



CBD SBI-7 Outcomes

A CBD Women's Caucus Analysis

SBI plays a critical role in shaping the institutional, financial and practical conditions through which commitments under the CBD are translated into action. At SBI-7, this included consideration of the Global Review and accelerated implementation of the KMGBF, resource mobilization and the financial mechanism, digital sequence information, capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation, the Nagoya Protocol, knowledge management, mainstreaming, and biodiversity education.

Across these discussions, gender and justice are not separate from implementation: they shape who participates in decisions, whose knowledge and contributions are recognized, who has access to finance and technical support, and how the costs and benefits of biodiversity action are distributed. Several negotiations also raised a fundamental question about how Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth are recognized within the Convention, including whether their distinct rights, roles and contributions remain visible or are subsumed within broader categories of actors and stakeholders.

This CBD Women's Caucus analysis examines selected SBI-7 outcomes through this gender and justice lens, highlighting progress, unresolved issues and priorities for COP17.

Contributors: Amelia Arreguín Prado, Cristina Eghenter, Edda Fernandez, Fatima El-aaraby, Laura Bermudez, Shruti Ajit and Pamela Tapia Diaz

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ITEM 3. PLANNING, MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEW

WHAT WAS THE ITEM ABOUT?

In decision 15/6, the Conference of the Parties adopted an enhanced multidimensional approach to planning, monitoring, reporting and review, including a global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. In decision 16/32, the COP established the procedures for the global review and provided guidance for the preparation of the Global Report on collective progress, which will serve as a key input to the review at COP17.

The Global Review was considered jointly by SBSTTA-28 and SBI-7, reflecting their complementary mandates. While SBSTTA considered the scientific and technical assessment underpinning the review, SBI-7 focused on the implementation response: how to address the gaps identified through the Global Report and accelerate implementation of the KMGBF, including through strengthened means of implementation and contributions across society.

WHAT WERE THE MAIN OUTCOMES?

SBI-7 advanced recommendations aimed at translating the findings of the Global Report into accelerated implementation, but several politically important elements remain unresolved. In particular, language on taking Section C of the KMGBF and a whole-of-society approach into account in further implementation remains bracketed. A proposal addressing means of implementation and access to finance for rights holders also remains bracketed, leaving unresolved the relationship between calls for broader participation in implementation and the resources required to enable that participation.

A significant unresolved issue concerns the increasing use of “actors other than national governments” instead of explicitly naming Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth and, where relevant, people of African descent. While this terminology can provide an umbrella for diverse actors, negotiations did not resolve how it should be used without obscuring the distinct status, rights and contributions of rights holders and constituencies. The relevant language therefore remains bracketed for further consideration at COP17. This is particularly consequential because the Global Report itself draws on information from actors other than national governments as part of assessing whole-of-society implementation.

The recommendation also contains bracketed language on regional and subregional informal dialogues between Parties and rights holders and stakeholders to foster collaboration and accelerate implementation. Technical and scientific cooperation and support structures are recognized as mechanisms for peer learning, knowledge exchange and capacity-building, although stronger language on their potential convening role was not retained. At the same time, Parties did not reopen the Monitoring Framework to introduce additional mandatory headline indicators, avoiding additional reporting requirements while implementation of the existing framework is still being consolidated.

WHAT DO THESE MEAN FROM A GENDER JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE?

The Global Review will shape not only how progress is assessed, but whose contributions and implementation barriers become visible and what actions are prioritized in response. At COP17, it will therefore be important to resolve the outstanding language on Section C, the whole-of-society approach and human rights-based implementation, while ensuring that umbrella terminology such as “actors other than national governments” does not erase the distinct recognition of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth as rights holders and constituencies with specific roles, rights and contributions to KMGBF implementation.

Calls for broader participation in accelerated implementation must also be matched by accessible means of implementation. Women, Indigenous Peoples and local communities and youth cannot be expected to contribute to closing implementation gaps without adequate access to finance, capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation. The proposed regional and subregional dialogues and existing support structures could provide important spaces for identifying implementation barriers and solutions directly with rights holders, provided that participation is meaningful, adequately resourced and connected to decision-making rather than treated simply as consultation.

Finally, COP17 should use the Global Review to strengthen the connection between Target 23, the Gender Plan of Action and implementation of the KMGBF as a whole. The review should help identify where gender-responsive implementation is falling short and translate those gaps into concrete actions, resources and accountability. This means moving beyond simply recognizing women’s participation towards examining who influences implementation decisions, who has access to resources, whose knowledge and contributions are recognized, and who benefits from implementation.

ITEM 4.A RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

WHAT WAS THE ITEM ABOUT?

This item addressed resource mobilization for implementation of the Convention and the KMGBF, particularly progress towards Target 19 and implementation of the resource mobilization roadmap agreed at COP16. Discussions took place against a persistent biodiversity finance gap, constrained fiscal space and debt burdens in many developing countries, and continuing barriers to accessing international biodiversity finance.

