



PRESS RELEASE

UN biodiversity convention opens talks on global agreement to safeguard nature and secure our future

- *Some 500 delegates from 100 countries participated in the first round of discussions on a new global framework for biodiversity.*
- *To be adopted at the 2020 UN Biodiversity Conference in Kunming, China, the framework seeks to protect, restore, and wisely use nature and ensure that its benefits are fairly shared.*
- *Parties and stakeholders focused on the potential elements and structure of the landmark agreement and the process leading to its adoption.*

2 September 2019 – Following a summer of dramatic heat waves and forest fires, and close on the heels of a landmark scientific report charting an unprecedented decline in nature, the global community came together from 27-30 August in Nairobi to deliberate over an appropriate response.

More than 500 delegates from 100 countries and a wide range of organizations from indigenous groups, civil society, local authorities and business, took part in the first round of official discussions for a new global biodiversity framework. Parties and observers to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) affirmed their commitment to work together towards an agreement for nature and for people that provides the transformative changes needed.

The conference report adopted at the close of the meeting captured the rich range of views expressed. “The framework structure should be lean, with a simple, clear apex goal or mission that was understandable to everyone,” the report said. “The framework should account for the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss and promote transformative change.”

In her opening remarks, CBD Executive Secretary Dr Cristiana Paşca Palmer challenged Parties to rise to the occasion.

“The global public senses the biodiversity crisis in their own lives and communities. They also increasingly see widespread ecological catastrophes as an affront to their values and future,” she said. “There is no time to waste; the costs of inaction only keep rising.”

The Nairobi round of discussions focused primarily on the structure and elements that will make up the framework as well as the way forward to reach a strong agreement. Parties sought to identify areas where there is common understanding, in order to build momentum ahead of more substantive negotiations.



Beyond conservation, the UN Biodiversity Convention explicitly aims to ensure sustainable use of and fair sharing of benefits from the world's biological treasures. The framework will promote broad participation, investment and knowledge exchange in biodiversity as a major part of the solution to climate change and other sustainable development challenges. It also aims to reach beyond the environmental field to further integrate biodiversity into other sectors and bring together a wide range of actors to address an issue that impacts every inhabitant of the planet.

"This global biodiversity framework will be a framework for everybody, not only for the Convention on Biological Diversity but for other multinational environmental and biodiversity-related agreements and organizations," said Hamdallah Zedan, senior adviser to the Minister of Environment of Egypt, who currently holds the presidency of the CBD.

"Every organization and every multilateral agreement will decide for themselves what will be implemented by them, and of course they will be accountable for this. And this is why it is very important to involve them from the beginning," he said, adding that the large number of participants at the Nairobi meeting shows the level of interest in the negotiations process.

In May, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) released its Global Assessment report. This report, together with breakthrough policy initiatives, including the G7 Metz Charter on Biodiversity and the Nature Champions Summit's Call for Action, have provided a strong scientific and political basis for developing the biodiversity framework.

The IPBES report warned that 1 million species currently face the threat of extinction, a level higher than at any other time in human history. It showed how the decline in biodiversity undermines people's ability to meet basic needs, including food and water, energy and physical and mental health.

While the window of opportunity may be closing, the report indicates that it is not too late for the world to act to address the interconnected crises in climate, biodiversity and other natural systems.

"I cannot think of a more exciting moment as we embark on an urgent global priority, with the hope and determination that this new policy will mobilize actions and transformative change to secure the future of all people and the planet," the CBD Executive Secretary said.

The 196 Parties of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity are expected to adopt the new framework during their 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15), scheduled for October 2020 in Kunming, China. A series of consultations on a range of thematic topics will take place in the coming months; a second round of negotiations is scheduled for February 2020 in China.

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NOTE TO EDITORS

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force on 11 September 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 171 Parties have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and to date has been ratified by 120 Parties. www.cbd.int , [@UNBiodiversity](https://twitter.com/UNBiodiversity)
