminology issues resurfaced under the agenda item addressing the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) recommendations. Some delegates supported UNPFII's call to "eliminate the use of the term "local communities" in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples, and to distinguish between the terms, in ongoing processes, policies, and new international agreements at all levels." Others, however, expressed stern opposition, recalling established CBD practice and decisions indicating that the terminology "Indigenous Peoples and local communities" is to be used in the future, and cautioning against relativizing the rights of local communities and their access to finance.

Final recommendations on many agenda items under the two subsidiary bodies contain numerous brackets, which will need to be resolved at COP 17, with many delegates expressing concerns and emphasizing the need for a spirit of compromise and solidarity to reach consensus.

SBSTTA 27 and SB8j-1 took place from 20-24 and 27-30 October, respectively, in Panama City, Panama, attracting more than 1,000 delegates and observers.

A Brief History of the Subsidiary Bodies

The CBD was adopted on 22 May 1992 and entered into force on 29 December 1993. There are currently 196 parties to the Convention. The CBD aims to promote the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the governing body of the Convention and currently meets every two years. Subsidiary bodies include the SBSTTA; the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI); and the newly established Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) and related provisions (SB8j).

In December 2022, COP 15 adopted the GBF, which will guide biodiversity policy in the years to come, through four overarching goals and 23 targets to be achieved by 2030.

COP 16, held from 16 October – 1 November 2024 in Cali, Colombia, focused on implementation, reviewing the development of national targets and the alignment of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) with the GBF. It further established the SB8(j), adopted modalities for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs), following eight years of negotiations, and adopted a decision on the operationalization of the multilateral mechanism for benefit-sharing from the use of digital sequence information (DSI) on genetic resources. The meeting was suspended without completing consideration of all agenda items, and the resumed session was held in Rome, Italy, from 25–27 February 2025, adopting outstanding decisions on resource mobilization; the financial mechanism; planning, monitoring, reporting, and review; and the budget.

SBSTTA was established under CBD [Article 25](#) as an open-ended, intergovernmental, multidisciplinary, scientific advisory body to provide the COP and other subsidiary bodies with scientific and technical advice relating to the Convention's implementation. Article 25 further elaborates on SBSTTA's functions, including providing assessments of the status of biodiversity and the effects of types of

measures taken in accordance with CBD provisions, and responding to questions that the COP may pose. SBSTTA further serves the Cartagena Protocol (CP) on biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol (NP) on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization, with CP [Article 30](#) and NP [Article 27](#) stipulating that any subsidiary body established by or under the Convention may also serve the protocols.

SBSTTA carries out its work according to its consolidated [modus operandi](#), set forth in Annex III of [Decision VIII/10](#) (operations of the Convention), which elaborates on SBSTTA's functions, operating principles, rules of procedure, and other modalities.

SBSTTA has met 27 times to date and produced over 250 recommendations to the COP.

The Convention recognizes the dependency of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) on biodiversity and their unique role in conserving life on Earth. This recognition is enshrined in the preamble of the Convention and its provisions. Under Article 8(j) of the Convention, each party has undertaken to, "subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations, and practices of Indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations, and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations, and practices."

SB8j's predecessor, the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and related provisions (WG8j), was established through [Decision IV/9](#), adopted in 1998. The WG8j met 12 times, producing over 70 recommendations to the COP.

SB8j was established in 2024 at COP 16 ([CBD/COP/DEC/16/5](#)) to provide advice to the COP, other subsidiary bodies, and, subject to their request, the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the CP and the COP serving as the MOP to the NP, on matters of relevance to IPLCs that are within the scope of the Convention and its Protocols.

Recent SBSTTA Sessions: SBSTTA 24 took place in two parts due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Part I convened virtually in May–June 2021. Plenary sessions took place on 3–4 May, 23–26 May, and 7–9 June 2021, with contact groups convening in between. The meeting addressed several scientific and technical matters related to the GBF, as well as matters related to synthetic biology, risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms (LMOs), and marine and coastal biodiversity. Delegates agreed to defer the adoption of recommendations to Part II, which convened in a hybrid format from 14–29 March 2022, in Geneva, Switzerland. They adopted 11 recommendations to support the review of the GBF and address, among others, the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook; the work programme of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES); synthetic biology; invasive alien species (IAS); and the GBF monitoring framework.

SBSTTA 25 was held from 15–20 October 2023, in Nairobi, Kenya. It adopted eight recommendations, including on: plant conservation; IAS; sustainable wildlife management; the GBF monitoring framework; scientific, technical, and technological inputs that should inform the global review of collective progress in GBF implementation; and climate change.

SBSTTA 26 convened from 13–18 May 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya. It adopted recommendations on the GBF monitoring framework,

including relevant indicators and mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting, and review; scientific and technical needs to support GBF implementation; synthetic biology; risk assessment and risk management; detection and identification of LMOs; marine and coastal biodiversity; and biodiversity and health.

Recent Sessions of the WG8(j): WG8j-11 took place in Montreal, Canada, from 20–22 November 2019. WG8j-11 forwarded four recommendations to COP15 on: future in-depth dialogues; development of a new programme of work (PoW) and institutional arrangements on Article 8(j) and other provisions of the Convention related to IPLCs; options for possible elements of work aimed at an integration of nature and culture in the GBF; and recommendations from the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). The meeting also featured an in-depth dialogue on the “contribution of traditional knowledge (TK), innovations, and practices of IPLCs, and cultural diversity to the GBF.”

WG8j-12 was held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 12–16 November 2023, and it forwarded five recommendations to COP 16 on: future in-depth dialogues; the updated draft knowledge management component of the GBF; the development of a new PoW and institutional arrangements on Article 8(j) and other provisions of the Convention related to IPLCs; the joint PoW on the links between biological and cultural diversity, including on a review and update of the four adopted TK indicators; and recommendations of the UNPFII. The meeting also featured an in-depth dialogue on the “role of languages in the intergenerational transmission of TK, innovations and practices.”

SBSTTA 27 Report

On [Monday, 20 October](#), SBSTTA Chair Jean Bruno Mikissa (Gabon) opened the meeting, highlighting the provision of scientific and technical advice as the key focus to support the preparation of the global review of collective progress in GBF implementation.

Noting that parties have submitted 3,300 GBF-aligned national targets and that 55 parties have submitted their NBSAPs, CBD Executive Secretary Astrid Schomaker urged delegates to accelerate efforts to provide evidence-based guidance to ensure synergies in tackling biodiversity loss and climate change.

Calling to turn ambition into real actions, Juan Carlos Navarro, Minister of Environment, Panama, called for a sustainable bioeconomy that converts natural wealth into well-being for people. He stressed that without financing, implementation is impossible, stating that “we can have targets, decisions, and declarations, but without real resources, the GBF will be just another promise.”

Organizational Matters

Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work:

Delegates adopted the provisional agenda ([CBD/SBSTTA/27/1](#)) and organization of work according to the annotated provisional agenda ([CBD/SBSTTA/27/1/Add.1/Rev.1](#)) and the scenario note ([CBD/SBSTTA/27/1/Add.2](#)).

Chile, for the LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN GROUP (GRULAC), supported by EGYPT, expressed concern over the limited funding available for participation of developing country representatives at SBSTTA 27, noting it is a clear disadvantage in terms of negotiating capacities and requested that working modalities reflect these limitations.

Election of officers: On Monday, Ruliyana Susanti (Indonesia) was elected as rapporteur.

Canada, for the WESTERN EUROPEAN AND OTHERS GROUP (WEOG), nominated Niklaus Wagner (Switzerland), and Czechia, for CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, nominated Karen Khachatryan (Armenia).

On Tuesday, South Africa, for the AFRICAN GROUP, nominated Dickson Chitupa (Zimbabwe). Bangladesh, for ASIA-PACIFIC, nominated Camille Inatio (Federated States of Micronesia), and Bo Karl Bengt Fellenius (Marshall Islands) as an alternate, for matters relating to the CP. Grenada, for GRULAC, nominated Kishma Priums-Ormond (Antigua and Barbuda). All candidates to serve on the Bureau for a term commencing at the end of the present meeting were elected by acclamation.

Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and Review: Global Review of Collective Progress in the Implementation of the GBF

This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Monday and Friday, and in a contact group, co-chaired by Sanne Kruid (the Netherlands) and Hesiquio Benítez (Mexico) on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

Discussions focused on the work of the *Ad Hoc* Scientific and Technical Advisory Group for the Preparation of the Global Report on Collective Progress in the Implementation of the GBF, particularly the draft report’s annotated outline. Delegates discussed the report’s structure and content. Emphasizing that national data should be the primary source of information, many underscored the need for Parties to update their NBSAPs and submit comprehensive seventh national reports. Discussions were productive, and SBSTTA delegates forwarded a clean recommendation to COP 17 for further deliberation.

On [Monday](#), the Secretariat introduced the relevant documents ([CBD/SBSTTA/27/2](#), [INF/4/Rev.1](#), and [INF/5](#)). Delegates exchanged initial views, agreeing that the annotated outline is a good basis for further deliberations. They discussed, among other things, commitments and contributions of non-state actors, including IPLCs, women, and youth. Many Parties, including GHANA and SWEDEN, underscored the significance of such contributions, while some expressed concerns about data quality and reliability, data fragmentation, and lack of coordination. Zimbabwe, for the AFRICAN GROUP, called for a robust analysis of financial resources, while BRAZIL called for an analysis of potential implementation costs per target.

Contact group discussions focused on five contentious issues: data information and relevant sources to use for the global report; information on contributions from actors other than state actors; progress toward the CBD’s 2050 Vision; means of implementation; and policy-relevant suggestions and the path forward.

On [Tuesday](#), the contact group proceeded to textual negotiations using a non-paper prepared by the Co-Chairs. Discussions focused on, among other issues, how contributions by actors other than national governments will be reflected, and how to address limitations in the report, including limited data representativeness.

On [Thursday](#), the contact group focused on: the sources of information; ways to uphold the Convention’s principles in the analysis of means of implementation, distinguishing Parties’ responsibilities; and how to ensure the report’s findings remain non-prescriptive.

On [Friday](#), delegates addressed a conference room paper (CRP) (CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.6). Delegates agreed to note that the report will be undertaken in a facilitative, non-intrusive, and non-punitive

manner, avoiding placing an undue burden on Parties and respecting their policy space. They further agreed to request the Secretariat to provide support for an informal technical dialogue among Parties and others to collect input for the global review, including through sharing best practices, challenges, gaps, and solutions.

Final Recommendation: In its final recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.4), SBSTTA urges Parties to submit their seventh national reports by 28 February 2026, and, for those that have not yet done so, to submit their NBSAPs.

