

**Statement by the Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity,  
David Cooper, at the opening plenary session of the twenty-fifth meeting of the Subsidiary  
Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice**

15 October 2023

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you today to the twenty-fifth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.

I would like to begin by once again congratulating all Parties on adopting the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework last December in Montreal.

We are here to further strengthen our collective efforts to implement the Framework with scientific, technical and technological inputs from the Subsidiary Body.

I would like to thank the people of Kenya and our colleagues at the United Nations Environment Programme for warmly welcoming us to Nairobi.

We have just heard from the Executive Director of ongoing strong commitment from UNEP to supporting the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework directly and through its work in galvanizing the wider United Nations. I would like to thank Inger Andersen and her team for this.

On behalf of the Secretariat, I also offer my sincere thanks and admiration to the Chair of the Subsidiary Body, Hesiquio Benítez Díaz, of Mexico, not only for his direction and persistent support, but also for his valuable scientific and technical guidance on various issues of the Convention throughout the previous intersessional period, including during the COVID-19 pandemic, and during the months following the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to this day.

Distinguished delegates,

We have more than 1,000 registered participants representing 149 countries, with some 670 participants from 135 countries already on site.

Given the importance of this meeting, the first intergovernmental meeting under the Convention since the adoption of the Framework, we have been able to finance, upon request, a representative from each eligible Party.

- 1 -

I would like to recognize a number of Governments for their generous financial support, namely, Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Germany, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I am pleased to acknowledge the presence in this meeting of representatives and experts of indigenous peoples and local communities. I look forward to their active engagement to ensure that their views are heard.

Distinguished delegates,

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework is ambitious. Following the recent midterm review of progress of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the imperative of ensuring the successful implementation of the Framework is clearer than ever.

Since its adoption, we have made great strides towards its implementation.

In August, the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund was launched at the seventh Assembly of the Global Environment Facility. I call upon donor countries to join Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom in contributing to this new fund, established at the request of the Conference of the Parties, to ensure that additional support for the rapid implementation of the Framework can be fast-tracked.

In September, the Task Force on Nature-related financial disclosures, co-led by our very own Elizabeth Mrema, launched its recommendations.

And of course, Parties are busy developing their national targets aligned with the Framework, updating their national biodiversity strategies and action plans and putting in place the measures for action.

Indigenous peoples, civil society, local governments, business and the financial sector are all engaged in implementation.

Together, we are moving from agreement to action. But there is much more to be done.

At the present meeting, the Subsidiary Body will flesh out the scientific and technical details of many of the actions agreed on at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

As highlighted by the Chair, we look forward to an update from the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators regarding its progress in finalizing the development of the monitoring framework.

The Subsidiary Body will also provide important inputs to ensure the development of robust mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting and review.

The reports and assessments of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, including its *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*, have greatly contributed to our collective knowledge about how to address the drivers of biodiversity loss and provided the scientific foundation upon which the Framework was built.

The recent work of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform will support the implementation of the Framework, in particular the targets on sustainable use, invasive alien species and values.

In the same vein, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has contributed to our understanding and recognition of the interdependence of climate, ecosystems, biodiversity and human societies.

Let us continue to make the fullest use of the outcomes of those intergovernmental assessment processes in our work.

Distinguished delegates, colleagues,

I have spoken of reports, of processes and of targets, but all of us, from every corner of our planet, have daily reminders of the scope and urgency of our challenge.

We have just over six years left to undertake the actions necessary to achieve the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Since February, it has been my privilege to lead the Secretariat team during this critical early phase of generating momentum towards implementation. From Montreal to Rome and New York, from Kunming to Kinshasa, we have been unwavering in our dedication and energized by our results. We cannot afford to falter or equivocate; the stakes are too high.

Mr. Chair, members of the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body, Party delegates and all participants, the Secretariat stands ready as always to support your work this week and in the coming years.

I wish you all a successful meeting.

I thank you.

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