

UN Biodiversity Conference Highlights: Wednesday, 26 February 2025

The morning session opened with a progress report on informal consultations on resource mobilization held on Tuesday evening. President Susana Muhamad, Colombia, stressed that consultations were productive toward creating common ground and will continue with a view of producing a revised document to be addressed by plenary. Following a report on credentials, delegates resumed deliberations on the financial mechanism. A procedural discussion, including informal consultations, reflected a divergence of views on the order for considering agenda items and the time available for plenary deliberations on resource mobilization. Delegates then addressed the monitoring framework of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting, and review (PMRR), including the global review of collective progress in GBF implementation. An evening plenary addressed a revised draft decision on resource mobilization, developed as a result of consultations.

Financial Mechanism

President Muhamad invited delegates to resume discussions on bracketed text in CBD/COP/16/L.31.

On a request that the Global Environment Facility (GEF) further increase flexibility in project cycles, President Muhamad suggested a compromise solution to refer to “all eligible parties,” in particular the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS) “and also take into consideration the most environmentally vulnerable countries in the context of the provisions of paragraph 7 of Article 20 (Financial Resources)” of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Following deliberations delegates accepted the President’s proposal.

The DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC) made a point of order, suggesting that discussions on the financial mechanism are adjourned in order to resume negotiations on resource mobilization, stressing that it was the item under consideration in Cali when the meeting was suspended. Following lengthy informal consultations, clarifications on the rules of procedure, and scheduling adjustments, the DRC withdrew their point of order and deliberations were resumed, with the understanding that plenary will have sufficient time to address resource mobilization.

Noting that all outstanding matters had been resolved, President Muhamad parked adoption of the document until discussions on resource mobilization are concluded.

GBF Monitoring Framework

Delegates resumed their consideration of outstanding matters in CBD/COP/16/L.26.

The EU presented compromise language resulting from informal consultations regarding bracketed text for the component indicators on “global environmental impacts of consumption” and “ecological footprint” under Target 16 (sustainable consumption). They proposed: deleting the “global environmental impacts of consumption” component indicator; retaining the “ecological footprint” component indicator; and adding a footnote to Annex II, containing the indicators, to note that “in line with Decision 15/5, Annex I, paragraphs 2(a) and (b), the methodology and relevant data must be publicly available and accessible.” EGYPT supported the proposal. The UK noted they could accept the compromise language, “with regret.” The RUSSIAN FEDERATION requested adding “for all” to the end of the footnote.

Following clarification from the Secretariat that component and complementary indicators are optional, INDIA withdrew their request to delete indicator 7.2 on pesticide environment concentration and/or aggregated total applied toxicity.

Following strong opposition by the EU, SWITZERLAND, BRAZIL, NAMIBIA, the DRC, JAPAN, INDONESIA, PANAMA, CHINA, the UK, and EGYPT, who cautioned against reopening discussions on clean text, ARGENTINA withdrew their proposal to remove a reference to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators from a provision inviting parties and other governments to make use of such data.

President Muhamad noted that a revised document would be prepared.

PMRR Mechanisms

Delegates resumed consideration of CBD/COP/16/L.33, focusing on the communication of commitments by actors other than national governments (non-state actors). The Secretariat clarified that: the provision concerning the process for reporting commitments by non-state actors to the online reporting tool of the Clearing-house Mechanism provides flexibility to parties; national focal points would receive notifications about commitments communicated by non-state actors and would have the option to reject the publication of those commitments if they so wish; and parties who do not wish to review commitments communicated by non-state actors can opt out of this communication and objection process.

Following requests for further clarification by several delegates, with some indicating their preference to delete the relevant provisions and others to retain them, ZIMBABWE called for the inclusion of a footnote noting that all submissions by actors other than national governments shall be subject to the consent and approval of the concerned national government.

The EU and SWITZERLAND opposed including the footnote, while CAMEROON, EGYPT, INDONESIA, GHANA, CÔTE D’IVOIRE, the DRC, and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION supported its inclusion. ARGENTINA expressed reservations

about including the footnote without specifying the time period given to national focal points to object to commitments communicated by non-state actors. Discussions will continue.

Resource Mobilization

In the evening, President Muhamad reported constructive informal discussions. Plenary then addressed the resulting revised draft decision ([CBD/COP/16/L.34/Rev.1](#)), including a series of steps aiming at enhancing global biodiversity finance and implementing Convention Article 21 (Financial Mechanism) by 2030, as well as an intersessional process and road map to deliver this mandate.

President Muhamad called for initial reactions. Many parties expressed their appreciation for the efforts that led to the revised document, and noted it is a good foundation for making progress toward consensus. EGYPT, supported by the DRC, CAMEROON, and SOUTH AFRICA, requested time to allow for regional consultations. Many emphasized that more time was required to consider the document before resuming negotiations. Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Canada, highlighted the “collective responsibility to show the world that multilateralism can work,” urging delegates to review the text in good faith and in the spirit of compromise.