SBSTTA approves the annotated outline of the global report contained in the annex to the recommendation and requests the Secretariat, under the guidance of the *Ad Hoc* Scientific and Technical Advisory Group, to prepare the report according to [Decision 16/32](#).

SBSTTA further requests the Secretariat to:

- provide support to Parties for national report submission;
- collect information through the online reporting tool on commitments by actors other than national governments; and
- support informal technical dialogues among Parties and other stakeholders to share best practices, identify gaps, and propose solutions.

The annexed annotated outline provides the structure of the global report as follows:

- a concise summary of the conclusions and key messages;
- Part I, on the introduction, status, and trends in biodiversity;
- Part II, on a summary of NBSAPs, national targets, and national report submissions, collective progress toward the GBF's targets and goals, means of implementation, and contributions of other multilateral environmental agreements and international processes; and
- Part III, on conclusions and key messages, including syntheses of progress, challenges, and opportunities.

Matters Related to the Work Programme of IPBES

This agenda item was discussed in plenary on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Discussions highlighted IPBES's role in integrating multiple scientific disciplines and Indigenous and local knowledges, stressing the importance of effectively communicating findings across scales and stakeholders.

On [Monday](#), the Secretariat introduced the relevant documents ([CBD/SBSTTA/27/3](#), [Add.1](#), [Add.2](#), and [Add.3](#)). Many delegates welcomed the work of IPBES, including the thematic assessments and summaries for policymakers of the [Nexus](#) and [Transformative Change](#) Assessments. Several Parties, including Malawi for the AFRICAN GROUP, DENMARK, SWEDEN, SPAIN, the NETHERLANDS, GERMANY, NEW ZEALAND, CZECHIA, CANADA, SWITZERLAND, COLOMBIA, and INDONESIA, underscored the need to bridge the science-policy divide, called for enhanced collaboration, and for simple, clear, and implementable recommendations to facilitate uptake in national policy contexts.

On [Wednesday](#), delegates addressed a CRP (CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.1). Discussions on the Nexus Assessment resumed, with the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, and INDIA suggesting to “take note of” rather than “welcome” it. Delegates further addressed a list of actors in a paragraph encouraging engagement in the preparation of the second global assessment.

On [Friday](#), delegates resumed consideration of the CRP. Chair Mikissa noted that agreement could not be reached on “welcoming/taking note of” the Nexus Assessment and on the list of actors,

which remained bracketed. Provisions addressing requests to the Secretariat and to the regional and subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centers, also remained bracketed.

Final Recommendation: In the final text (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.10), SBSTTA recommends that COP 17, among other things:

- encourage coordination and cooperation among relevant actors and stakeholders working on biodiversity, water, food, health, and climate change; and
- welcome the approval of the undertaking of a second global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services; and encourage Parties and others to engage in its preparation, noting its relevance, including as a scientific input to the global review of collective progress, in GBF implementation.

A number of provisions remain fully bracketed, requiring further negotiations at COP 17, including on whether to:

- “welcome” or “take note of” the Nexus Assessment, and the Transformative Change Assessment, respectively, including its summary for policymakers and its key messages, and note their relevance to the work undertaken under the Convention and GBF implementation; and
- “encourage” or “invite” Parties and others to promote and implement a synergistic and holistic approach to biodiversity issues in line with the Nexus Assessment; and to promote and implement approaches in line with the Transformative Change Assessment, respectively.

Due to a lack of time, provisions that were not discussed during plenary remain bracketed, including on:

- a request to the Secretariat to: invite Parties and others to submit their views and experiences on implementing transformative change and nexus approaches when implementing the GBF; compile that information and make it available to SBSTTA at a meeting held before COP 18; and utilize the Nexus and Transformative Change assessments' findings in relevant Convention work;
- requests to the regional and subregional support centers and the global coordination entity to provide, upon request, support for capacity-building and development for implementing transformational and nexus approaches when implementing the GBF; and
- an invitation to IPBES to consider how to further facilitate the uptake of the key messages identified in the Nexus and Transformative Change assessments by Parties and others.

Biodiversity and Climate Change

This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday, and in a contact group, co-chaired by Clarisse Kehler Siebert (Sweden) and Sikeade Egbuwalo (Nigeria), on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Discussions focused, among other things, on the expanded supplement to the [Voluntary Guidelines](#) for the Design and Effective Implementation of Ecosystem-based Approaches to Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction; cooperation and synergies; and advisory opinions related to climate change. Despite progress, the final recommendation to COP 17 contains several brackets.

On [Monday](#), the Secretariat introduced the relevant documents [CBD/SBSTTA/27/4](#), [INF/8](#), and [INF/11](#), and delegates initiated discussions.

On [Tuesday](#), many delegates, including Denmark for the EU, EGYPT, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, CANADA, URUGUAY, CHILE, PANAMA, and UGANDA, underscored that biodiversity

loss, climate change, desertification, and land and ocean degradation are interdependent and inseparable crises that require coordinated, integrated, and holistic solutions. They discussed ways to further operationalize cooperation and synergies, including through the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions. SAUDI ARABIA stressed the importance of respecting the competencies of each Rio Convention.

Many delegations emphasized the importance of respecting and conserving TK and recognizing and valuing diverse knowledge systems. They diverged on the appropriateness of addressing the advisory opinion of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on the climate emergency and human rights, as well as the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on obligations of states in respect to climate change. Many suggested an intersessional peer review process to update the draft supplement to the Voluntary Guidelines for consideration at COP 17.

Discussions in the contact group focused on the proposed peer review process and the draft SBSTTA recommendation contained in a non-paper.

The contact group continued its work on [Wednesday](#), with delegates trying to find common ground regarding references to the advisory opinions and the peer review process. They agreed to encourage Parties and others to take steps to promote and implement integrated and synergistic approaches for biodiversity and nexus elements, in accordance with national priorities and circumstances; and to delete a paragraph on CBD decisions on climate-related geoeengineering.

On [Thursday](#), the contact group addressed an outstanding footnote in the draft SBSTTA recommendation on how to reference the [Paris Agreement](#), as well as requests to the Secretariat for further work.

On [Friday](#), delegates addressed the CRP (CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.9). Following lengthy discussions, they agreed, among other things, to: bracket the annex on the supplement to the voluntary guidelines pending the peer-review process; delete a provision related to the requests to the Joint Liaison Group; and request the Secretariat to collaborate with the Secretariats of the other Rio Conventions on the organization of technical information exchanges to, among others, further discuss options to enhance cooperation, policy coherence, and synergies, and develop a multilevel road map, and report to COP 17.

Delegates approved the CRP and adopted it as the final recommendation.

Final Recommendation: In the final recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/26/L.5), SBSTTA, among other things, requests the Secretariat to invite:

- Parties and others to participate in a peer review of an updated, expanded supplement to the Voluntary Guidelines, including the annexed revised primer for policymakers, and, following the peer review, to make the further revised primer for policymakers available for consideration by COP 17;
- the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Secretariats to collaborate on strengthening the role and function of the Joint Liaison Group; and
- the Secretariats of the other Rio Conventions, and the current and incoming COP presidencies of the three Rio Conventions, to collaborate on the organization of technical information exchanges to further discuss options to enhance cooperation, policy coherence, and synergies, and subsequently develop a

multilevel road map with short-, medium-, and long-term actions, and to report its findings at COP 17.

SBSTTA recommends that COP 17, among other things, encourage Parties and others to: take steps to promote and implement integrated and synergistic approaches for biodiversity and the other nexus elements; make use of the Voluntary Guidelines and its supplement, including through effective social and environmental safeguards; and, when undertaking actions toward the achievement of the GBF targets, to collectively scale up investments for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity through climate change mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction.

SBSTTA further recommends COP 17 to request the Secretariat to: collaborate with the UNFCCC and UNCCD Secretariats on assessing and strengthening the mandate of the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions; and to increase transparency and engagement between the Group and Parties.

In provisions containing bracketed alternative language, SBSTTA 27 further recommends that COP 17:

- “take note of” or “welcome” the Nexus and Transformative Change Assessments and their relevance to the Convention’s work and to GBF implementation; and
- “encourage” or “urge” Parties and others, when undertaking actions to achieve GBF targets, to undertake a list of fully bracketed actions, including to: identify and operationalize potential biodiversity and climate synergies through their NBSAPs and national targets; promote positive impacts and avoid negative impacts of climate action on biodiversity, ensuring adequate, predictable, and easily accessible means of implementation; and prioritize the protection, conservation, restoration, sustainable management, and enhancement of ecosystems that contribute to carbon storage, sequestration, and adaptation.

Some recommendations to COP 17 remain fully bracketed, requiring further negotiations to reach an agreement, including provisions to:

- take note of [Advisory Opinion 31](#) of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice concerning the obligations of States in respect of climate change; and
- request the Secretariat to: develop dissemination tools for Parties and others on the use of the Voluntary Guidelines and its supplement; and to further pursue enhancing policy coherence, in collaboration with the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions, the Joint Capacity-building Programme, and others.

Annexed to the recommendation is the bracketed Supplement to the Voluntary Guidelines.

Scientific and Technical Needs to Support the Implementation of the GBF

On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant documents [CBD/SBSTTA/27/5](#), [Add.1](#), [Add.2](#), and [Add.3](#). Discussions continued under three sub-items.

Strategic Review and Analysis of PoWs under the Convention: This item was discussed in plenary on Tuesday and Friday, and in a contact group, co-chaired by Scott Wilson (Canada) and Senka Barudanović (Bosnia and Herzegovina), on Wednesday and Thursday.

On [Tuesday](#), Zimbabwe for the AFRICAN GROUP noted the short review time and limited Party submissions, and suggested

the Secretariat organize an open-ended online forum to facilitate further review of the report. Some Parties, including DENMARK, BELGIUM, SWEDEN, and JAPAN, sought clarifications on resource and workload implications for future work and collaborations. They also made suggestions on organizing and prioritizing areas of work.

On [Wednesday](#), the contact group began its deliberations on a non-paper developed on the basis of oral submissions presented in plenary and written proposals submitted by Parties.

On [Thursday](#), the contact group discussed a request to the Secretariat to forward the strategic review and analysis of the PoWs to the SBI, without reaching consensus. Parties further diverged on the review's scope, particularly on whether it should address only PoWs, or also "other areas of work," or "cross-cutting issues." They agreed to request the Secretariat to propose a "systematic approach, timeline, and schedule" of review and potential updating of PoWs."

On [Friday](#), delegates addressed the CRP (CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.7). They agreed to delete references to "other areas of work" and "cross-cutting issues" in the recommendation, retaining only reference to the PoWs. Despite opposition by some Parties, including the EU, the UK, CANADA, NORWAY, and SWITZERLAND, they deleted a bracketed paragraph requesting the Secretariat to forward the strategic review and analysis of the PoWs to the SBI. As a compromise, they agreed to add language "noting the work undertaken to date," to a paragraph requesting the Secretariat to propose a systematic approach for the review.