SBI-7 was expected to advance three particularly important elements of the roadmap: criteria for the institutional structure that will operate the Convention’s financial mechanism under Article 21; identification of structural impediments to the effectiveness of global biodiversity finance and possible measures to address them; and approaches to broadening the contributor base. At stake were therefore the adequacy and accessibility of biodiversity finance, responsibility for providing it, and the future governance and architecture of the Convention’s financial mechanism.



WHAT WERE THE MAIN OUTCOMES?

SBI-7 made limited substantive progress, leaving much of the resource mobilization package open for COP17. The SBI-related portion of the recommendation was agreed, including requests for an updated progress report on decision 16/34 and for the Secretariat to make available the non-exhaustive list of areas of convergence and divergence identified during the negotiations. However, the proposed COP17 resolution itself remains entirely in brackets, reflecting the lack of agreement on several of its core political elements.

On the adequacy of finance, the draft COP17 resolution recognizes that, despite reported increases in biodiversity-related financial flows, international public finance remains insufficient, unpredictable and unevenly accessible, and that further efforts are required to achieve Target 19. On the future institutional structure under Article 21, Parties still need to decide whether COP17 should “adopt” or “note” the proposed criteria. The annex retains the minimum criteria established through decision 16/34—including COP authority and guidance, equitable and representative governance, and fair, timely and simplified access for eligible developing-country Parties—but additional criteria remain heavily bracketed. The draft also proposes inviting the GEF and other financial institutions, including multilateral development banks, to take the criteria into account in reforms to their operations.

On impediments to global biodiversity finance, SBI-7 did not complete the substantive work envisaged in the roadmap. The Secretariat had prepared a dedicated analysis of impediments as one of the mandated inputs to the process, alongside the review of the resource mobilization strategy and further development of the Article 21 criteria. However, because the relevant annex was not negotiated, it was removed from the recommendation. The remaining draft instead asks for further work on measures to enhance global biodiversity finance and mobilize new and additional resources from all sources. This leaves COP17 without an agreed set of measures for addressing the structural barriers already identified, making the next steps on this work particularly important.

Finally, broadening the contributor base remains one of the most politically unresolved elements. The recommendation carries four alternative bracketed options, reflecting different approaches to whether and how additional countries could contribute. Developing countries repeatedly stressed during SBI-7 that broadening the base should not alter the obligations of developed-country Parties under Article 20, while other Parties supported exploring a wider contributor base. The issue therefore moves to COP17 without agreement on the balance between mobilizing additional contributions and preserving differentiated responsibilities under the Convention.

WHAT DO THESE MEAN FROM A GENDER JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE?

The additional criteria for the future financial mechanism provide a concrete opportunity to address inequalities in who governs and accesses biodiversity finance. The four minimum criteria agreed at COP16, (a)–(d), remain unchanged, while the additional criteria remain bracketed. At COP17, criterion (g) should explicitly recognize Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth, rather than conflating rights holders and constituencies within the generic category of “all stakeholders.” Criterion (m) is particularly important and should retain both full and effective participation in decision-making and direct access to finance for Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth, without making such access conditional on a national focal point letter. Criterion (n) should retain the stronger provisions on accountability, transparency, monitoring and reporting, and grievance and redress. Together, these provisions would translate equitable governance into recognition, decision-making power, access to resources and accountability.

Second, the limited progress on structural impediments to biodiversity finance leaves an important justice gap. Paragraphs 7–9 recognize that the impediments identified by the Secretariat require further elaboration and envisage further work before COP18, but the measures under paragraph 9(a) are framed as voluntary. COP17 should strengthen this pathway by establishing a clear process for addressing structural barriers—including debt, fiscal constraints, unequal access to finance and harmful financial flows—and connect this work with implementation of Target 18 on harmful incentives. The analysis should also examine how these structural conditions and proposed reforms distribute costs, risks and benefits across and within countries, including their differentiated impacts on women, Indigenous Peoples and local communities and other rights holders.

Finally, the debate on broadening the contributor base should go beyond simply expanding the list of countries or actors expected to contribute. From an equity perspective, the more fundamental question is how to ensure that contributors actually provide their fair share of the resources required to close the biodiversity finance gap, in line with responsibilities, capacities and existing obligations under the Convention. COP17 should therefore advance an approach to fair burden-sharing that strengthens accountability for contributions and increases the overall resources available, rather than allowing a broader contributor base to dilute or substitute for developed-country Parties' obligations under Article 20. New contributors and sources should be additional and complementary, while the primary focus remains on securing adequate, predictable and sustained international public finance for implementation of the KMGBF.

ITEM 4.B FINANCIAL MECHANISM

WHAT WAS THE ITEM ABOUT?