PANAMA and HAITI lamented the document’s lack of ambition and urgency. PANAMA and others called for a dedicated financial instrument under the authority of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to be established without delay. BRAZIL expressed concern about protracted delays and lack of political will to take a decision on Article 21. ECUADOR urged specifying that the dedicated instrument aims at implementing the Convention and “its three objectives.” INDIA pointed to inconsistencies in different provisions regarding the commitment to establish a dedicated global instrument for biodiversity finance by COP 19. Fiji, for PACIFIC SIDS, cautioned against diminishing obligations set out in the Convention text, and queried the implications of “direct allocation” of funds.

ARGENTINA proposed several amendments, including to add a safeguard to provisions pertaining to access to financial resources for Indigenous Peoples and local communities, “consistent with national legislation and regulatory frameworks,” which was opposed by PANAMA and others, and to delete references to the SDGs.

JORDAN and the UNITED ARAB EMIRATES requested specifying that assessing and improving the mobilization of finance from all sources is “subject to national circumstances.” SAUDI ARABIA preferred reforming existing finance instruments, including the GEF, rather than creating new ones.

The UK flagged a need to elaborate on what is entailed by “possible direct allocation” in a list of elements of enhanced global biodiversity finance. NORWAY said that the draft would constitute an ambitious outcome of COP 16, and expressed concern that the reference to direct allocation might preclude the GEF from taking a new or revised role. The EU noted that: the new element on direct fund allocation requires further discussion; provisions on the assessment criteria require further reflection; and the annex on the assessment of the effectiveness of the GEF is a standalone element that could be deleted.

CHINA highlighted inconsistencies in the document and room for improvement on the proposed road map for intersessional work, noting that it confuses two elements, namely the strategy for resource mobilization, and the approach to dealing with a dedicated finance instrument. GRENADA emphasized the need for refining the proposed intersessional work. CUBA also noted that different elements are mixed, such as issues on resource mobilization, the intersessional process, the institutional architecture, and general principles and, with NIGERIA, CÔTE D’IVOIRE, and others, urged finalizing the process by COP 18. MALDIVES stressed the need to immediately mobilize resources

for GBF implementation and to distinguish such efforts from post-2030 resource mobilization.

EGYPT lamented that the road map is “process-heavy,” calling for assessments and studies without mandating concrete commitments and actions. BOLIVIA stated that the draft “opens the path toward an indefinite discussion of the financial mechanism,” urging a clear decision on the establishment of a global mechanism with fair and representative governance under the authority of the COP. COSTA RICA suggested: defining “financial architecture”; discussing the body responsible for intersessional work; and evaluating existing instruments at COP 17 so that decisions regarding the post-2030 financial architecture can be taken at COP 18. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION noted that elements requiring further discussion include the criteria for assessing existing instruments that are “currently diluted,” the assessment of the effectiveness of the GEF, and modalities for intersessional work.

The DRC emphasized that time for regional consultation as requested by Egypt was not provided, and the document had only been available in English countering the rules of procedure, requesting these comments to be reflected in the meeting’s report. He underscored that Article 21 should have been implemented since COP 1, and stressed that the revised document cannot be accepted as the foundation for further discussions, suggesting reverting to the original [CBD/COP/16/L.34](#).

GHANA called for clear finance targets and binding commitments to implement Article 21, and with CÔTE D’IVOIRE, urged establishing a dedicated mechanism that defines the finance architecture prior to considering which instruments might be accommodated under such a mechanism.

President Muhamad called upon parties to consult regionally to consolidate input on the revised draft decision for plenary’s consideration on Thursday morning.

In The Corridors

“We will be like bees flying around you,” President Muhamad told delegates, describing the intensity and pace of informal consultations on resource mobilization. While no participant expressed doubts on the efforts undertaken toward finding consensus on the meeting’s most divisive item, an observer noted that “much more than effort is needed to restore trust between the parties.” As the morning plenary stumbled through procedural difficulties over the order of items on the agenda, protracted discussions over footnotes, and pleas to avoid opening discussions on clean text, another participant echoed that disagreements over seemingly less important matters reflect “a deepening lack of trust that must be addressed through substantive commitments and, unfortunately, ample negotiating time.” Still, one optimistic delegate expressed the hope that “these frustrations and entrenched positions can be bridged to achieve our common goal.”

In the evening, initial reactions on a revised draft decision on resource mobilization signaled that bridging the biodiversity finance gap requires not only time and effort, but also good faith, bold decisions, and political will. Some pointed out that the road map’s timeline postpones decision-making to 2030, with one delegate wondering “what about the finance that is urgently needed to achieve the GBF’s targets right now?” The call by Canada’s Minister of Environment and Climate Change to show the world that multilateralism can work was met by an observer’s skepticism that the session “was not multilateralism at its best.” Most participants agreed, however, that the final decisions to be reached on Thursday are crucial to put biodiversity on a path to recovery – with the window of opportunity rapidly closing.

The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of the resumed UN Biodiversity Conference will be available on Monday, 3 March 2025 at enb.iisd.org/un-biodiversity-conference-cbd-cop16-resumed