Delegates approved the CRP with these amendments.

Final Recommendation: In the final recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.8), SBSTTA, noting the work undertaken to date, requests the Secretariat to propose a systematic approach, timeline, and schedule of review and potential updating of the PoWs under the Convention, in alignment with the GBF, identifying efficiencies, and improving implementation consistency, to the Bureau of the COP for its consideration, with a view to address the issue at the SBI 7 in the context of the multi-year PoW.

SBSTTA recommends that COP 17 adopt a decision appreciating the evaluation methodology contained in the annex to the present recommendation prepared by the Secretariat and noting its potential for future use in reviewing the work of the Convention.

Delegates were unable to agree on bracketed provisions addressing lists of PoWs: to be maintained close to their current form and regularly updated; that would benefit from being updated to better align with the GBF; that would benefit from being integrated; and that would be led by partner organizations and Parties, whose achievements would be recorded on the CBD's website and the CHM.

SBSTTA's recommendation to COP 17 further contains:

- a request to the Secretariat to analyze the implications and potential benefits of integrating PoWs, pertaining to the list of PoWs to be integrated on which there was no agreement; and
- an annex containing a schedule for updating the PoWs as well as an approach for updating PoWs, pertaining to the list of PoWs to be updated on which there was no agreement.

Strategic Review of and Updates to the Expanded PoW

on Forest Biodiversity: This item was discussed in plenary on Tuesday and Friday, and in a contact group, co-chaired by Marina von Weissenberg (Finland) and Jahidul Kabir (Bangladesh), on Wednesday.

On [Tuesday](#), Zimbabwe, for the AFRICAN GROUP, welcomed the work expansion but requested attention to: co-management

concepts; forest restoration; and increased technical and financial support, especially regarding qualitative aspects of forest management and forest inventories. Parties exchanged views on focus areas for the expanded PoW and noted the need to fully align the PoW with the GBF.

During contact group discussions on [Wednesday](#), many delegates stressed that unprecedented forest loss and degradation require urgent attention, while some expressed concerns about revising the expanded PoW and producing additional guidance at a time when NBSAPs have already been updated, suggesting focusing efforts on implementation at the national level. Deliberations focused on the draft recommendation and on the annex containing the updated PoW activities in the context of each GBF target, without reaching consensus.

On [Friday](#), Chair Mikissa introduced a fully bracketed CRP (CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.5), which was approved.

Final Recommendation: In the final text (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.7), SBSTTA recommends that COP 17 consider updates and complementary activities to the expanded PoW on forest biodiversity to align it with the GBF.

The entire recommendation, including the annex, remains bracketed. Additional brackets in several paragraphs indicate that in-depth discussions will be needed at COP 17 to reach consensus, including, in preambular paragraphs, on references to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UNFCCC, and the Paris Agreement.

Further brackets exist in operative paragraphs, on:

- whether and how to note or welcome the IPBES thematic assessments and their "potential relevance" to forest biodiversity;
- endorsing the annexed complementary activities as priority actions to support GBF implementation as they relate to forest biodiversity;
- recognizing that such implementation measures should not constitute a means of discrimination or restriction on international trade;
- encouraging Parties to apply a human-rights-based and gender-responsive approach and intergenerational equity in implementing the PoW on forests; and
- inviting Parties to mainstream forest biodiversity through the PoW on annexed activities into and across relevant sectors.

Additional bracketed provisions relate to requests for the Secretariat to:

- enhance cooperation with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and identify future joint initiatives;
- compile and share Party and stakeholder experiences in using the expanded PoW and the complementary activities;
- integrate these elements into relevant CBD capacity-building and scientific cooperation efforts;
- strengthen communication on forest biodiversity among all stakeholders; and
- report to the SBI prior to COP 18.

The fully bracketed recommendation also contains provisions with no additional brackets, indicating areas of broader convergence, including on:

- recognizing the importance of mobilizing predictable, adequate, and sustainable means of implementation to ensure the effective implementation of the expanded PoW on forest biodiversity;
- inviting Parties and other governments to consider the annexed complementary activities when updating or implementing

their NBSAPs, national targets, and developing relevant forest programmes and initiatives;

- inviting relevant multilateral environmental agreements, organizations, and partnerships, to contribute to implementation of annexed activities, through targeted capacity-building and development programmes;
- inviting IPLCs and other stakeholders to use the annex as guidance to support implementation; and
- inviting members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to enhance their individual and collective contributions to support Parties.

The annex, which also remains fully bracketed, details 38 complementary activities linked to specific GBF targets to further support implementation of the GBF as it relates to forest biodiversity.

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

This item was addressed in plenary on Tuesday and Friday, and in a contact group, co-chaired by Senka Barudanović (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Scott Wilson (Canada), on Thursday.

On [Tuesday](#), delegates discussed as areas of potential further work: pollution and biodiversity, including the potential establishment of an *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group (AHTEG); equity, gender equality, and the human rights-based approach; and different value systems.

Discussions in the contact group on [Thursday](#) focused on the aforementioned areas of potential further work, also addressing biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning; and sustainable biodiversity-based activities, products, and services that enhance biodiversity.

On [Friday](#), delegates discussed the CRP (CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.10), including a heavily bracketed draft recommendation. They deleted the section on equity, gender equality, and the human rights-based approach, following an objection by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and inability to reach a compromise. On pollution and biodiversity, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION requested deleting requests to the Secretariat to invite Parties and others to submit information on the relevant impacts. Delegates agreed to invite a list of pollution-related bodies and organizations to provide information on their activities.

The CRP was approved with numerous brackets.

Final Recommendation: In the final recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.9), SBSTTA requests the Secretariat to invite pollution-related bodies, conventions, and organizations to provide information on their activities on the interaction of chemicals and waste, including plastic waste, with biodiversity and ecosystem services, and to make the information available at SBSTTA 28 or COP 17.

Delegates were unable to agree on SBSTTA recommendations to COP 17, which remain fully bracketed. These address:

- for biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning, requests to the Secretariat to prepare a report on experiences with participatory, integrated, and biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning with a focus on terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems; organize an expert workshop based on the report's findings; and develop a proposal for potential further work for consideration by SBSTTA before COP 18.
- alternate bracketed provisions on pollution and biodiversity: with option one recommending, among others, that COP 17 establish an AHTEG on pollution and biodiversity, and adopt its terms of reference contained in an annex, and invite parties and others to submit scientific and technical information to the Secretariat; and

option two, inviting pollution-related bodies, conventions, and organizations to strengthen their focus and enhance their activities on the interaction of chemicals and waste with biodiversity and ecosystem services to advance GBF implementation, and requesting the Secretariat to engage with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution and others to prepare a report on the work those entities may do toward GBF Target 7 implementation.

- requests to the Secretariat to: prepare a report on experiences with or in implementing sustainable biodiversity-based activities, products, and services that enhance biodiversity; hold an expert workshop to provide technical and scientific advice on the definition, scope, and elements of the concept of sustainable biodiversity-based activities, products, and services that enhance biodiversity; and to prepare a report for consideration by SBSTTA at a meeting before COP 18;
- requests to the Secretariat to further develop a proposal for potential additional work on equity, gender equality, and the human rights-based approach, and to submit the proposal for consideration by SBI and SB8j at meetings to be held before COP 18; and
- invitations to the regional and subregional support centers and others to use and support the use of [the Methodological Assessment Report on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature of IPBES](#) in GBF implementation; and requests to the Secretariat to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and good practices among Parties and others, to support the effective integration of diverse values and knowledge systems into GBF implementation.

Risk Assessment and Risk Management of LMOs

This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Tuesday and Friday, and in a contact group, co-chaired by Martha Kandawa-Schulz (Namibia) and Werner Schenkel (Germany), on Wednesday and Thursday.

On [Tuesday](#), the Secretariat presented document [CBD/SBSTTA/27/6](#). Discussions focused on the work of the AHTEG on risk assessment and the outcomes of the structured analysis of the topics of risk assessment proposed by Parties in relation to needs and priorities for further guidance.

Many Parties, including MEXICO, NORWAY, BELGIUM, GERMANY, AUSTRIA, SWEDEN, DENMARK, FINLAND, SWITZERLAND, MOROCCO, HUNGARY, and SOUTH AFRICA, welcomed the conclusions of the AHTEG and its recommendation to develop additional voluntary guidance materials and supported establishing a new AHTEG and extending the relevant open-ended online forum. Many delegations, including NORWAY, AUSTRIA, DENMARK, GERMANY, HUNGARY, SWEDEN, BELGIUM, FINLAND, and GUATEMALA, noted that the AHTEG's workload is excessive and suggested prioritizing a few of the seven identified topics for the development of additional guidance during the intersessional period.

Others, including NEW ZEALAND, PANAMA, BRAZIL, ZIMBABWE, and MALAWI, noted that it is unnecessary to develop additional guidance, stressing that sufficient guidance exists and suggesting focusing on implementation and capacity-building activities.

Discussions in the contact group on [Wednesday](#), on the basis of a non-paper, sought to balance a pragmatic approach with concerns about developing additional guidance. The contact group resumed

deliberations on [Thursday](#), addressing terminology issues around “guidance materials” and “technical notes.” Delegates provisionally agreed to expand capacity-building efforts on risk assessment and risk management of LMOs and 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 the Biosafety Technical Series 07, launched during SBSTTA 27. They further provisionally agreed to develop a maximum of two additional voluntary guidance materials, with many Parties expressing their preferences.

On [Friday](#), delegates discussed the CRP (CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.8). Some Parties 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, for consideration by SBSTTA at a meeting held before the 13th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the CP (COP/MOP 13). The suggestion was bracketed.

Delegates approved the heavily bracketed CRP and adopted it as the final recommendation

Final Recommendation: In the final text (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.6), SBSTTA recommends that COP/MOP 12 to the CP: express appreciation for the work of the AHTEG; urge Parties and others to engage in broad international cooperation to share information and experiences related to risk assessment, in particular through the Biosafety Clearing-House, and promote capacity-building and development activities with regard to the topics prioritized; and invite the relevant support centers to assist Parties in addressing their needs and priorities.

It further recommends that COP/MOP 12 request the Secretariat to: synthesize information related to specific needs for further guidance on topics of risk assessment and risk management in national reports; continue to undertake capacity-building and development activities on existing guidance materials through regional workshops; and continue to collect experiences and assessments of the applicability and usefulness of the additional voluntary guidance materials to support case-by-case risk assessment of LMOs containing engineered gene drives and make them available through the Biosafety Clearing-House.