Item 4(b) examined the financial mechanism of the Convention and its contribution to implementation of the KMGBF. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) serves as the institutional structure operating the financial mechanism under the Convention and functions under the authority and guidance of, and is accountable to, the COP.

SBI-7 considered the GEF-9 replenishment and further guidance to the GEF, as well as two processes looking towards the next financing cycle: the Terms of Reference (ToR) for assessing the funding needs of eligible developing countries for GEF-10 (2030–2034) and the ToR for the seventh quadrennial review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism. These processes will respectively help determine the level of resources needed for the next replenishment and assess how effectively the financial mechanism is delivering resources and supporting implementation of the Convention.

WHAT WERE THE MAIN OUTCOMES?

A central disagreement concerned the approximately USD 3.9 billion pledged to GEF-9. Developing countries emphasized the gap between available resources and growing implementation needs, including developed-country obligations under Article 20, while other Parties placed greater emphasis on effectiveness and broadening the contributor base. These differences remain reflected in brackets over whether COP17 should “welcome” or “acknowledge” the GEF-9 pledges and whether to express concern that the overall level of resources remains insufficient for KMGBF implementation, particularly Target 19. At the same time, the draft advances guidance aimed at improving accessibility, predictability, country ownership, transparency and the timely approval and disbursement of resources. Questions around stronger forms of direct access remain unresolved. This is important because the negotiations are therefore concerned not only with the overall volume of finance, but also with how resources are accessed and delivered.

SBI-7 also advanced the two processes that will shape future financing and accountability. The ToR for the GEF-10 funding-needs assessment was largely agreed, establishing the basis for estimating the resources eligible developing countries will need during the next replenishment cycle. Less agreement was reached on the seventh review of effectiveness: key sections of its ToR, particularly the criteria for assessing effectiveness and procedures for conducting the review, remain bracketed. Proposed elements include indicators such as numbers of funded projects, disbursement times and impacts on local communities, while provisions concerning the effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth also remain unresolved. These choices will determine whether effectiveness is assessed mainly through operational performance or also through adequacy, accessibility, distribution and impacts of finance.

WHAT DO THESE MEAN FROM A GENDER JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE?

The first concern is adequacy and responsibility. The decline in resources pledged to GEF-9 comes precisely when developing countries are expected to accelerate KMGBF implementation. A financial mechanism cannot deliver equitable implementation if it is structurally under-resourced. This reinforces the importance of fair burden-sharing and developed-country Parties meeting their commitments under Article 20, rather than shifting responsibility for closing financing gaps onto countries and communities already carrying disproportionate implementation burdens.

Adequacy must also be accompanied by equitable access, decision-making power and accountability. The effectiveness of the financial mechanism cannot be judged only by amounts programmed, projects approved or disbursement times: these measures say little about who ultimately accesses and controls resources, who influences funding priorities, or how equitably finance is distributed. At COP17, Parties should therefore retain explicit references to Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth in the ToR for the seventh effectiveness review, while strengthening its criteria to assess barriers to access, meaningful participation in financial decision-making, and gender-responsive and rights-based outcomes. Counting women as beneficiaries alone is not sufficient evidence of equitable finance.

Looking forward, the GEF-10 funding-needs assessment is particularly important because what is recognized as a financing need now will shape expectations for the next replenishment. Gender commitments risk remaining under-resourced if their implementation costs are not made visible within that assessment. COP17 should therefore ensure that the ToR explicitly captures the resources developing countries require to implement Target 23 and the Gender Plan of Action, including a specific estimate of financing needs for GPA implementation. This would begin to close the gap between adopting gender commitments and actually budgeting for their implementation.

ITEM 5. DIGITAL SEQUENCE INFORMATION ON GENETIC RESOURCES

WHAT WAS THE ITEM ABOUT?

At COP16, Parties adopted the modalities for operationalizing the Multilateral Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital Sequence Information (DSI) on Genetic Resources, including its global fund, the Cali Fund, through decision 16/2. The mechanism seeks to enable fair and equitable sharing of monetary and non-monetary benefits from the use of DSI while maintaining open access to DSI for research and innovation.

SBI-7 was tasked with advancing several elements of its implementation ahead of COP17. These included considering possible additional modalities for benefit-sharing, possible tools and models for making DSI publicly available and accessible in a transparent and accountable manner, and the methodology for reviewing the effectiveness of the Multilateral Mechanism and the Cali Fund.



WHAT WERE THE MAIN OUTCOMES?

SBI-7 maintained the basic architecture agreed at COP16 and advanced some aspects of operationalization, but several of the most politically consequential questions remain unresolved for COP17. In particular, Parties did not reach agreement on possible additional modalities for benefit-sharing. While there was greater convergence on the need to improve transparency around DSI and its use, questions remained over the tools and approaches for doing so. Work also progressed on the methodology for reviewing the effectiveness of the Multilateral Mechanism and Cali Fund, but key elements concerning its conceptual framework, approach and governance remained unresolved.

