



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



**International Treaty
on Plant Genetic Resources
for Food and Agriculture**

E

Item 16.3 of the Provisional Agenda

TENTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Rome, Italy, 20–24 November 2023

Report on Cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity

Executive Summary

This document responds to the provisions of the International Treaty, as well as to the request from the Governing Body to the Secretary, to report on cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at each Session. Specifically, the document reports on actions taken in following up on decisions made by the Ninth Session of the Governing Body through Resolution 13/2022. The document highlights the recent developments and ongoing processes under the CBD and its Nagoya Protocol since the Ninth Session that are relevant to the International Treaty.

The document also provides a summary of key areas for decision-making by the Governing Body on cooperation with the CBD, as well as of recent developments in the continuing close relationship between its Secretariat and Secretariat of the CBD. The document should be read in conjunction with document IT/GB-10/23/7, *The Role of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture within the Global Biodiversity Framework*, which describes the role of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture within the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the relationship and linkages between the GBF and the International Treaty.

The report of the Executive Secretary of the CBD on cooperation with the International Treaty is provided in the document, IT/GB-10/23/16.3/Inf.1, *Report from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity on Cooperation with the International Treaty*.

Guidance Sought

The Governing Body is invited to take note of the report and provide further guidance on the continuing close cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol, taking into account the elements for a possible Resolution provided in Annex to this Document.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Article 1.2 of the International Treaty stipulates that its objectives “will be attained by closely linking this Treaty to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and to the Convention on Biological Diversity”. In addition, Article 20.5 requires the Secretary, inter alia, to cooperate with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in achieving the objectives of the International Treaty. Article 19.3 (l) further provides that the Governing Body shall take note of the relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD. As a result, the Governing Body decided to retain the relationship with the CBD as a standing item on its Agenda at every Session.¹
2. Cooperation with the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, its subsidiary bodies and the Secretariat has continued to develop and expand during the current biennium. Section II of this document describes cooperation between the Governing Body and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. Section III reports on cooperation between their Secretariats.

II. COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TREATY’S GOVERNING BODY AND THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CBD

A. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

3. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was adopted at the 15th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP-15) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in December 2022. The Governing Body provided inputs and guidance in relation to the further development and finalization of the GBF, including through Resolution 13/2022.
4. The document, IT/GB-10/23/7, *The Role of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture within the Global Biodiversity Framework*, describes the role of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture within the GBF and the relationship and linkages between the GBF and the International Treaty. The document contains a draft Resolution on the role of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture within the Global Biodiversity Framework. Key areas for decision-making by the Governing Body regarding the GBF are contained in the document, IT/GB-10/23/7.

B. Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

5. At its Ninth Session, the Governing Body welcomed the relevant reports of the IPBES and recognized their importance to the mandate and work of the International Treaty, and that the implementation of the International Treaty may also benefit from the findings of those assessments. It therefore requested the Secretary to continue following the related processes and report any relevant developments to the Governing Body
6. The tenth session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES 10) was held in Bonn, Germany, from 28 August to 2 September 2023. It launched a new report on invasive alien species (IAS) and their control. It also approved the scoping process for a second global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services. The members of the Biodiversity-related Conventions Liaison Group (BLG), which includes the International Treaty, have emphasized that assessments conducted by IPBES, notably assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services, can contribute to the scientific and stewardship roles of these Conventions. The Governing Body may wish to emphasize the importance of including plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in the second global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services, where relevant.

C. Resource Mobilization and the Convention's Financial Mechanism - the Global Environment Facility

7. The CBD COP adopted decision XV/7 on resource mobilization, including a strategy for resource mobilization for the GBF implementation and the establishment of an advisory committee on resource mobilization to support the strategy. The strategy contains a number of elements of interest and relevance to the work of the Standing Committee on the Funding Strategy and Resource Mobilization (Funding Committee), including in relation to increasing international biodiversity-related financial flows and domestic resource mobilization, as well as enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of resource use. A staff

of the Secretariat of the International Treaty has been invited to be a member of the Advisory Committee on Resource Mobilization (Advisory Committee). The work of the Advisory Committee is also relevant in the context of the development of a multilateral mechanism on DSI. The Governing Body may wish to request the Secretariat to keep the Funding Committee regularly informed of relevant developments related to resource mobilization for the implementation of the GBF.