In fully bracketed provisions, SBSTTA recommends that COP/MOP 12 decide to:

- develop a maximum of two additional voluntary guidance materials for the topics of: LM algae; LM fish; LM microorganisms; LMOs expressing genome editing machinery for pest or pathogen control; long-term and cumulative effects of genetic constructs and LMOs; operationalizing protection goals into relevant assessment and measurement end points; and the use of LMOs in centers of origin and in traditional agricultural systems;
- expand capacity-building efforts on risk assessment and risk management of LMOs, making use of existing information and guidance materials, with two alternative options on how to include reference to Biosafety Technical Series 07;
- establish a new AHTEG and invite Parties and others to submit relevant information to support the AHTEG’s work;
- extend the open-ended online forum; and
- consider at COP/MOP 13 additional issues on which guidance materials may be needed.

In further fully bracketed requests, SBSTTA recommends that COP/MOP 12 request the Secretariat to: convene at least two meetings of the AHTEG and discussions in the open-ended online

forum before COP/MOP 13, and to request SBSTTA to consider the outcome before COP/MOP 13 and to make recommendations.

The terms of reference for the AHTEG are contained in the annex, which remains fully bracketed.

Invasive Alien Species

This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.

On [Tuesday](#), the Secretariat introduced the relevant documents, [CBD/SBSTTA/27/7](#), [INF/2/Rev.1](#), and [INF/3](#). Parties converged on the critical threat posed by IAS not only to biodiversity, but also to livelihoods, well-being, health, and the economy. Many Parties, including South Africa, for the AFRICAN GROUP, the Cook Islands, for PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES, INDIA, and INDONESIA, emphasized the need for increased funding, capacity-building, and technology transfer, as well as the strengthening of regional cooperation platforms.

Many delegates, including Denmark, for the EU, JAPAN, INDIA, and INDONESIA, supported broad stakeholder engagement and underlined the need for cross-sectoral coordination; others underscored the importance of data availability, accessibility, and knowledge sharing.

On [Thursday](#), they addressed the CRP (CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.2). They discussed, among other things, collaborative approaches; ways to strengthen cross-sectoral and cross-border collaboration; a list of requests to the Secretariat for collaboration with the Liaison Group on IAS; the development of training materials for a list of emerging tools; and requests to the Secretariat for further work.

The CRP was approved with these and other minor amendments.

On [Friday](#), delegates adopted the final recommendation. Denmark, for the EU, NORWAY, the UK, SWITZERLAND, and EGYPT expressed frustration with the brackets on a list of requests to the Secretariat.

Final Recommendation: In its final text (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.2), SBSTTA recommends that COP 17 encourage Parties and invite others to:

- improve collection, analysis, storage, and sharing of data on IAS impacts, and on introduction and spread pathways;
 - consider integrated and collaborative approaches across relevant sectors, including the private sector, to address the challenges posed by IAS; and
 - strengthen cross-sectoral and cross-border collaboration.
- On these provisions, brackets remain on: the list of stakeholders to invite; the invitation to implement the [Global Action Plan on Biodiversity and Health](#); reference to the [One Health](#) approach; and on whether to “consider the use” or “to use” integrated and collaborative approaches. In the preamble, a reference emphasizing the connections between climate change and IAS remains bracketed.
- Requests to the Secretariat also remain bracketed, including on:
- coordination with relevant conventions and organizations and collaboration with the Inter-Agency Liaison Group on IAS;
 - compilation of lessons learned to improve cross-sectoral collaboration at national and regional levels;
 - exploration of strategies for early detection and rapid response;
 - development of training materials on emerging tools, such as predictive modeling, environmental DNA, and AI-based detection, with “synthetic biology” bracketed;
 - enhancement of technical capacity and technology transfer;
 - organization of an online forum for sharing experience and lessons learned; and

- continued improvement of the CBD [IAS Portal](#) by expanding data on globally significant and national IAS, ensuring multilingual access.

Biodiversity and Agriculture

This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Tuesday and Friday.

On [Tuesday](#), the Secretariat introduced documents [CBD/SBSTTA/27/8](#), [INF/7](#), [INF/14](#), [INF/16](#), and [INF/17](#), and noted that the pilot procedure for early submission of documents would apply.

Some Parties welcomed progress made by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and other relevant organizations in supporting the implementation of the [Plan of Action \(2020–2030\)](#) for the International Initiative for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Soil Biodiversity, and supported further engagement.

On [Friday](#), delegates addressed the CRP (CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.3). Delegates agreed to invite the FAO to continue facilitating the implementation of the Plan of Action. Discussions further focused on provisions: encouraging Parties to integrate the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of soil biodiversity in their NBSAPs and in climate and land policy instruments through biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning; inviting Parties to strengthen cooperation; community-based monitoring; and phasing out or reforming harmful subsidies. They further addressed a list of requests to the Secretariat, which the RUSSIAN FEDERATION bracketed the list of requests.

The CRP was approved with brackets.

Final Recommendation: In the final text (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.11), SBSTTA recommends that COP 17, among other things:

- invite the FAO, including through 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 GBF, and to report on progress to SBSTTA before COP 18; and to strengthen the implementation of the Initiative by enhancing actions, notably with regard to wild pollinators;
- invite Parties to strengthen cooperation among national focal points for environmental conventions and the FAO for the conservation and restoration of soil biodiversity and soil health; and
- invite relevant organizations and others to address knowledge gaps in soil biodiversity.

In provisions containing bracketed text, SBSTTA recommends that COP 17:

- encourage Parties to integrate the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of soil biodiversity in their “NBSAPs and in climate and land policy instruments” or in their “national plans”; and
- invite Parties, and encourage others, to provide capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, technological transfer, and the training of experts to support developing countries, to establish and strengthen soil biodiversity monitoring, including community-based monitoring.

In fully bracketed provisions, SBSTTA recommends that COP 17:

- invite Parties to develop a mechanism for improved coordination among agricultural, environmental, and health sectors to mainstream sustainable soil biodiversity initiatives across sectoral plans, policies, and strategies;

- urge Parties and others to identify, eliminate, phase out, or reform incentives, including subsidies harmful to biodiversity and to redirect them towards promoting biodiversity-friendly practices;
- request the Secretariat to: continue to engage with the FAO and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture on soil biodiversity and pollinators; cooperate with relevant conventions and organizations on the development of tools, guidance, and capacity-building activities on reducing the impacts of pollution on soil biodiversity, reporting progress to SBSTTA before COP 18; and consider the establishment of an inter-agency liaison group to coordinate work on soil biodiversity; and
- request the Secretariat and invite others to continue efforts to develop harmonized methodologies and compatible indicators for the conservation and sustainable use of soil biodiversity, and to report progress to SBSTTA at a meeting held before COP 18.

Biodiversity and Health

This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

On [Wednesday](#), the Secretariat introduced document [CBD/SBSTTA/27/9](#), noting that the pilot procedure for early submission of documents would apply.

South Africa, for the AFRICAN GROUP, PANAMA, INDIA, JORDAN, and others highlighted that significant challenges remain in relation to the integration of biodiversity and health into national policies and the implementation of the [Global Action Plan on Biodiversity and Health](#), and called for capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, technology transfer, and resource mobilization for implementation. Many suggested continuing the work on the development of integrated science-based indicators, metrics, and progress measurement tools on biodiversity and health, while ARGENTINA suggested postponing their consideration until the next intersessional period.

On [Thursday](#), delegates addressed the CRP (CBD/SBSTTA/27/CRP.4). Deliberations focused on the timeline and process for the development of indicators; references to the Nexus Assessment and to the [World Health Organization Pandemic Agreement](#); the provision of financial resources to support the implementation of the Global Action Plan; and a provision on the One Health approach. The CRP was adopted containing numerous brackets.

Final Recommendation: In the final recommendation (CBD/SBSTTA/27/L.3), SBSTTA requests the Secretariat to adjust the development timeline of the integrated science-based indicators, metrics, and progress measurement tools on biodiversity and health, in order to allow adequate time for peer review and engagement; and to submit a progress report on the activities requested in paragraph 9 of [Decision 16/9](#), including the draft list of indicators, metrics, and progress measurement tools, for consideration by COP 17.

SBSTTA recommends that COP 17 invite Parties to create, in accordance with national circumstances and priorities, an enabling environment for the implementation of the Global Action Plan on Biodiversity and Health.

In provisions containing bracketed text, SBSTTA recommends that COP 17:

- “invite,” “encourage,” or “urge,” “in accordance with Article 20 of the Convention,” developed country Parties “and other Parties in a position to do so,” and others, to provide financial resources to support the implementation of the Global Action Plan in developing countries; and

- “request” or “encourage” the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to provide “new, additional, and predictable” financial support for the implementation of the Global Action Plan.

Some provisions remain fully bracketed, requiring further negotiations at COP 17 to reach an agreement, including whether to:

- “take note of” or “welcome” the IPBES Nexus Assessment, including its summary for policymakers and its key messages, as well as the 71 response options, and highlight its relevance to the Convention’s work, GBF implementation, and to the Global Action Plan;
- welcome the adoption of the WHO Pandemic Agreement; and
- urge Parties to apply the One Health approach, with bracketed alternative on how to apply the approach.

Requests to the Secretariat also remain fully bracketed, including provisions to:

- complete the work conducted on the development of integrated science-based indicators, metrics, and progress measurement tools on biodiversity and health, and allow for their review, potentially convening an expert workshop;
- compile and synthesize information from Parties and others on measures, guidance, indicators and tools, examples, best practices, and lessons learned in the implementation of the Global Action Plan and the mainstreaming of biodiversity and health interlinkages at all levels, and to make the information available, as appropriate;
- continue and strengthen cooperation on biodiversity and health with relevant organizations, including the Quadripartite collaboration on One Health and the Cooperation on Health and Biodiversity Initiative, with additional brackets around “the International Union for Conservation of Nature” and “other non-governmental organizations”;
- resume the activities of the Inter-Agency Liaison Group on Biodiversity and Health;
- continue to facilitate capacity-building activities, scientific and technical cooperation, and technology transfer to support Parties; and
- submit a report on the outcomes of its work for consideration by SBSTTA at a meeting held before COP 18.

Adoption of the Report and Closing of the Meeting

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

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.

Representatives of regional groups highlighted progress made, particularly on the annotated outline on the global review of progress in GBF implementation. Senegal, for the AFRICAN GROUP, the Federated States of Micronesia, for ASIA-PACIFIC, Antigua and Barbuda, for SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES, and Chile, for GRULAC, expressed concerns over financial and logistical constraints, and called for additional funding. Canada, for JUSCANZ, lamented that “political interventions not of a scientific nature” had resulted in the bracketing of entire paragraphs, stressing, with Denmark, for the EU, it should not become a common practice.

Observer organizations urged for, among other things, the implementation of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, and the full and effective participation of IPLCs, women, and youth, addressing the “root causes” threatening their rights.

CBD Executive Secretary Astrid Schomaker 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.”