A significant governance issue also emerged around the Memorandum of Understanding between the Cali Fund and the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, signed in February 2025. Several developing-country Parties questioned the process through which the arrangements had been operationalized and their alignment with the authority of the COP. The compromise reached at SBI-7 records the timing of the MoU and leaves COP17 to consider an appropriate course of action regarding its alignment and related governance, administrative and operational arrangements. An intersessional webinar was also agreed to facilitate further clarification before COP17.

The result therefore moves implementation forward without settling the underlying distributional and governance questions: how the mechanism will generate sufficient contributions, whether additional modalities are needed, how its effectiveness will be assessed, and how the Cali Fund's operational arrangements will remain aligned with the governance framework agreed by Parties at COP16.

WHAT DO THESE MEAN FROM A GENDER JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE?

The central question is not only whether the Cali Fund becomes operational, but who benefits from the value generated through DSI, who participates in decisions over those benefits, and whether resources reach those whose knowledge, territories and stewardship contribute to biodiversity conservation. The unresolved questions on contributions, allocation and governance therefore have direct distributional implications.

Decision 16/2 already establishes an important equity foundation: at least half of Cali Fund resources are intended to support the self-identified needs of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, including women and youth, through governments or direct payments through institutions identified by them. As the mechanism becomes operational, this commitment needs to translate into accessible funding and meaningful influence over how resources are allocated and used.

The SBI-7 text also retains explicit references to Indigenous women and women from local communities. This visibility is important, but it will only become meaningful if the effectiveness review can assess not simply how much money the Fund mobilizes and disburses, but who can access those resources, who participates in decisions, and whether benefits contribute to more equitable outcomes. Your colleague is right that many of these gender implications cannot yet be fully assessed while the underlying modalities and review methodology remain unresolved.

For COP17, the gender and justice priority is therefore to ensure that decisions on additional modalities, governance and the effectiveness review protect the benefit-sharing purpose of the mechanism and make its equity commitments measurable in practice. This includes safeguarding the participation and rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, ensuring that Indigenous women and women from local communities remain explicitly visible, and assessing not only whether benefits are generated, but who receives them and who has power over their allocation.

ITEM 7. SECOND ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL ON ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES AND THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE SHARING OF BENEFITS ARISING FROM THEIR UTILIZATION

WHAT WAS THE ITEM ABOUT?

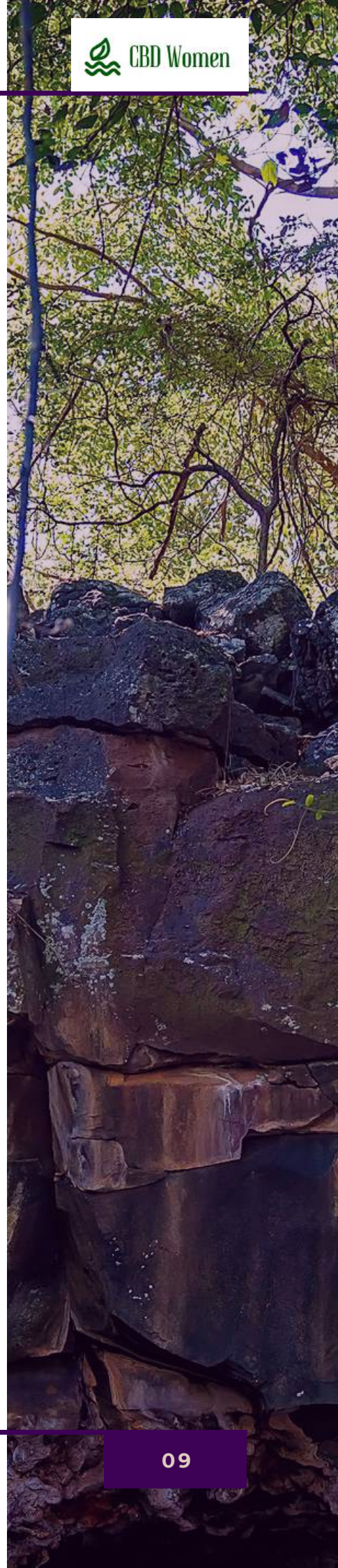
Item 7 concerned preparations for the second assessment and review of the effectiveness of the Nagoya Protocol, to be conducted by NP-MOP 6. The assessment examines progress in implementing the Protocol and its effectiveness in achieving the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources. It draws on national reports, information from the ABS Clearing-House, targeted surveys, the work of the Compliance Committee and the Informal Advisory Committee on Capacity-building, and a scoping study on the causes of implementation and compliance challenges.

