



Convention on Biological Diversity

Distr.
GENERAL

CBD/COP/Bur/2024/3/2
5 August 2024

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Videoconference, 25 July 2024

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH BUREAU MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE

1. The fourth meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties was held via Zoom on 25 July 2024 at 7:00 EDT.
2. The meeting was chaired by the Minister of Ecology and Environment of China, H.E. Mr. Runqiu Huang, the COP 15 President.
3. The following members of the Bureau attended the above meeting:
Africa: Ms. Khangeziwe Mabuza (Eswatini); Mr. Moustafa Fouda (Egypt, substitute for Algeria for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol).
Asia-Pacific: Ms. Somaly Chan (Cambodia); Mr. Krishneel Nand (Fiji).
Eastern Europe: Ms. Teona Karchava (Georgia); Mr. Sino Tohirzoda (Tajikistan, substitute for Georgia for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol); Ms. Angela Lozan (Republic of Moldova).
Latin America and the Caribbean: Ms. Maria Teresa Becerra Ramirez (Colombia); Ms. Corina Sarli (Argentina, substitute for Colombia for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol); Ms. Gillian Guthrie (Jamaica); Mr. Jesus Guerra Bell (Cuba, substitute for Jamaica for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol).
Western Europe and Others: Mr. Eric Schauls (Luxembourg); Mr. Norbert Bärlocher (Switzerland);
Ex officio: Ms. Senka Barudanovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Matters (SBSTTA); Mr. Chirra Achalender Reddy (India), Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation.
COP 15 Presidency: Ms. ZHOU Guomei, Mr. LIU Ning, Ms. CHEN Haijun, Ms. YAO Wei.
COP 16 Presidency: H.E. Ms. Susana Muhamad, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia
Observer: Mr. Neville Ash (UNEP)
4. The Secretariat was represented by Ms. Astrid Schomaker (Executive Secretary), Mr. David Cooper (Deputy Executive Secretary), Mr. Neil Pratt (Acting Director, Implementation Support Division), Ms. Jihyun Lee (Director, Science, Society and Sustainable Futures Division), Ms. Wadzanayi Mandivenyi (Head, Biosafety Unit), Mr. Taukondjo Shikongo (Head, ABS Unit), Mr. Worku Yifru (Senior Legal Officer), Mr. Kathryn Garforth (Programme Management Officer), Ms. Kirsty Bryant (Associate Expert) and Ms. Christine Estrada (Senior Programme Management Assistant).

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

5. The Bureau meeting was opened on 25 July 2024 at 7:10 EST by the Minister of Ecology and Environment of China, Mr. Huang Runqiu, as President of COP 15. The President welcomed the Bureau members and welcomed the new Executive Secretary, Ms. Astrid Schomaker, who began her appointment on 1 July 2024. The President then thanked Mr. David Cooper for his hard work, commitment and support to the Presidency and to the Bureau and provided a brief update on the work that was being carried out by China as COP 15 Presidency, including the official launch of Kunming Biodiversity Fund, as well as promoting the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) in many global events under the auspices of KMGBF Action Initiative. He invited the new Executive Secretary to provide welcome remarks.

6. The Executive Secretary thanked the President for the warm welcome and highlighted her intention to work closely with the Bureau and the Presidencies to ensure successfully achieving the common goals. She noted that the Secretariat was well advanced in their preparations for COP 16 and would be able to have most documents available by the 6-week deadline with exception to the budget document, which parties expect 90 days before COP, but which was still being worked on. She assured the Bureau that the document would be made available as soon as possible. She concluded by thanking both, the sitting and incoming COP Presidents for their support and commitment.

ITEM 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The President introduced the provisional agenda, and the Bureau adopted it as presented.

ITEM 3. UPDATE ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE SECOND MEETING OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON BENEFIT-SHARING FROM THE USE OF DIGITAL SEQUENCE INFORMATION ON GENETIC RESOURCES (WGDSI-2)

8. Under this agenda item, the President invited the Secretariat to provide a brief overview of the preparations for the second meeting of the Ad hoc open-ended Working Group on Benefit-Sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources (WGDSI-2).