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

SB8j 1 Report

On [Monday, 27 October](#), the meeting opened with a traditional Guna dance as a tribute to knowledge, culture, and the strength of grandmothers. “In the name of the Great Creator and the Great Mother, to the brothers and sisters who come from different parts of the world. We are all brothers and sisters. Our creator and our mother bequeathed us the legacy of walking together, united,” underlined Briseida Iglesias López de Guerrero, founder of the Bundorgan Women’s Network, in opening remarks at the inaugural meeting of SB8j.

Stressing that the establishment of SB8j is an “unprecedented step toward greater environmental democracy within the UN,” SB8j Co-Chair Irene Vélez Torres (Colombia), highlighted as a meeting priority to finalize the draft *modus operandi* of SB8j for adoption at COP 17.

“We have reached a watershed moment in the journey of the Convention,” said CBD Executive Secretary Schomaker, emphasizing that IPLCs are partners in conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Juan Carlos Navarro, Minister of Environment, Panama, acknowledged the Guna, Embera, Waunan, Gnobe, Bri bri, Naso Tier-Di, and Bugle Indigenous Peoples of Panama, and highlighted “Muu Bi-li,” a term encapsulating the interconnectedness of life, meaning Ocean Grandmother in the Guna language. He further emphasized that SB8j must ensure that its commitments translate to real policies, accessible funding, and visible results on the ground.

Organizational Matters

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: Delegates adopted the provisional agenda ([CBD/SB8J/1/1/Rev.1](#)) and the annotated provisional agenda ([CBD/SB8J/1/1/Add.1](#)).

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION stressed that representatives of IPLCs may participate only as “Friends of the Bureau,” without becoming Bureau members or having decision-making powers.

Election of officers: Gunn-Britt Retter (Arctic region) was designated to serve as Indigenous Co-Chair, together with the representative of the COP 16 presidency, Irene Vélez Torres, who was represented by Acting Co-Chair Daniela Durán González (Colombia).

In addition to Co-Chair Retter, six IPLC representatives were designated as “Friends of the Bureau,” representing the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) socio-cultural regions. Lucy Mullenkei (Africa); Jennifer Tauli Corpuz (Asia); Ramiro Batzin (Central and South America and the Caribbean); Aleksei Tsykarev (Central and Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Central Asia, and Transcaucasia); Rochelle Diver (North America); and Christine Teresa Grant (Pacific). Jonas Komi Anthé (Togo) was elected rapporteur.

In-Depth Dialogue on Resource Mobilization

This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

On [Monday](#), Co-Chair Retter introduced the document ([CBD/SB8J/1/2](#)) for the in-depth dialogue on “strategies for mobilizing resources to ensure the availability of and access to financial resources and funding, as well as other means of implementation, including capacity-building, development, and technical support for IPLCs, including women and youth, to support the full implementation of the GBF.”

Panelists highlighted, among other things, the importance of self-determination, project co-design, direct funding, and local priority-setting.

The INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY (IIFB) called for creating dedicated Indigenous-managed funding opportunities within multilateral funds and analyzing the cultural impacts of financing programmes for IPLCs.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), for the AFRICAN GROUP, called to ensure that IPLCs have the technical and financial capacity to access funding opportunities; and ensure that the GBF Fund delivers 20% of funding to IPLCs. Denmark, for the EU, highlighted the need for increased financial resources from all sources and sustained capacity-building.

Many Parties, including COLOMBIA, PANAMA, and TANZANIA, called for direct access funding mechanisms, while others, including CHINA, MALAYSIA, JORDAN, INDONESIA, INDIA, BRAZIL, and MALAWI, suggested nationally tailored approaches to direct access funding mechanisms.

On [Wednesday](#), delegates addressed a CRP.

Deliberations focused on a preambular paragraph noting that the implementation of the PoW on Article 8(j) should follow a human rights-based approach, in accordance with national legislation. Parties decided to bracket “human rights-based approach,” following a request by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, and the qualifier “in accordance with national legislation,” following a suggestion by the EU. CANADA and the EU suggested improving the in-depth dialogues’ modalities.

They further discussed a provision encouraging the GEF and others to identify finance solutions and consider ways to facilitate direct access to IPLCs, deciding to remove specific mechanisms and refer simply to “funding providers and initiatives.” The CRP was approved with these and other minor changes.

On Thursday, delegates considered the final recommendation and adopted it with an amendment by the DRC to include “women and youth” in the next dialogue’s title.

Final Recommendation: In the final text (CBD/SB8J/1/L.2), SB8j recommends that COP 17:

- encourage Parties and invite others, considering specific challenges faced by developing countries, to take into account the outcomes of the dialogue to: consider establishing or strengthening mechanisms and strategies for mobilization of adequate, predictable, and easily accessible financial resources from all sources for IPLCs, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities; and support and strengthen the self-determined priorities of IPLCs, identify gaps, promote good practices, and explore options to achieve the GBF targets;
- invite funding providers and initiatives to: support the identification and implementation of finance solutions to support IPLCs; and consider establishing or enhancing simplified procedures and dedicated funding windows to facilitate direct access by IPLCs, including women, youth, and persons with

- disabilities, in a transparent, fair, accountable, and equitable manner, taking into account IPLCs’ needs and priorities, in accordance with national circumstances and legislation; and
- decide that the next in-depth dialogue’s theme will be: “Development of guidelines, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations bodies, as well as Indigenous Peoples and local communities, including women and youth, to contribute to the enhancement of the contributions of IPLCs to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in line with a human rights-based approach, consistent with relevant international obligations and instruments.”

Modus Operandi of SB8j

This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Monday and Thursday, and in a contact group, co-chaired by Lucy Mulenkei (IPLC representative, Africa region), and Pernilla Malmer (Sweden) on Monday and Wednesday.

On [Monday](#), the Secretariat introduced the relevant documents ([CBD/SB8J/1/3](#) and [INF/3](#)).

The IIFB highlighted: applying *mutatis mutandis* the practices of the Working Group on Article 8j (WG8j); simplicity and avoiding overly prescriptive language; and the self-selection processes for IPLCs.

Many delegates, including South Africa, for the AFRICAN GROUP, Denmark, for the EU, BRAZIL, CHINA, INDIA, PANAMA, JORDAN, BANGLADESH, JAPAN, and others, stressed that SB8j should be complementary to other subsidiary bodies and avoid duplication, respecting their mandates.

Many Parties, including the AFRICAN GROUP, the EU, AUSTRALIA, NORWAY, BRAZIL, the DRC, INDIA, JORDAN, and others, emphasized that the *modus operandi* should maintain a Party-led process. Delegates further discussed the selection mechanism of Co-Chairs and “Friends of the Bureau.”

Discussions on the *modus operandi* continued in a contact group. On Monday, the group addressed the section on functions, including the ways to refer to the roles, functions, and mandates of the three CBD subsidiary bodies to avoid duplication and foster collaboration and complementarity.

On [Wednesday](#), the contact group focused on provisions addressing the Bureau and Co-Chairs, budgetary matters, focal points, and documentation, as well as the draft recommendation.

On Thursday, Acting Co-Chair Durán invited the plenary to consider and approve the relevant CRP (CBD/SB8J/1/CRP.4).

GUATEMALA, noting that the annex containing the *modus operandi* was fully bracketed, stressed that “we cannot move forward effectively without a *modus operandi*,” and invited Parties to work together toward adopting it at COP 17. The CRP was approved.

Final Recommendation: In the final text (CBD/SB8J/1/L.5), SB8j recommends that COP 17:

- adopt the *modus operandi*, which remains in brackets pending agreement;
- invite SBSTTA and SBI to support the work of SB8j by further incorporating and promoting the PoW of SB8j, with the provision remaining bracketed; and
- encourage Parties and invite others to continue and enhance their support for the full and effective participation of IPLC representatives through contributions to the Special Voluntary Trust Fund for Facilitating the Participation of IPLCs, with

bracketed references to, among others, “national priorities and circumstances” and “people of African descent.”

Annexed to the final recommendation is the proposed *modus operandi* for SB8j, which remains fully bracketed. It includes sections on: functions; operating principles; procedural matters; Bureau and Co-Chairs; budgetary matters; organizational matters; focal points; and documentation.

Implementation of the PoW on Article 8(j) to 2030

Proposed Elements for the Guidelines Related to Tasks

1.1 and 1.2 of the PoW on Article 8(j): This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Monday and Thursday, and in a contact group, co-chaired by Jennifer Tauli Corpuz (IPLC representative, Asia region) and Sikeade Egbuwalo (Nigeria) on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

On [Monday](#), the Secretariat introduced the relevant documents ([CBD/SB8j/1/4](#) and [INF/5](#)). Delegates opened deliberations addressing elements for the guidelines related to Tasks 1.1 (strengthening the legal and policy framework for the implementation of GBF Targets 2 (restore 30% of all degraded ecosystems) and 3 (conserve 30% of land, waters, and seas)); and 1.2 (the inclusion of traditional lands and resource use in spatial planning processes and environmental impact assessments) of the PoW.

The IIFB emphasized the need to: develop implementation, monitoring, and reporting mechanisms that recognize Indigenous and traditional territories’ (ITTs) direct role in conservation, restoration, and spatial planning; ensure the guidelines safeguard the rights of Indigenous Peoples living in voluntary isolation and initial contact; and adhere to the principles of the [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#).

Zimbabwe, for the AFRICAN GROUP, CHINA, MALAYSIA, INDIA, SAUDI ARABIA, BRAZIL, and JAPAN supported the development of guidelines, while underlining the need to implement them according to respective national legal systems, governance structures, circumstances, and contexts.

BRAZIL supported the recognition of ITTs as a specific pathway under GBF Target 3, while the EU and EGYPT stressed that further discussions are required. GUATEMALA emphasized the need to advance in such recognition.

On [Tuesday](#), discussions in the contact group focused on: the title of the annex; rationale; objectives; guiding principles; and the section addressing spatial planning processes.

Delegates were unable to agree on, among other things: the title of the guidelines, with a set of proposals on whether to include ITTs and how to refer to area-based conservation; the need for a differentiated protection of Indigenous Peoples in isolation and initial contact; and the title of a section on spatial planning. Delegates provisionally approved paragraphs addressing the rationale and the objectives with minor amendments, deleting an objective referencing the [Akwé: Kon Voluntary Guidelines](#).

On [Wednesday](#), contact group deliberations addressed, among other things: consultative and collaborative mechanisms with legitimate IPLC bodies and organizations, and IPLC self-determination; how to advance direct access funding mechanisms for IPLCs, while ensuring Party oversight; and whether to include references to a global registry for ITTs or use/broaden existing ones, such as the Registry of territories and areas conserved by IPLCs ([ICCA Registry](#)).