SBI-7 considered the findings of that assessment, an updated indicator framework and recommendations on how to strengthen implementation, including ABS procedures, checkpoints, the ABS Clearing-House, compliance, capacity-building, financial resources and the future operationalization of the global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism under Article 10.

WHAT WERE THE MAIN OUTCOMES?

SBI-7 recognized progress in implementing the Nagoya Protocol while also identifying persistent gaps in effectiveness, compliance and means of implementation. An important development was the stronger focus on whether ABS systems are producing results in practice, not only whether legislative, administrative and policy measures exist. The recommendation calls for future assessment methodologies and indicators to capture the operationalization of ABS systems and outcomes achieved in terms of benefits shared, and encourages Parties to provide more complete and disaggregated information on monetary and non-monetary benefits, their recipients, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and the proportion directed toward biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

The outcome also advances the operationalization of checkpoints and the ABS Clearing-House, including clearer and more streamlined ABS procedures, publication of relevant information and stronger information-sharing.



The limited use of the Protocol's compliance procedures was also addressed: the Secretariat, together with the Compliance Committee, is requested to assess why the mechanism has not been triggered, including possible awareness, accessibility, procedural, institutional and practical barriers.

Participation and community protocols were also addressed. The recommendation invites Parties to ensure the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, including women and youth among them, in ABS processes, including through community protocols and procedures. It also provides that such protocols and procedures should only be made available through the ABS Clearing-House if the Indigenous Peoples and local communities concerned agree, while protecting confidential information.

A major unresolved issue concerns Article 10 and the global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism. SBI-7 agreed to establish a Party-driven intersessional process to advance its modalities and requested an open-ended meeting, with participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and relevant stakeholders, to develop elements for consideration at NP-MOP 7. Financing also remains unresolved: while additional financial resources and continued GEF support were encouraged, proposals concerning a dedicated ABS funding window and core-budget financing for key Nagoya Protocol functions remained bracketed.

WHAT DO THESE MEAN FROM A GENDER JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE?

The stronger emphasis on actual benefits and their recipients is particularly important. Fair and equitable benefit-sharing cannot be assessed simply by counting ABS laws, permits or agreements. It requires asking who receives monetary and non-monetary benefits, who participates in decisions over their distribution, whose knowledge enables access and whether those contributing knowledge and resources have meaningful decision-making power. The move toward more disaggregated information on benefit recipients creates an important opening for making these distributional inequalities more visible.

The recognition of the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, including women and youth among them, is also important, but participation does not itself guarantee equitable outcomes or control over resources and knowledge. The safeguard that community protocols should only be made available through the ABS Clearing-House with the agreement of the communities concerned is therefore significant. More broadly, gender-responsive ABS requires attention not only to whether women participate, but to whether their knowledge is recognized, whether they influence decisions, and whether they actually receive and control benefits.

The unresolved Article 10 mechanism has major justice implications because it may determine how benefits are shared in situations where bilateral ABS arrangements are insufficient, including transboundary contexts. Its future design will need to address not only who contributes and who receives benefits, but whose rights, knowledge and governance systems are recognized in determining access and distribution.

Finally, means of implementation and access to remedy remain critical. Without predictable finance, capacity and functioning institutions, checkpoints, community protocols, the ABS Clearing-House and compliance mechanisms may exist formally without being effective in practice. The fact that SBI-7 is now examining barriers to use of the compliance mechanism is therefore important from a justice perspective: rights and benefit-sharing commitments have limited value where affected communities cannot realistically access information, procedures or remedy. For NP-MOP 6 and the Article 10 process, the central question is whether the Protocol can move from formal participation and ABS administration toward meaningful control, accountability and equitable distribution of benefits.

ITEM 10. CAPACITY-BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

WHAT WAS THE ITEM ABOUT?

Item 10 concerned progress in implementing the long-term strategic framework for capacity-building and development and the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism, established under decision 15/8 and further developed through subsequent COP decisions. The mechanism includes a network of regional and subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centres and a Global Coordination Entity (GCE) intended to coordinate and strengthen support for implementation of the Convention and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

SBI-7 considered progress in operationalizing these arrangements, including the work of the support centres and GCE, identified capacity gaps and barriers, and the financial and institutional arrangements required for their longer-term operation. It also considered how capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation could respond more effectively to needs identified through national implementation and the global review of collective progress.

WHAT WERE THE MAIN OUTCOMES?

SBI-7 advanced the operationalization of the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism, taking note of progress on the Global Coordination Entity (GCE) and its draft workplan and budget and requesting a revised workplan and budget for consideration at COP17. The outcome also strengthens the role of regional and subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centres in responding to implementation needs, requesting them to take into account gaps, challenges and barriers identified through the Global Report and seventh national reports, including challenges related to the use of indicators

Financing and the long-term sustainability of the mechanism emerged as central issues. Parties, other governments, subnational and local governments and other relevant actors in a position to do so are invited to provide adequate, predictable, timely and easily accessible financial resources and in-kind contributions to support the programmes and long-term operation of the GCE and support centres.