8. Through COP decision XV/15, the CBD COP provided guidance on the establishment and operations of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund, to be dedicated exclusively to supporting the implementation of the GBF goals and targets. Given the importance of the implementation of the Treaty for the achievement of a number of GBF targets, the Governing Body may wish to request the Secretary to follow developments in the establishment and implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund and keep the Funding Committee informed regularly and report back to the Governing Body, at its Eleventh Session.

9. At its twelfth meeting, the COP to the CBD invited to the governing bodies of the various biodiversity-related conventions to develop strategic guidance for the seventh and eighth replenishments of the Trust Fund of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The Governing Body thanked the COP of the CBD for such invitation and had, since its Sixth Session, provided elements of advice at strategic level.

10. Through Decision XIII/21, the CBD COP invited the Governing Body to develop strategic guidance for its consideration in preparing four-year outcome-oriented framework of programme priorities of the CBD for the eighth replenishment period (2022–2026) of the Global Environment Facility trust fund.

11. At its Ninth Session, the Governing Body:

15. Notes that the GEF-8 gives significant consideration to biodiversity and, in particular, to the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity and that further advice would be provided to it by the COP to the CBD at its fifteenth meeting and, therefore, reiterates the elements of advice provided previously through Resolution 11/2019 and the following ones;

a) Invites the GEF to place a strong emphasis on the sustainable use of PGRFA in particular in its support to mainstreaming biodiversity within the agriculture sector, and in general in its work to improve conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of natural ecosystems;

b) Thanks the GEF for recognizing in the GEF-8 Biodiversity Strategy the importance of genetic resources for food and agriculture and in achieving food security worldwide, and in doing so, for considering projects for the mutually supportive implementation of the Nagoya Protocol and the Treaty; and invites FAO, the United Nations Development Programme and other agencies implementing or executing such projects to liaise with the Secretariat of the International Treaty to synthesize and disseminate lessons learned and knowledge gained arising from such projects to support the implementation of the International Treaty;

c) Invites the GEF to take into account the specificities of PGRFA and the need for specific solutions in its support to promote policies and plans for scientific research and development on the use of genetic resources under national access and benefit-sharing frameworks; national investments and to capacity building to add value to genetic resources as well as regional collaborations;

16. Invites Contracting Parties, in line with Article 18.4 (a) of the International Treaty, to ensure due attention to plans and programmes that support the implementation of the International Treaty when implementing relevant programme directions that have been adopted within the context of GEF-8;

12. The Secretary submitted the elements of advice provided by the Governing Body to the Executive Secretary of the CBD and these were published as part of the information document CBD/COP/15/INF/15¹.

13. The CBD COP adopted Decision XV/15 on its financial mechanism. *Annex I* of the Decision includes four-year outcome-oriented framework of programme priorities of the CBD for GEF-8. The programme priorities include several considerations regarding promotion of implementation of biodiversity-

¹ Update on recent developments under the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of relevance to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization www.cbd.int/meetings/COP-15

related conventions and enhancement of programmatic synergies and efficiencies amongst them. However, none of the specific elements of advice developed by the Governing Body were included in the programme priorities. There is no reference to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture under programme priorities for agricultural biodiversity or to mutual supportiveness with the Treaty in the programming directions related to the Nagoya Protocol.

14. The CBD COP has again invited the governing bodies of the various biodiversity-related conventions to repeat the exercise described therein for the development of strategic guidance for the ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility in time for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting. Given the above, the Governing Body may wish to request the Funding Committee to assess the efficiency and practicality of providing further strategic guidance on this area and, if appropriate, to develop, with the support of the Secretariat, elements of advice concerning the funding of the objectives and priorities the Treaty, consistent with the mandates of the Global Environment Facility, and request the Secretary to transmit the elements of advice, if developed, to the sixteenth meeting of the CBD COP, consistent with COP decision XV/15.