On Thursday, the contact group completed discussions on the draft recommendation, focusing on whether:

- information collection and exchange, capacity-building, and technical cooperation for the implementation of the guidelines should be led by the Secretariat, Parties, IPLCs, the global coordination entity, the Scientific and Technical Support Centers, and/or others;
- to, when, or how to refer to people of African descent;
- to encourage Parties to use the guidelines and/or its elements;
- “international law and instruments” encompass “human rights law”; and
- to, or when, to refer to “national capabilities,” and “international obligations.”
- to, or how to, acknowledge “the need to address the under-representation of IPLCs from various regions and specific challenges faced by developing countries” in the CBD’s work.

Several issues remained unresolved, including the guidelines’ title.

In plenary, Acting Co-Chair Durán introduced the CRP (CBD/SB8J/1/CRP.5), and proposed approving the document as a whole.

BRAZIL, with the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, asked for the inclusion of the agreed compromise text on differentiated approaches for Indigenous Peoples in isolation and initial contact when applying the guidelines. Parties agreed to refer to “voluntary” isolation. NAMIBIA expressed concern with bracketing text that is fundamental to the resolution of several issues, including the title of the guidelines, noting it is “kicking the can further down the road.” Acknowledging that the paragraph dealing with the consideration of ITTs as territories complementary to, and distinct from, protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures is fully bracketed, NAMIBIA requested reflecting their concerns in the meeting report. NORWAY reintroduced its proposal to add to the recognition of ITTs, “in accordance with target 3 of the GBF and national circumstances.” NEW ZEALAND requested reinserting text on a human rights-based approach. These additions were kept in brackets, and the heavily bracketed CRP was approved and then adopted as the final recommendation.

Final Recommendation: In the final text (CBD/SB8J/1/L.7), SB8j recommends that COP 17:

- encourage Parties and invite others to: integrate and apply the guidelines, as appropriate and in accordance with national legal frameworks, in spatial planning processes, NBSAPs, and environmental impact assessment procedures; and to support the dissemination of the guidelines, with bracketed references on respecting IPLC rights, and applying elements of the guidelines; and
- encourage Parties to identify and promote best practices to secure land tenure and governance by IPLCs, with bracketed references that this should be done in accordance with national legislation and circumstances, and international obligations; and
- encourage Parties and others to monitor and evaluate the use and effectiveness of the guidelines and report thereon in national reports and other appropriate mechanisms.

In fully bracketed provisions, SB8j recommends that COP 17:

- encourage Parties to strengthen the effective participation and co-leadership of IPLCs, also including people of African descent, where appropriate, in the design, implementation, and monitoring of biodiversity policies, programmes, assessments, and reporting, ensuring their full and effective participation and incorporating

community-based monitoring indicators and TK systems as complementary to other data sources, in accordance with national circumstances; and

- request the Secretariat and invite the [Global Coordination Entity](#) and [Technical Support Centers](#) to assist Parties, IPLCs, and others in implementing the guidelines; and
- invite Parties and others, in partnership with IPLCs, to identify and share their capacity-building and development needs, and invite Parties and others to offer support to address identified needs.

The voluntary guidelines, which contain multiple brackets including bracketed title options, are annexed to the document, and include sections on: the rationale; objectives; guiding principles; inclusion and consideration of traditional lands and of resource use in spatial planning processes; contributions to the effective restoration of degraded ecosystems; recognition of, and respect for, ITTs in the implementation of GBF Target 3; environmental impact assessments; institutional and administrative mechanisms; full and effective participation; and enabling conditions.

Process to Review and Update the Voluntary Glossary: This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

On [Tuesday](#), the Secretariat introduced the relevant document on the process to review and update the [Voluntary Glossary of Key Terms and Concepts Within the Context of Article 8\(j\) \(CBD/SB8J/1/5\)](#).

IIFB requested equal representation of Parties and IPLC representatives in the AHTEG, and respect for the internal regional nomination processes of the seven sociocultural regions. They suggested that, in revising the glossary, the AHTEG take into account the [2023 joint statement](#) by the three UN mechanisms on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the report "[Recognition of Indigenous Peoples](#)" of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Many Parties, including Zimbabwe for the AFRICAN GROUP, Denmark for the EU, COLOMBIA, AUSTRALIA, MALAYSIA, CANADA, MEXICO, CHILE, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, and others, supported the glossary's update and review. CANADA reminded Parties that the current glossary took 14 years to be adopted. INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, CHINA, EGYPT, and others welcomed the update process, underscoring that it must remain Party-led, voluntary, non-prescriptive, and non-binding. INDONESIA and CHILE underscored that definitions should use broad and inclusive language. BRAZIL and COLOMBIA emphasized the need to recognize the contributions of people of African descent.

The AFRICAN GROUP noted that convening an AHTEG is unnecessary, as sufficient expertise exists within the Secretariat, and emphasized that the term "IPLCs" should be retained "as one unit." Pointing to financial considerations, NORWAY suggested reducing the number of AHTEG members, based on the practice of the [Facilitative Working Group of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform](#) of the UNFCCC. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION emphasized that the number of observers should not exceed that of Parties and selection should be based on the five UN regions rather than the seven sociocultural ones. BRAZIL and EGYPT proposed including a peer-review process for the material produced by the AHTEG, before the text is submitted to SB8j-2.

On [Wednesday](#), delegates addressed a CRP (CBD/SB8J/1/CRP.2).

COLOMBIA, supported by BRAZIL, URUGUAY, and PANAMA, suggested adding reference to people of African descent, in line with [Decision 16/6](#). Following discussions, delegates agreed to 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." They further 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.

On Thursday, discussions on the CRP continued, focusing on the terms of reference of the relevant AHTEG. Parties agreed to keep in brackets three options on AHTEG's composition, namely whether it is to include 35, 29, or 14 experts from Parties and IPLCs. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION reiterated that the number of IPLC experts should not exceed the number of Party experts. Acting Co-Chair Durán suggested retaining the alternatives in brackets for further discussion at COP 17, which was accepted. Following a proposal by CANADA, delegates removed an additional set of brackets around a provision noting that IPLC experts should be "nominated and selected through an agreed process."

Following suggestions by URUGUAY, AZERBAIJAN, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, and SAUDI ARABIA, Parties agreed to note that experts shall be selected taking into consideration relevant expertise, including on gender perspectives, gender balance, and geographical distribution, ensuring a diversity of knowledge systems, including traditional knowledge (TK) and relevant policy development.

On the steps for reviewing and updating the voluntary glossary, INDONESIA, supported by AZERBAIJAN, reiterated that any revised definitions should reflect the diversity of legal and cultural contexts across Parties and allow for national adaptation. The proposal was kept in brackets.

Delegates further agreed that the Secretariat will make available the technical advice and proposals formulated by the AHTEG for peer-review and make them available as an information document for SB8j- 2.

On the draft recommendation, delegates agreed, following informal consultations, to request the Secretariat to convene an AHTEG, subject to the availability of funds.

With these and other minor amendments, the CRP was approved.

Final Recommendation: In the final text (CBD/SB8J/1/L.3), SB8j recommends that COP 17:

- endorse the process for reviewing and updating the Voluntary Glossary;
- request the Secretariat to convene, subject to the availability of resources, an AHTEG on the review and update of the glossary and submit the results to SB8j-2; and
- request SB8j to make a recommendation for updating the glossary for consideration by COP 18.

Annex I contains the steps of the process to review and update the glossary:

- inviting Parties and others to submit views on elements of the glossary that shall be reviewed and updated;
- preparing a synthesis of views, to be carried out by the Secretariat;
- convening an AHTEG to formulate technical advice and proposals on the basis of the views received;
- making available the AHTEG's advice and proposals for peer review; and

- considering the AHTEG's advice and proposals at SB8j-2 and preparing a recommendation for consideration by COP 18.

Annex I contains a bracketed reference on reflecting the diversity of legal and cultural contexts across Parties.

Annex II contains the terms of reference for the AHTEG with bracketed provisions on, among other things, its composition.

Provision of Advice on TK on the Global Report on Collective Progress in GBF Implementation

This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Tuesday and Thursday.

On [Tuesday](#), the Secretariat introduced the relevant documents ([CBD/SB8J/1/6](#) and [INF/2](#)).

IIFB informed delegates that a third edition of the [Local Biodiversity Outlooks](#) is under preparation and proposed adding language to the recommendation to address challenges and barriers on the inclusion of TK in the global report, including on: facilitating submissions on IPLCs' TK with their free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) to NBSAPs; recognizing other sources of information on TK, innovations, practices, and technologies; and developing and using relevant indicators in the global report.

Many Parties, including the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, INDIA, MALAYSIA, and the DRC, noted their efforts to include IPLCs in the preparation of NBSAPs and national reports. EGYPT, the COOK ISLANDS, COLOMBIA, BURKINA FASO, INDIA, INDONESIA, BRAZIL, MEXICO, the DRC, CANADA, and NORWAY, among others, further supported the incorporation of TK in the global report with FPIC. EGYPT, the COOK ISLANDS, the DRC, NORWAY, COLOMBIA, and others stressed that the inclusion of TK in the global report requires adequate financial, technical, and capacity-building support.

On Thursday, Acting Co-Chair Durán introduced the CRP (CBD/SB8J/1/CRP.3).

On a paragraph reiterating encouragement to Parties made in [Decision 15/6](#) on stakeholder engagement, SOUTH AFRICA proposed specifying the relevant paragraphs on full and effective participation of IPLCs and others, and FPIC. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, supported by the DRC, suggested deleting the redundant sub-paragraphs, which was agreed.

On stressing the importance of including IPLCs and others in the development of NBSAPs and national report preparation, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION expressed concern with numerous repetitive requests across draft recommendations and proposed streamlined text to refer only to national reports, which was agreed.

On a paragraph encouraging Parties to facilitate information submission by IPLCs and others on actions related to GBF implementation, the DRC suggested adding GBF Target 13 (benefit sharing), and SAUDI ARABIA called to qualify the provision of information with "when available." The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, supported by the DRC, expressed concerns with increasing demands on Parties, and suggested this request be made instead to IPLCs and others. CANADA, supported by the EU, suggested inviting both Parties and IPLCs, and others, which was agreed.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, supported by SOUTH AFRICA and opposed by NORWAY, suggested deleting a paragraph noting sources of information for the global report described in paragraph 18 of [Decision 16/32](#), stating Parties discussed this during SBSTTA 27. Recognizing that all subparagraphs refer to sources already contained in the decision, Parties agreed to delete them, and the paragraph was approved.

Delegates agreed to note that the advice contained in the recommendation should "be considered in" rather than "inform" the production of the global report, following a suggestion by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

On a request to the Secretariat to include in the informal technical dialogue the collection of inputs related to TK, including the sharing of best practices, challenges, gaps, and solutions, delegates agreed to subject the request to the availability of funds, following a request by CANADA.