The Executive Secretary is also requested to strengthen resource mobilization, including engagement with multilateral funding sources. Importantly, the outcome recognizes that private-sector support should complement rather than replace public international support for capacity-building.

The negotiations also addressed who should participate in capacity-building and development. The final text refers to “organizations of women and youth”, alongside Indigenous Peoples and local communities and other relevant stakeholders. During the negotiations, proposals to qualify references to women and youth through terms such as “organizations” or “representatives” were contested, with the broader question of how inclusively these constituencies should be recognized becoming an important point of discussion.

More broadly, Parties emphasized needs-based and country-driven capacity-building and North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation. Discussions also revealed differences over the scope of financing, including whether support should focus on country-driven projects or extend more broadly to the establishment and operation of the regional and subregional support centres themselves.

WHAT DO THESE MEAN FROM A GENDER JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE?

Technical and scientific cooperation should not reproduce a one-directional model in which expertise and solutions flow from better-resourced institutions to countries and communities perceived as lacking capacity. Knowledge and expertise already exist at national and local levels, including among Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth, researchers and practitioners. The regional and subregional support centres can help connect and resource this expertise through South-South, triangular and locally grounded cooperation and co-production of knowledge.

This makes adequate, predictable and accessible financing for the GCE and support centres essential. Their ability to respond to country-driven priorities and build sustained partnerships depends on sufficient resources. A gender-responsive approach should also enable them to connect systematically with locally rooted gender expertise and women’s knowledge and experience, so that gender informs how implementation challenges and technical responses are defined rather than being added later.

For COP17, the priority should therefore be to adequately resource the technical and scientific cooperation architecture while ensuring that it mobilizes and values diverse, locally grounded expertise without imposing unnecessary institutional barriers to participation. This would help shift capacity-building from a model of knowledge transfer towards one of equitable exchange, partnership and co-production.

ITEM 11. CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

WHAT WAS THE ITEM ABOUT?

Item 11 concerned progress in implementing the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) Programme of Work for 2024–2030 and the Knowledge Management Strategy supporting the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). The CHM facilitates access to and exchange of biodiversity-related data, information and knowledge, while the Knowledge Management Strategy provides a broader framework for generating, collecting, organizing, sharing and using knowledge in support of the Framework. This work is particularly relevant to Target 21, which addresses access to the best available data, information and knowledge for biodiversity governance, while recognizing that traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local communities should only be accessed with their free, prior and informed consent, in accordance with national legislation.

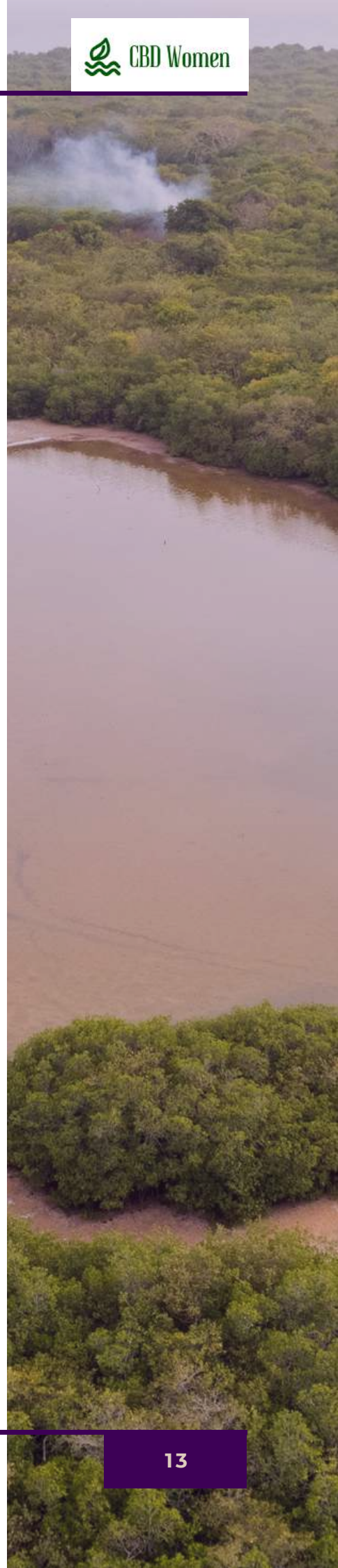
SBI-7 considered progress in strengthening the CHM central portal and national CHMs, improving the organization and accessibility of biodiversity-related information and interoperability between systems, developing tools such as Bioland, and strengthening common vocabularies, taxonomies, ontologies and metadata standards. It also considered capacity-building and technical support to enable Parties, particularly developing countries, to establish, operationalize and strengthen their national CHMs.