D. Digital Sequence Information (DSI) on Genetic Resources

15. Resolution 13/2022 on cooperation with the CBD, made a number of references to ongoing developments related to DSI.

16. The document, IT/GB-10/23/17.2, *Consideration of “Digital Sequence Information / Genetic Sequence Data” on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture for the Objectives of the International Treaty*, contains a section on developments in other fora, including in particular the Convention on Biological Diversity and contains draft elements for a Resolution in its Annex.

E. Synergies among the Biodiversity-Related Conventions

17. The Governing Body, through Resolution 13/2022, *inter alia*:

- **Thank[ed]** the Secretariat for the activities undertaken to enhance cooperation, coordination and complementarity among the biodiversity-related conventions and requests the Secretary to continue this engagement during the next biennium;
- **Invit[ed]** the United Nations Environment Programme to build on the Bern Process and continue to strengthen cooperation and coordination among biodiversity-related conventions contributing to effective and efficient implementation of the Post-2020 GBF, when adopted, by facilitating the process for cooperation among Parties to the relevant biodiversity-related conventions;
- **request[ed]** the Secretary and encourages Contracting Parties to actively engage in this effort contributing to effective and efficient implementation of the Post-2020 GBF, when adopted;

18. Though its decision XV/12 on cooperation with other conventions and international organizations, the CBD COP invited the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions, as well as the informal advisory group on synergies, to enhance cooperation, reduce inefficiencies and facilitate synergies between the heads of the secretariats of biodiversity-related conventions, including through thematic consultations, on key issues for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and to provide common messages or draft recommendations to their respective governing bodies to act upon.

19. The Secretariat participated in a meeting organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in June 2023, to gather inputs for the organisation of the Bern III Conference of Biodiversity-related Conventions and other relevant conventions on implementation of the GBF that will be held in early 2024.

III. COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO SECRETARIATS

Memorandum of Cooperation

20. Cooperation between the two Secretariats has increased steadily in recent years. An existing Memorandum of Cooperation provides the framework for cooperation between the two Secretariats in the

areas of biological diversity of relevance to food and agriculture with a view to promoting synergy, ensuring complementarity and mutual support, and better serving its Members. The Memorandum is being reviewed for renewal including to take advantage of the adoption of the GBF to further enhance coherence and cooperation between Secretariats.

Joint capacity-development activities

21. The Governing Body has repeatedly acknowledged the need for the harmonious and mutually supportive implementation of the International Treaty, the CBD and its Nagoya Protocol, and for continued capacity-building and capacity-development support to Contracting Parties, especially for developing country Contracting Parties in this regard.

22. During the current biennium, the Secretariat continued its close collaboration with the CBD Secretariat on capacity development for the harmonious implementation of the International Treaty and the CBD, particularly its Nagoya Protocol, as well as on awareness-raising and information sharing, partly in conjunction with other partners, such as Bioversity International and the ABS Capacity Development Initiative. Other areas of collaboration included strengthening joint programming and capacity building in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and achieving synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions.

Information systems and knowledge management

23. During this period, the Secretariat continued the collaboration with the CBD Secretariat through the technical activities of the InforMEA Initiative and its Steering Committee, including on matters related to information and knowledge management. In particular, the Secretariats collaborated with the UN Environment to make available, through the InforMEA Portal, information on the membership and resolutions adopted by the respective governing bodies.

Indicators on benefit-sharing: GBF Targets and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

24. The Secretariats of the CBD and the International Treaty have continued their collaboration in the monitoring process on the achievement of SDG Target 15.6, “Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed”. For the annual progress reporting organized by the United Nations Statistical Division, necessary inputs on the indicator 15.6.1, both data and text, were prepared jointly by the two Secretariats.

25. A number of indicators are being developed to monitor the achievements of goals and targets of the GBF, including in the area of benefit-sharing. The two Secretariats collaborated in the preparation of a quick guide on the GBF target 13 on access and benefit-sharing. It is still early to know whether development of indicators under the GBF will influence or not future reporting regarding the monitoring of SDG Target 15.6. Further information will be provided at the next Session of the Governing Body.

IV. GUIDANCE SOUGHT

26. The Governing Body is invited to take note of the information contained in this report and provide further guidance on continuing the close cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol, taking into account the elements for a possible Resolution provided in the Annex to this document.