9. The Deputy Executive Secretary, firstly thanking the President for the kind words and welcoming the new Executive Secretary, provided members of the Bureau with an update on the multiple aspects of preparation for WGDSI-2, ranging from the status of documentation, plans on how the Committee of the Whole intended to proceed, an overview of the possible contact groups, and an overview of the requests for side-events.

10. Before engaging in discussions regarding WGDSI-2, the Bureau welcomed the new Executive Secretary and offered support and commitment to work together to ensure successful outcomes at COP 16 and beyond. Members of the Bureau also expressed their appreciation to David Cooper, for his contributions as Acting Executive Secretary and leading the Convention during a crucial time. They thanked the Secretariat for their dedication and hard work as well.

11. Regarding the preparations for WGDSI-2, members of the Bureau engaged in a brief discussion and noted that they would welcome more information on the possible contact groups that could arise and how they would be organized, as well as more information on the side-events that would take place during the meeting. They also requested more delegates be funded to the meeting, noting that a few delegates had had their requests for support rejected.

12. In response to these comments, the Deputy Executive Secretary confirmed that not more than one contact group session would take place at any given time and the topics would largely depend on the feedback the Co-chairs receive after the first reading and nature of discussions, but they could be looking at aspects of funding, monitoring benefit-sharing, and issues to be reviewed in the future. The Deputy Executive Secretary also

confirmed that a list of side-events would be later circulated to the Bureau. Regarding funding, he noted that the Secretariat had exhausted all the available funding it had for travel support and made an appeal to the Bureau for contributions to the BZ fund in order to facilitate more funded delegates. He also indicated that more information on contact groups, including potential chairs, would be provided to the Bureau during its meeting on August 11th, immediately prior to the start of the Working Group meeting.

ITEM 4. UPDATE ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE SIXTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION, THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY, THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING (THE UN BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE 2024) AND THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON IMPLEMENTATION (SBI-5)

13. Under this agenda item, the President welcomed Her Excellency, Ms. Susana Muhamad, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia and invited her to take the floor to provide the Bureau with an update on the preparations for the 2024 UN Biodiversity Conference.

14. The Minister of Environment of Colombia thanked the President and the Bureau for the opportunity and expressed appreciation to all for the support and leadership. She expressed deep appreciation for the support and guidance offered to Colombia by the Secretariat staff and to David Cooper for his help and support. The Minister also welcomed the new Executive Secretary and reaffirmed they would continue building a strong team to lead COP 16. Regarding the preparations, the Minister addressed various aspects including what the Government of Colombia was bringing to the table and its wish for this to be a COP of the people, in order to ensure holistic implementation of the KMGBF. She noted there was very lively local participation in the preparations for COP and much enthusiasm not only nationally, but regionally and worldwide. The Minister also highlighted the challenges expected at COP with the heavy agenda and the bracketed documents. She provided an overview of what they expect from the negotiations, including the operationalization of the multilateral mechanism on DSI benefit sharing, enhancing the role of indigenous peoples and local communities through a new programme of work and a permanent subsidiary body, and advancing discussions on resource mobilization.

15. The Minister provided an overview of the concept of “Peace with Nature” as an overall theme for the COP and informed the Bureau of the many activities and events that would take place in the green zone and a new concept denominated “multicolored zone” which were COP-related activities being organized in the outskirts of Cali. She indicated that the outcomes from the discussions taking place in the green, blue and multicolored zone would be brought back to the COP discussions through her or reports to the High-Level Segment. The Minister concluded by offering a brief update on how the High-Level Segment would unfold, including an opening plenary with a few Heads of State launching the Peace with Nature Coalition, and thematic discussions on biodiversity and climate change, finance, peace with nature and implementation. She also noted the possibility of ministers informally discussing any contentious matters of the negotiations to help facilitate consensus.