WHAT WERE THE MAIN OUTCOMES?

SBI-7 advanced the implementation of both the CHM Programme of Work and the Knowledge Management Strategy, with greater emphasis on capacity, interoperability and the practical functioning of national CHMs. Parties agreed on the need to strengthen access to and usability of information through the central portal and online reporting tool, and to improve the exchange of experiences, good practices, success stories and lessons learned across national, regional and global levels.

Means of implementation emerged as an important issue. The final recommendation urges Parties, in line with Articles 20 and 21 of the Convention, and invites other governments and relevant organizations to provide financial and technical support for capacity-building and development to implement the CHM Programme of Work and Knowledge Management Strategy, taking into account the particular circumstances of developing countries, especially LDCs and SIDS. During the negotiations, developing countries stressed that effective knowledge-sharing systems cannot function without adequate financial, technical and institutional capacity.

The outcome also strengthens the role of regional and subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centres, inviting them (and, where applicable, “actors other than national governments”) to collaborate with Parties and share information and implementation experience through the CHM. This formulation is relevant to the broader discussion across SBI-7 concerning how non-State actors, rights holders and constituencies are identified within CBD implementation processes.



SBI-7 also introduced a stronger focus on interoperability and emerging technologies. The Executive Secretary is requested to prioritize improvements arising, inter alia, from the use of artificial intelligence and other relevant new technologies, alongside improvements to the online reporting tool and the accessibility, searchability and usability of information on the CBD website. Regional knowledge-management workshops are also expected between COP17 and COP18.

Finally, the recommendation establishes a pathway for assessing implementation of the CHM Programme of Work and Knowledge Management Strategy before COP19, linked to the global review of collective progress. The analysis is expected to take account of different levels of development and operationalization of national CHMs and may include voluntary indicators to assess whether national CHMs are functioning and contributing to KMGBF implementation.

WHAT DO THESE MEAN FROM A GENDER JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE?

There remains a clear gap in recognizing the distinct roles and contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth within the CHM and wider knowledge management processes. Their engagement risks being positioned primarily as users, contributors or sources of information, rather than recognizing them as actors who are already generating knowledge, documenting biodiversity, undertaking conservation efforts and contributing to KMGBF implementation. The use of broader formulations such as “actors other than national governments” is particularly relevant in this context, as it can obscure the distinct rights, knowledge systems and contributions of rights holders and constituencies, including the specific barriers women face in having their knowledge recognized and valued.

Strengthening the CHM should therefore go beyond improving technical infrastructure and ensure full, effective, inclusive and gender-responsive participation in how knowledge systems are designed, implemented and governed. Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth should have meaningful opportunities not only to access and provide information, but also to shape how knowledge is collected, classified, managed, shared and used for decision-making and reporting. This becomes increasingly important as the CHM explores artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies, which can reproduce existing biases and exclusions if the knowledge and perspectives underpinning these systems are not sufficiently diverse.

Greater accessibility must also be accompanied by appropriate rights and safeguards around knowledge-sharing. Strengthening interoperability and access should not result in traditional or community knowledge becoming automatically open or extractable. Implementation should respect free, prior and informed consent where applicable and appropriate rights and control over knowledge, particularly in relation to the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Finally, equitable participation in knowledge systems depends on capacity, technology and resources. Differences in digital and institutional capacity can determine whose knowledge is documented, accessible and visible within global biodiversity systems. Adequate financial and technical support, particularly for developing countries, is therefore essential. Without these dimensions, increasingly sophisticated knowledge systems risk reproducing existing inequalities; with them, the CHM can become a more equitable and representative knowledge foundation for KMGBF implementation.

ITEM 12. MAINSTREAMING OF BIODIVERSITY WITHIN AND ACROSS SECTORS

WHAT WAS THE ITEM ABOUT?

In decision 16/13, COP provided guidance for further work on mainstreaming biodiversity within and across sectors, including elements for consideration by SBI before COP17. The Executive Secretary was requested, among other things, to integrate mainstreaming into regional and subregional dialogues, strengthen cooperation with relevant organizations and processes, compile good practices, tools and guidance, and support related capacity-building in collaboration with Parties, technical and scientific cooperation support centres, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, networks of women and youth and other relevant actors.

SBI-7 considered a progress report and structured overview of available practices, tools, mechanisms, guidance and solutions for mainstreaming biodiversity. The discussions focused on how to strengthen the integration of biodiversity into government policies, planning and decision-making within and across sectors, including through institutional coordination, capacity-building, sectoral approaches, engagement with business and finance, and the resources needed to support mainstreaming, particularly in developing countries.

WHAT WERE THE MAIN OUTCOMES?