DRAFT RESOLUTION **/2023**COOPERATION WITH THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY****THE GOVERNING BODY,**

Recalling Article 1.2 of the International Treaty, as well as Article 19.3 (g) and (l), which provide for the Governing Body to establish and maintain cooperation with, as well as take note of the relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the provisions of Article 20.5, which requires the Secretary to cooperate with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity;

Recalling Resolution 13/2022 regarding cooperation with the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, its subsidiary bodies and Secretariat;

Acknowledging the need for continued capacity building support to Parties, especially developing countries, for the mutually supportive implementation of the International Treaty, the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol;

1. **Takes note** of the recent developments and ongoing processes under the CBD and its Nagoya Protocol that are of relevance to the International Treaty;
2. **Requests** the Secretary to continue monitoring and participating in the relevant processes related to the CBD and its Nagoya Protocol, in order to promote practical, harmonious and appropriate interfaces among them, both nationally and internationally;
3. **Emphasizes** the importance of maintaining cooperation, complementarity and coherence as well as avoiding duplication between the International Treaty and the CBD, and with other biodiversity-related conventions, in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF);
4. **Recalls** that, at its Ninth Session, it welcomed relevant reports of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and recognized their importance to the mandate and work of the International Treaty, and **emphasizes** the importance of including plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in the second global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services, where relevant;
5. **Welcomes** the adoption of a strategy for resource mobilization to support the implementation of the GBF and **requests** the Secretary to keep the Standing Committee for the Funding Strategy and Resource Mobilization (Funding Committee) regularly informed of relevant developments in this area and report back to the Governing Body, at its Eleventh Session;
6. **Welcomes** the establishment of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund and **requests** the Secretary to follow developments in the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund and to keep the Funding Committee informed regularly and report back to the Governing Body, at its Eleventh Session.
7. **Thanks** the COP to the CBD for its invitation to the governing bodies of the various biodiversity-related conventions to develop strategic guidance, in accordance with CBD COP Decision XIII/21, for the ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, and **requests** the Funding Committee to assess the efficiency and practicality of providing further strategic guidance on this area and, if appropriate, to develop, with the support of the Secretariat, elements of advice concerning the funding of the objectives and priorities the Treaty, consistent with the mandates of the Global Environment Facility, and **requests** the Secretary to transmit the elements of advice, if developed, to the sixteenth meeting of the CBD COP, consistent with COP decision XV/15.

8. **Thanks** the Secretariat for the activities undertaken to enhance cooperation, coordination and complementarity among the biodiversity-related conventions and **requests** the Secretary to continue this engagement during the next biennium;
9. **Commends** the Secretariat for its efforts to cooperate with the Secretariat of the CBD and **requests** the Secretary, subject to the availability of financial resources, to continue exploring with the Secretariat of the CBD, practical means and activities to further enhance this cooperation, including by renewing the Memorandum of Cooperation and continue to develop joint initiatives between the two Secretariats, and to report to the Governing Body;
10. **Requests** the Secretary to cooperate with the Executive Secretary of the CBD by providing information on developments and practical implementation experiences within the International Treaty;
11. **Welcomes** the on-going collaboration between the Secretariats of the International Treaty and the CBD in the development of indicators on benefit-sharing under the GBF and the monitoring process on the achievement of SDG Target 15.6 “Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed” and **requests** the Secretary to report back to the Governing Body at each Session on any relevant developments regarding such collaboration;
12. **Welcomes** the engagement of the Secretariat of the International Treaty in capacity development activities on harmonious and mutually supportive implementation of the Treaty and the CBD, and its Nagoya Protocol, and **requests** the Secretary to continue engaging in such activities, subject to the availability of financial resources;
13. **Welcomes** the efforts of the Secretariats of the International Treaty and the CBD in collaborating with the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, the ABS Capacity Development Initiative and other partners to bring together stakeholders and experts involved in the implementation of the International Treaty, the CBD and its Nagoya Protocol, and **requests** the Secretary, subject to the availability of financial resources, to continue facilitating such interaction on the mutual supportiveness and harmonious implementation of the instruments, and to report the outcomes of such activities to the Governing Body;
14. **Requests** the Secretary to continue reporting on cooperation with the CBD at each Session of the Governing Body.