Delegates agreed to a request to the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to support Indigenous communities, including women and youth among them, to submit information on "their" commitments as actors other than national governments, "following the procedures described in CBD Decision 16/32," following suggestions by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, MALAWI, and ZIMBABWE.

With these and other minor editorial amendments, the CRP was approved.

Final Recommendation: In the final recommendation (CBD/SB8J/1/L.4), SB8j, among other things:

- welcomes the contributions of IPLCs, women, and youth to GBF implementation and encourages Parties to facilitate submissions on Indigenous knowledge systems and TK of IPLCs, including women and youth among them, obtained with their FPIC, so that such information may be used in NBSAPs and the global progress report;
- invites IPLCs, including women and youth among them, and encourages Parties to provide information, when available, on IPLC actions in relation to GBF implementation;
- requests the Secretariat, under the guidance of the *Ad Hoc* Scientific and Technical Advisory Group for the Preparation of the Global Report, to utilize the advice provided on TK when preparing the progress report, and include in the informal technical dialogue the collection of input related to TK; and
- requests the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to work with relevant organizations to facilitate capacity-building and development activities, and support IPLCs, including women and youth among them, to submit information on their commitments.

Recommendations of the UNPFII

This agenda item was addressed in plenary on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

On [Tuesday](#), the Secretariat introduced the relevant document ([CBD/SB8J/1/7](#)).

IIFB suggested: including references to CBD [Decisions 15/21](#) and [16/4](#); "welcoming" rather than "taking note of" the recommendations emanating from the [23rd](#) and [24th](#) UNPFII sessions; and requesting the Secretariat to convene an expert seminar in relation to Decision 15/21.

On [Wednesday](#), many Parties, including Cameroon, for the AFRICAN GROUP, COLOMBIA, PANAMA, BRAZIL, and others, highlighted the importance of the UNPFII as a consultative platform to ensure that Indigenous Peoples' rights are respected and, with Denmark for the EU, JORDAN, CANADA, and others, supported the draft recommendation.

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." BRAZIL called for balanced and distinct representation of Indigenous Peoples and

local communities and cautioned against relativizing the rights of local communities and their access to financial mechanisms. MEXICO urged not conflating Indigenous Peoples, as subjects of international law, and local communities.

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.

On Thursday, Acting Co-Chair Durán introduced the CRP (CBD/SB8J/1/CRP.6).

NORWAY, DENMARK, and AUSTRALIA supported the draft recommendation. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, the DRC, BRAZIL, INDONESIA, INDIA, and others expressed concerns and preferred bracketing the entire draft recommendation.

The DRC expressed concern that the UNPFII is “torpedoing efforts to achieve agreement on inclusivity and diversity.” NORWAY stressed that the UNPFII is a legitimate body appointed to safeguard the special rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Despite several proposals to resolve differences, delegates bracketed the entire draft recommendation.

During the discussion on the final recommendation, Brazil, for the BRICS countries, supported by the DRC, expressed concern over the UNPFII recommendation that urges “all UN entities and States Parties to treaties concerning the environment, biodiversity, and climate change to eliminate the use of the term “local communities” in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples, and to distinguish between the terms, in ongoing processes, policies and new international agreements at all levels,” stressing that the term IPLCs is adopted by CBD Parties. They requested their concerns be included in the meeting report.

The final recommendation was adopted.

Final Recommendation: In the bracketed final text (CBD/SB8J/1/L.6), SB8j recommends that COP 17: take note of the recommendations emanating from the 23rd and 24th sessions of the UNPFII; and request the Secretariat to continue to inform the UNPFII on developments of mutual interest and to provide information to the Forum about relevant activities undertaken under the CBD.

Other Matters

The DRC requested information on intersessional work. The Secretariat responded that intersessional work will depend on budgetary and other factors.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION pointed to an error in the placement of brackets in the final recommendations on UNPFII recommendations (CBD/SB8J/1/L.6), which was acknowledged, and, following discussions, decided to be corrected.

COLOMBIA expressed gratitude to Parties that participated in discussions regarding people of African descent and their contributions to biodiversity conservation, encouraging Parties to engage in informal dialogues on these matters during the intersessional period.

Adoption of the Report and Closing of the Meeting

On Thursday, Rapporteur Jonas Komi Anthé (Togo) introduced the report (CBD/SB8J/1/L.1), which was approved following an editorial amendment.

In closing statements, IIFB stressed that SB8j’s *modus operandi* must be based on the proven efficient process established in the WG8j. They called for the recognition of IPLCs’ organization

in seven sociocultural regions, as well as ITTs as a standalone system contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, distinct from protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures. They stressed the urgent need for resources to maintain and improve measures in favor of biodiversity, particularly those led by IPLCs.

Malawi, for the AFRICAN GROUP, reaffirmed that IPLCs are central actors, custodians of knowledge, stewards of biodiversity, and essential partners in achieving the objectives of the CBD and the GBF, noting that they will not support any proposal to separate Indigenous peoples from local communities. They underscored the importance of adequate, predictable, and accessible financing; capacity-building; technology cooperation; and enabling policy environments as the cornerstones of equity and justice.

Emphasizing the right to self-determination, the EU reaffirmed its commitment to the full and effective participation of IPLCs, aligned with a human rights-based approach. Recognizing that IPLCs are biodiversity custodians, they welcomed progress regarding the provision of advice on TK for the global report on collective progress in GBF implementation.

Saint Lucia, for GRULAC, stressed the need to ensure meaningful participation of both Indigenous Peoples and local communities, ensuring that local communities are represented in the leadership and conduct of SB8j; and reaffirmed the importance of meaningfully integrating the roles and contributions of peoples of African descent, comprising collectives embodying traditional lifestyles, within the CBD’s work.

NORWAY, for JUSCANZ, stressed the need to finalize the *modus operandi* at COP 17, building on established procedures and practices of WG8j; and underlined the self-determination of IPLCs as enabling conditions for their contributions to the CBD.

ARMENIA stated they are committed to ensuring that TK is recognized and valued, and necessary efforts mobilized to uphold the rights and full and effective participation of IPLCs; as well as to working with Parties and stakeholders in an inclusive manner to jointly advance SB8j deliverables at COP 17.

PAKISTAN urged engaging Parties and IPLCs in a collaborative manner, underlining diverse actors’ shared responsibility for biodiversity conservation.

AZERBAIJAN recalled the historic milestone in the work of the CBD, recognizing the vital role of IPLCs as custodians of biodiversity and of traditional knowledge.

PANAMA stressed that conservation only has meaning if it protects rights, culture, and the self-determination of peoples with respect, autonomy, and shared responsibility.

LAO PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC recognized the critical contributions of IPLCs, whose traditional knowledges, practices, and stewardship of biodiversity are essential for achieving the GBF’s goals; and highlighted ongoing efforts to include ethnic minorities and local communities in their NBSAP revision process.

The CBD WOMEN’S CAUCUS emphasized that delivering on the GBF means delivering on the CBD Gender Plan of Action.

The INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE (IUCN) underscored the important role SB8j can play towards strengthening equity and rights-based conservation, stressing in particular that the guidelines related to the PoW on Article 8(j) should promote the identification, recognition, protection, promotion, and respect of ITTs as distinct systems that directly contribute to the implementation of Target 3 (conserve 30% of land, waters, and seas).

The FUND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN emphasized that SB8j is one of several spaces within the UN system to advance Indigenous Peoples' rights, stressing the need for harmony among them.

CBD Executive Secretary Astrid Schomaker emphasized that "this is the beginning of the journey" leading to Yerevan, Armenia, for COP 17, noting that "we still have mountains to climb to make the full promise of SB8j a reality for our Convention."

Indigenous Co-Chair Gunn-Britt Retter emphasized that the urgency of the biodiversity crisis underscores the pressing need for resources to sustain and enhance biodiversity actions, in particular those led by IPLCs.

Stressing that "we are part of history today," Acting Co-Chair Durán emphasized the need to maintain momentum and make progress toward COP 17, and gavelled the meeting to a close at 8:28 pm.

A Brief Analysis of the Meetings

We are all brothers and sisters. Our creator and our Mother bequeathed us the legacy of walking together, united – Briseida Iglesias López de Guerrero, Guna Indigenous leader

In Abya Yala, the "land of life"—a multifaceted term referring to the landmasses of North and South America in the language of the Guna Peoples of Panama—a new chapter in the history of the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was born.

Meeting back to back, the 27th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and the first ever meeting of Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) and Other Provisions of the CBD Related to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) (SB8j), convened to harness both science and traditional knowledge to strengthen policymaking in support of the Convention's work and the realization of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

In their distinct but complementary mandates, both subsidiary bodies can help to support biodiversity-related policies and governance rooted in diverse lifeways and experiences to deliver holistic and comprehensive outcomes for people and the planet.

Similar to the Panama Canal, which connects two waterbodies, this analysis appraises the achievements and shortcomings of SBSTTA 27 and SB8j before reflecting upon the opportunities and challenges that unite them, in preparation for the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 17).

Brackets, Budgets, and Bottlenecks: Inside SBSTTA 27

With five years to go before 2030, the implementation of the GBF is underway, with a multitude of bodies, processes, rightsholders, and stakeholders involved in this immense endeavor. SBSTTA 27 did its part to contribute one of the pieces in this joint effort, tackling an annotated outline for the global report that will evaluate collective progress in reaching GBF goals and targets.

While delegates found compromises on the sources of information for the report and how to include contributions from non-state actors in addition to national reports, concerns about data representativeness prevailed. Many cautioned that the report, which is to be drafted by mid-2026, is likely to draw on a limited set of national data and experiences, given that many Parties have not yet been able to update their national biodiversity strategies and action

plans. As Guatemala underlined, countries' delays in updating these "do not reflect a lack of commitment but rather structural limitations" that require support.

The ongoing challenges of an ever-growing agenda were also felt at this SBSTTA meeting, affecting not only the meeting's efficacy, but raising questions about the Secretariat's workload. Concerns over resource constraints are recurring matters not limited to the availability, or lack thereof, of financial resources, but also include human resources. As the Russian Federation pointedly observed, "We can give the Secretariat millions, but it will still be the same 92 people doing the work."

Sending heavily bracketed requests to the Secretariat in several decisions, proposed by some Parties as a way to temper the workflow, was not appreciated by everyone. Several delegates voiced concern about "the precedent this would set," and the potential to sow doubt about the scientific authority and advice transmitted by SBSTTA. As one participant commented, "SBSTTA is tasked with providing science-based advice" rather than prioritizing the work that will be carried forward. Several highlighted that it will be up to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and the COP to prioritize work according to resource availability.