SBI-7 advanced a more implementation-oriented approach to mainstreaming. The recommendation recognizes the importance of inclusive approaches, stronger science-policy interfaces and greater exchange and uptake of good practices and tools. Importantly, Parties are invited to strengthen and accelerate mainstreaming by closing the gap between the integration of biodiversity into policies and regulations and their effective application in practice, strengthening institutional and technical capacities and interministerial coordination, and engaging business and public and private financial sectors.

However, several substantive issues remain unresolved for COP17. These include bracketed language concerning national sectoral plans, specific economic and livelihood sectors, sustainable use and productive activities, and further action related to business and finance. The negotiations also revealed continuing differences over the scope of whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches.

Language on who should participate in and contribute to mainstreaming also remains bracketed, with competing formulations ranging from explicit references to Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women, youth and people with disabilities to the broader category of “actors other than national Governments.” This leaves unresolved whether distinct rights holders and constituencies will remain explicitly visible within the mainstreaming framework or be subsumed under a broader category of non-State actors.



WHAT DO THESE MEAN FROM A GENDER JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE?

Mainstreaming has significant gender and justice implications because decisions in sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, infrastructure, tourism, energy and finance affect access to land and resources, livelihoods, food systems and the distribution of environmental and economic costs and benefits. Women and other rights holders therefore need to be recognized not simply as participants in mainstreaming processes, but as actors able to influence the decisions through which biodiversity is integrated into economic and sectoral policies. As the negotiations showed, participation is not the same as decision-making power.

For COP17, the priority should be to ensure that mainstreaming is gender-responsive, rights-based and adequately resourced. This means retaining explicit recognition of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth; strengthening their meaningful participation and leadership; addressing differentiated impacts and protecting rights to lands and resources; and ensuring that business and financial-sector mainstreaming is accompanied by accountability and safeguards. Means of implementation will also be critical: developing countries need adequate financial, technical and institutional capacity to mainstream biodiversity across sectors without creating additional unfunded responsibilities.

ITEM 13. COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

WHAT WAS THE ITEM ABOUT?

Item 13 concerned the draft global plan of action for education on biodiversity, developed pursuant to decision 16/10 to align the Convention's communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) programme of work with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, in particular the actions under section K of the Framework. The plan covers the period up to 2030 and is treated as a living document, with its implementation to be reviewed at the COP18 and COP19.

The Plan seeks to strengthen biodiversity education across formal, non-formal and informal learning, including through greater biodiversity literacy, transformative learning, educator capacity, policy and curriculum integration, whole-of-society engagement and sustainable financing. SBI-7 considered both the draft Plan and the accompanying draft decision, including arrangements for its further development, uptake, financing, participation, monitoring and reporting.

WHAT WERE THE MAIN OUTCOMES?

SBI-7 welcomed the draft global plan of action for education on biodiversity as a living document, to be further developed through peer review and considered again by SBI before COP18. The Plan covers formal, non-formal and informal education and includes strong recognition of diverse knowledge systems, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth. Importantly, its guiding principles include a stand-alone commitment to gender-responsive implementation, linked to decision 15/11 and Target 23.

Gender and inclusion are also reflected in the enabling conditions and monitoring framework. Women's and youth organizations are identified among actors across the results framework, and the Plan encourages age- and gender-disaggregated information and greater involvement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth in monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

However, two important provisions remain bracketed. Paragraph 5, on encouraging Parties to use and implement the Plan, remains unresolved, as does paragraph 7, concerning adequate and accessible technical and financial support, including dedicated and easily accessible resources for Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women and youth for community-led education initiatives. The Plan itself nevertheless includes a non-binding provision supporting equitable and direct access to funding for these groups.

WHAT DO THESE MEAN FROM A GENDER JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE?

The Plan provides a strong basis for recognizing women, Indigenous Peoples and local communities and youth not simply as recipients of biodiversity education, but as knowledge holders, educators and actors in its design, delivery and monitoring. The stand-alone gender-responsive principle and references to meaningful participation, diverse knowledge systems and disaggregated information are therefore important gains.

For COP17, priorities should include resolving the remaining brackets on implementation and accessible financial support, while also strengthening gender-responsive objectives and indicators across the four results-framework tables so that gender equality is embedded throughout the Plan rather than confined primarily to its guiding principles and enabling conditions. Women's organizations and networks, including the CBD Women's Caucus, should be explicitly recognized among the actors contributing to the Plan. Finally, sex-disaggregated data on participation, leadership and reach should be collected more systematically, rather than only "where appropriate," so that future reviews can assess who participates, who leads, whose knowledge is recognized and who benefits from biodiversity education.

The CBD Women's Caucus (CBD WC) is the women major group within the Convention on Biological Diversity. It is a self-organised global platform supporting women and girls worldwide to advocate for their rights in biodiversity-related decision-making processes at all levels.

For more information: coordination@cbd womenscaucus.org