16. The President thanked the Minister for her comprehensive update and invited the Secretariat to complement her presentation with further information.

17. The Deputy Executive Secretary informed the Bureau that the annotations for the COP agenda and COP/MOP agendas were being currently prepared and would be provided to them in the coming days so that they could be finalized ahead of the next Bureau meeting of 11 August 2024 in Montreal. He also informed the Bureau that the Secretariat was preparing an analysis document outlining all the agenda items for COP with proposals on how to manage each one, and including other details such as number of brackets, possibility of contact groups, etc. It would be circulated soon so that Bureau members could be ready to discuss it at the in-person meeting in August.

18. The Deputy Executive Secretary noted that the Secretariat was preparing a list of possible co-chairs and to offer a training just ahead of SBI-5, as requested during SBI-4. He also highlighted that documents for SBI-5 would be ready on time, which was the beginning of September and clarified that the deadline for Parties to identify national targets or submit NBSAPs was COP itself, however if they wished the information to be reflected in the reporting documentation available six weeks before the meeting, the Secretariat would need to receive input by 1 August 2024.

19. The Bureau expressed appreciation to the Minister of Environment of Colombia and to the Secretariat for the update. They congratulated Colombia for the strong efforts and clear commitment it had made so far for the preparations for COP16 and engaged in a brief discussion. Regarding the Heads of State event, some members of the Bureau requested additional written information on this event and what was expected from the participation of the Heads of State/Government vis a vis the Ministers of Environment. The Bureau also requested written information on the format and agenda of the High-Level Segment, the ministerial declaration, and highlighted the importance of being able to properly brief their own ministers. Regarding the COP agenda, the Bureau reiterated its concern on the large volume of agenda items and the time to deal with them, as well as the capacity of smaller delegations to adequately manage the workload. The Bureau acknowledged the importance of adopting some decisions early in the process to leave sufficient time to the more contentious items. Among other issues, they also emphasized the importance of securing more funding to strengthen smaller delegations, the importance of publishing the annotations of the agenda early in the process, and requested that dates for future Bureau meetings be identified for planning purposes.

20. The Minister of Environment of Colombia and the Deputy Executive Secretary addressed the questions and comments from the Bureau. The Minister confirmed that more information on the High-Level Segment would be made available as soon as possible and explained the rationale of the presence of Heads of State, which was to elevate the political importance of biodiversity. Regarding the funding of delegates, the Deputy Executive Secretary noted that a notification would be issued soon requesting Parties in a position to do so, to make pledges and contributions to the BZ fund in order to increase the number of delegates that can be funded to COP. He appealed to the Bureau to maintain the good practice of timely submission of credentials that was experienced for the resumed session of COP 15. Regarding a question on the security situation of Colombia, the Minister assured the Bureau that they were working closely with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security as well as their Ministry of Defense and Police departments to ensure the safety of delegates. She indicated that if the situation changed and they deemed there were any compromises to security, they would immediately inform the Secretariat and the Bureau.

ITEM 5. OTHER MATTERS

21. Under this agenda item, a member of the Bureau enquired on the meeting taking place on the margins of WGDSI-2 in Montreal. The Deputy Executive Secretary clarified this was a training organized by the Government of Colombia and the Centre for Multilateral Negotiations (CEMUNE) to prepare them to preside the COP, and that it was not a special meeting organized by the Secretariat.

22. An enquiry was also made regarding the briefing sessions on the budget that could be offered by the Secretariat. The Executive Secretary, expanding on where the process of preparations for the budget were and highlighting some of the reasons for the delay with the documentation, confirmed the plans to hold informal sessions on the budget with Parties in the coming months.

ITEM 6. CLOSURE OF THE MEETINGS

23. Thanking the Bureau for their valuable contributions and discussion, the Chair closed the Bureau meeting at 9:35am EST on 25 July 2024.