Difficult deliberations also ensued over aligning the Convention's work programmes with the GBF, ensuring its responsiveness to evolving needs and demands. Divergent views on which programmes to prioritize, how to align them with the GBF, and how far to broaden mandates suggested not only concerns over resource constraints but also revealed fundamental differences in Parties' understanding of SBSTTA's role.

Several other work areas under SBSTTA's agenda gathered experts on issues ranging from biosafety to invasive alien species (IAS), agriculture, health, and climate change, with mixed results and, at times, testy discussions. Serious dichotomies appeared on biosafety issues, with Parties, for instance, disagreeing on the development of, and modalities for, new guidance on assessment and risk management of living modified organisms. This frustrated some delegates, since the COP had requested the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group to develop suggested topics for such guidance, and they hoped the Group's work wouldn't be lost. Agreement was easier in other areas, such as in IAS, with SBSTTA agreeing to request the development of training materials on "predictive modeling of range shifts and the identification of areas most vulnerable to invasion in the context of climate change."

SB8j-1: A Seat at a Table Still in Construction

After nearly three decades of self-organizing by IPLC organizations, Lucy Mullenkei, International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB), reflected that the convening of SB8j was "to witness a long-held dream come true"; the establishment of a dedicated and permanent body on traditional knowledge and IPLCs' contributions to biodiversity stewardship. IPLCs have been contributing to the work of the CBD since its early days, with the IIFB established in 1996 to advance IPLC participation and representation. However, their expertise on these issues spans much longer timeframes. As one IPLC representative said, "Our worldviews are holistic, and our governance and practices are already based in synergistic approaches."

The creation of SB8j was a hard-fought and celebrated victory on this long journey, preceded by 24 years of work of the Working Group on Article 8(j). Several delegates took the floor to say that

the new permanent subsidiary body is not a symbolic gesture, but represents the long-awaited recognition of IPLCs as rights-bearers, knowledge holders, and partners.

While there were repeated statements in support of ensuring the full and effective participation of IPLCs, the rhetoric did not always translate into practice, and substantial differences remain as to what such participation should look like. The last-minute compromise at COP 16 to create the subsidiary body, even though discussions over its *modus operandi* were at an impasse, was a testament to these underlying differences. These reemerged in challenging discussions during SB8j-1, resulting in a fully bracketed *modus operandi* that was forwarded to COP 17.

Tensions between the long-established Party-led processes of subsidiary bodies clashed with aspirations and demands for more participatory and inclusive processes. This seeped into discussions on the selection process for IPLC Co-Chairs, with language often tempered by caveats: “subject to national legislation,” “international obligations,” and “as appropriate.” With the risk of national control obstructing the agency and governance structures of IPLCs, it appears that the path toward more equitable participation remains a work in progress. As underscored by many, including Máret Michelsen, IIFB, these modalities must respect IPLCs’ “internal regional processes and their own governance structures.” Others, however, noted that establishing appropriate modalities for IPLCs’ representation is more complex than at the national level, given the diversity among governance systems, as well as the fact that Indigenous territories do not align with national boundaries.

These tensions also arose in the discussions on the recognition of Indigenous Traditional Territories (ITTs). IPLCs called for ITTs to be recognized as a standalone system contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, different from protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, embodying rights-based and self-determined approaches. In a different vein, many Parties cautioned against reopening discussions that concluded with the adoption of the GBF targets. As a participant commented, “These tensions reflect hesitations to move beyond state-centered paradigms.”

In appraising SB8j-1, a veteran noted that it seems wise to take a longer view into account; one that sometimes gets lost amidst two-year COP cycles. Even the long-term vision of living in harmony with nature by 2050 pales in comparison to the multi-generational timeframes that often guide IPLCs’ cosmologies and governance arrangements. As SB8j Co-Chair Irene Vélez Torres (Colombia) said, SB8j-1 marked an “unprecedented step toward greater environmental democracy within the UN.” IPLC representatives stressed that a body ensuring full and effective IPLC participation may steer the work of the Convention toward new, unseen, and yet unimaginable directions.

The Canal Connecting Two Bodies

Parties broadly agree that achieving GBF’s 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature will require integrating diverse forms of knowledge and evidence. Much work remains to be done if Parties want to do so through whole-of-society, whole-of-government, and human rights-based approaches. IPLCs’ contributions to achieving this vision are pivotal. As Ramson Karmushu, IIFB, pointed out, “We have continued to voluntarily offer our cultural governance and knowledge systems to effectively manage and sustainably use biodiversity in our territories, and we will continue to do so.”

Calls for increased synergies were another defining theme across both meetings. Yet, discussions revealed a familiar paradox: while everyone agrees in principle that no single body can tackle biodiversity loss alone, the fear of blurring institutional boundaries remains strong.

At SBSTTA 27, debates over whether to “welcome” or merely “take note of” IPBES assessments illustrated this unease—a delegate noted that science seems to be most valued when it does not dictate the work of the Convention or clash with national interests. At SB8j-1, similar caution surfaced during the consideration of recommendations from the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). Many delegates acknowledged the Forum’s authority and expertise, but others hesitated, warning that formally endorsing its recommendations could encroach on the CBD’s mandate and undermine the Party-led process.

The complex geopolitical times during which these meetings convened, amidst interlinked planetary crises and multiple pressures on multilateral institutions, compounded the difficult negotiations. The incessant calls to underline that agreed work would be subject to national circumstances, contexts, and legislation reflected divergent political priorities and the barriers many Parties face in accessing ever-shrinking funding flows. Some delegates cautioned not to allow politically-charged issues that belong to neither body’s mandate, such as resource mobilization, to cause tensions or delays. Others, however, felt that only a holistic approach can deliver solutions to interlinked challenges, noting that “working in silos on issues that underpin our entire work is not efficient.”

Even so, there were also loud and clear calls to uphold internationally agreed principles and seek mutually acceptable solutions. As Norway said in a tense plenary session, those who do not wish to follow such principles “should reconsider their membership in this Convention.” Others, however, believed that their attempts to find compromises repeatedly fell flat.

High Hopes for Yerevan

These sessions in Panama have undoubtedly demonstrated a willingness to innovate, as seen in the pilot modalities for the early submission of statements, and historic progress toward IPLCs’ full and effective participation in the CBD’s work. Nevertheless, many uncertainties remain, spanning from ongoing efforts to ensure the effective implementation of the GBF to laying the foundations to enable SB8j to operate.

It remains to be seen whether COP 17 will facilitate the necessary in-depth discussions to resolve outstanding issues and lift the remaining brackets. Many stressed that the path to COP 17 is not expected to be smooth, and yet the upcoming intersessional meetings—SBTTA 28, SBI 6 and 7—provide the opportunity to make the necessary progress. The success of multilateralism rests on a shared commitment to the often-slow processes that make collective decisions possible. As exhausted delegates reflected on two busy weeks and the work that lies ahead, the wisdom in keeping a longer perspective in mind offered some consolation. “Multilateralism may be slow, fraught, and at times fickle, but it is only through better understanding each other that we can weather these challenging times and build more just and sustainable futures, together.”

Upcoming Meetings

2025 UN Climate Change Conference: This event will include the 30th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 30), the 20th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 20), and the seventh meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 7). The 63rd sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 63) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 63) will also meet. **dates:** 10–21 November 2025 **location:** Belém, Brazil **www:** unfccc.int/cop30

ITPGRFA GB 11: The 11th meeting of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) is expected to conclude the revision of the Treaty's Multilateral System of Access and Benefit Sharing and address a series of other items, including farmers' rights. **dates:** 24–29 November 2025 **location:** Lima, Peru **www:** fao.org/plant-treaty

CITES CoP20: The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) CoP convenes every two to three years to review implementation of the Convention, review progress in the conservation of species included in the Convention's Appendices, and consider proposals to amend the lists of species in Appendices I and II. **dates:** 24 November – 5 December 2025 **location:** Samarkand, Uzbekistan **www:** cites.org/eng/cop/20

OECP-7 and UNEA-7: The seventh session of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECP-7) and the seventh session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) will meet back-to-back. UNEA-7 will convene on the theme “Advancing sustainable solutions for a resilient planet.” **dates:** 1–5 and 8–12 December 2025 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** unep.org/environmentassembly/unea7

UNCCD CRIC 23: The twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 23) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) will discuss progress on the implementation of voluntary land degradation neutrality (LDN) targets and efforts to strengthen targeted capacity building. **dates:** 1–5 December 2025 **location:** Panama City, Panama **www:** unccd.int/cric23

70th GEF Council Meeting: The Global Environment Facility's Council meets twice annually to develop, adopt, and evaluate the operational policies and programs for GEF-financed activities, and review the work program. The event will include the 5th Global Biodiversity Framework Fund Council Meeting, and the 39th Least Developed Countries Fund and Special Climate Change Fund Council meeting. **dates:** 15–19 December 2025 **location:** virtual **www:** www.thegef.org/events/70th-gef-council-meeting

12th session of the IPBES Plenary: IPBES 12 will consider interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food, and health as well as transformative change. This IPBES Plenary will be preceded by a Stakeholder Day on 2 February 2026. **dates:** 3–8 February 2026 **location:** Manchester, UK **www:** ipbes.net/events/ipbes-12-plenary

SBI 6: The sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) of the CBD will review implementation of the CBD, including on matters related to resource mobilization, the financial mechanism, the Gender Plan of Action, capacity-building, and status update on NBSAPs, national targets and national reporting. **dates:** 16–19 February 2026 **location:** Rome, Italy **www:** cbd.int/meetings/SBI-06

SBSTTA 28: The 28th meeting of SBSTTA will discuss, among other things, the global review of progress in GBF implementation; synthetic biology; sustainable wildlife management; and marine and coastal biodiversity. **dates:** 27 July – 1 August 2026 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** cbd.int/meetings/SBSTTA-28

SBI 7: The seventh meeting of the SBI will continue its work on reviewing implementation of the CBD and the GBF, ahead of COP 17. **dates:** 4–12 August 2026 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** cbd.int/meetings/SBI-07

COP 17: The 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties will review GBF implementation and address issues under the Convention and its Protocols. **dates:** 19–30 October 2026 **location:** Yerevan, Armenia **www:** cbd.int/meetings/COP-17

For additional upcoming events, see: sdg.iisd.org

Glossary

AHTEG	<i>Ad Hoc</i> Technical Expert Group
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of the Parties
CP	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
CRP	Conference room paper
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
FPIC	Free, prior, and informed consent
GBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
IAS	Invasive alien species
IIFB	International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPLCs	Indigenous Peoples and local communities
ITT	Indigenous and traditional territories
LMOs	Living modified organisms
NBSAPs	National biodiversity strategies and action plans
NP	Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing
PoW	Programme of Work
SB8j	Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) and Other Provisions of the CBD Related to IPLCs
SBI	Subsidiary Body on Implementation
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
TK	Traditional knowledge
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNPFII	UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues