



Convention on Biological Diversity

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BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Fourth meeting

Nairobi, Kenya 19 October 2023

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES IN THE INTER-SESSIONAL PERIOD

1. A meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties (COP) was held in-person on 19 October 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya at 8:00 a.m. East Africa Time (EAT).
2. The meeting was attended by the following members of the COP Bureau and substitutes:
Representative of the President: Dr. ZHOU Guomei;
Africa: Mr. Eric Okoree (Ghana);
Asia and the Pacific: Ms. Leina Al-Awadhi (Kuwait);
Eastern Europe: Ms. Teona Karchava (Georgia); Mr. Sino Tohirzoda (Tajikistan, substitute for Georgia for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol);
Latin America and the Caribbean: Ms. Helena Jeffery Brown (Antigua and Barbuda); Ms. Eugenia Arguedas Montezuma (Costa Rica); Ms. Corina Sarli (Argentina, substitute for Costa Rica for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol);
Western Europe and others: Ms. Gabriele Obermayr (Austria); Marie Haraldstad (Norway, substitute for New Zealand for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol);
COP Presidency: Ms. CHEN Haijun (China);
Observers: Mr. Neville Ash and Mr. Stadler Trengove (United Nations Environment Programme).
3. The Secretariat was represented by Mr. David Cooper, Acting Executive Secretary; Ms. Wadzanayi Mandivenyi, Head, Biosafety Unit; Mr. Taukondjo Shikongo, Head ABS Unit; Mr. Worku Yifru, Senior Legal Officer; Ms. Inonge Mweene, Legal Officer; Ms. Kathryn Garforth, Programme Management Officer; Mr. David Ainsworth, Public Information Officer and Ms. Li Gu, Programme Management Officer.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

4. The meeting was opened at 8:00 a.m. by Dr. Guomei Zhou, who chaired the meeting on behalf of the President of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP). Dr. Zhou mentioned that a successful closure of COP15 was needed and briefly outlined the consultations that China had undertaken to support this, including participation in the African Climate Summit, the GEF Assembly, the 3rd Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing, and holding meetings with UNEP's Executive

Director, Ms. Inger Andersen, as well as with representatives from several countries. The consultations also offered opportunities to discuss progress of implementation of COP15 outcomes.

5. Dr. Zhou also informed Bureau members that China was proposing the Action Initiative for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), with the aim of promoting the profile and visibility of the KMGBF, mobilizing, and strengthening political will through the sharing and exchanging of experiences towards implementation.

6. The Acting Executive Secretary expressed gratitude to the COP15 Presidency and countries for building momentum through the KMGBF Action Initiative and other efforts. He added that the purpose of the meeting was to focus on the closure of COP15, ensure the election of officers and chairs of the subsidiary bodies, and adopt the reports of the meetings.

ITEM 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The Chair introduced the provisional agenda for the meeting. The agenda was adopted as proposed.

ITEM 3. REPORT ON CREDENTIALS

8. An update on the status of credentials was presented to the Bureau by Mr. Eric Okoree, the representative of the Bureau responsible for reviewing credentials, supported by the Senior Legal Officer of the Secretariat. Members were also informed that a credentials report would be made available as an information document and uploaded on the COP15 website no later than the opening of the resumed meetings the next day.

9. Mr. Worku Damena Yifru, Senior Legal Officer, informed the Bureau that the quorum required for the resumed meetings to take decision had been reached and that a detail report on the status of credentials would be made available as information document, in time for the meetings.

10. Bureau members expressed their appreciation to the Secretariat and the Presidency for the preparations carried out for the resumed part two of the fifteenth meeting of the COP, the tenth meeting of the COP-MOP to the Cartagena Protocol and the fourth meeting of the COP-MOP to the Nagoya Protocol.

11. After receiving clarifications from the Secretariat on some questions raised by members, the Bureau approved the report on credentials.

ITEM 4. PREPARATION FOR THE RESUMED MEETINGS

12. Following the resignation of Ms. Elvana Ramaj (Albania), the former Rapporteur of the meetings, from the Bureau, the Chair indicated that a new Rapporteur would need to be identified. The Chair informed the Bureau that she had made some consultations and that Ms. Leina El-Awadhi, the Bureau member from Kuwait, had kindly accepted to take the role. Bureau members agreed with the Chair's proposal.

13. The Chair then asked the Secretariat to brief the meeting on the proposed organization of work and the procedure for elections of officers.

14. Mr. David Cooper, Acting Executive Secretary, stated that after series of discussions in the Bureau, and consultations with other relevant organizations and processes, the time had come to resume COP15.2 and the meetings of the Parties to the Protocols. He referred to the proposed organization of work for the resumed meetings as contained in annex II to document CBD/COP/15/1/Add.5. The Acting Executive Secretary suggested a change in the order of the items, namely that the meetings would conduct the election of officers immediately after item 3 on report on credentials. He then referred to the note

CBD/COP/15/INF/28/Rev.1 on the procedures for elections to fill the positions of Vice-Presidents of the COP, Chairpersons of SBSTTA and SBI and outlined the planned steps in the election process.

15. Mr. Cooper provided details on the proposed plan regarding the election of Vice-Presidents of the COP. He indicated that the Chair would open the floor for nominations for the ten positions. Subsequently, the Chair would read the full list of nominees received from regions/Parties and then close the nominations. He explained that the Chair would propose to elect by acclamation the candidates where there was no objection and where the number of nominees equaled the number of positions. Additionally, he stated that if some regions had more than two candidates, the Chair would then indicate that, according to the rules of procedure, a vote would be conducted. Finally, he added that if there were objections to any candidates, the Chair would attempt to include the objection in the report and proceed without a vote. However, if necessary, a vote would be conducted according to the rules of procedure. Mr. Cooper explained that the voting for the Vice-Presidents would be alphabetical by region, starting with the Eastern European States, to be followed, where required, by Western European and other States.

16. Mr. Cooper stated that once the election of Vice Presidents was completed, the meeting would be invited to move on to the election of the Chairs for the two Subsidiary bodies. Mr Cooper mentioned that the election of the SBI Chair was expected to be by acclamation, and voting would likely take place to elect the Chair of SBSTTA.

17. He also informed the Bureau that Tellers had been identified from regions where there were no election related problems. The Tellers would be announced during the proceedings. The Tellers would supervise the distribution of ballot papers to those Parties with credentials. Once the distribution was completed, the same Tellers would supervise the collection of ballot papers using two ballot boxes. Then the Tellers would proceed, with the assistance of assigned Secretariat staff, with the counting of the votes. Once counting was completed, they submit their report to the Chair who would announce the results on the election of new members to the Bureau.

18. The Senior Legal Officer added that only those with credentials would take part in the voting process; however all Parties could be present during the elections, regardless of whether they had credentials. Mr. Yifru confirmed that at least two-thirds of the Parties had presented credentials and stressed that, in order to maintain quorum, all those Parties with valid credentials had to be present in the room. Regarding the Tellers, he indicated to the Bureau that the representatives proposed to serve as Tellers were Ms. Mariela Canepa from Peru, Ms. Agnes Asagbra from Nigeria, and Mr. Bilal Qteshat from Jordan.

19. The Senior Legal Officer of the Secretariat and Mr. Stadler Trengove, the Principal Legal Officer of UNEP, responded to a number of questions raised by members of the Bureau, to further clarify the procedure. The Chair expressed her gratitude to the Secretariat for the information and explanation provided as well as for the two information sessions organized earlier. The Chair indicated her hope that the meetings would proceed smoothly and be concluded as planned.

ITEM 5. HOSTING OF COP-16 AND THE CONCURRENT MEETINGS OF THE PARTIES TO THE PROTOCOLS

20. The Secretariat introduced the agenda item. The Acting Executive Secretary said that following Türkiye's withdrawal from hosting COP16, and the Bureau's request to the Secretariat to invite offers from Parties to host COP16 and the concurrent meetings of the Parties to the Protocols, the Secretariat had issued

a notification.¹ He noted that there had been some consultations with several Parties; however, no offer had been made to date.

21. Mr. Cooper added that there are active discussions with two Parties from the Western European and other States. He added that the Secretariat continues to look for potential host and that in the case of no offers, COP16 would then take place at the seat of the Secretariat. He stressed that the dates for COP16 would have to remain the same or very close to those dates due to tight schedule in the international calendar.

ITEM 6. OTHER MATTERS

22. There was no other matter raised by members of the Bureau.

ITEM 7. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

23. The Chair and the Acting Executive Secretary expressed their appreciation to Bureau members for their active participation and the guidance provided.

24. The meeting was closed on 19 October 2023 at 9:30 a.m.

¹ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2023/ntf-2023-082-cop16-en.pdf>.