



Convention on
Biological Diversity

**Statement by the Executive Secretary
of the Convention on Biological Diversity,
Astrid Schomaker**

**Closing session of the high-level segment of the sixteenth meeting of the
Conference of the Parties**

30 October 2024

Your Excellency Susana Muhamad, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia and President of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

Thank you for your presence and active engagement in this remarkable high-level segment of the United Nations Biodiversity Conference.

Thank you, President Gustavo Petro, for hosting this high-level segment and for the unprecedented high-level mobilization for biodiversity.

Here in the Blue Zone and in the bustling Green Zone at the heart of Cali, we have also seen the largest whole-of-society mobilization for biodiversity.

The sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties is indeed “la COP de la gente”.

Citizens in Cali and around the world have come together to root for nature. Our work on biodiversity has become the talk of the town – now it must become the talk of the globe.

Not all but many have got the memo.

Over the last few days at the venue, we have seen businesses and financial institutions, subnational governments, cities and local authorities present remarkable initiatives and action.

The message is clear: the time for bold, transformative change is now. Because business as usual means pushing life on this planet to the brink.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework that you adopted two years ago is a historic blueprint for peace with nature.

Let us take that blueprint and build a future where humans and nature thrive together.

Excellencies,

The political weight that you bring to this conference can tilt the balance and push negotiations across the finish line.

I appeal to you to help us deliver on what the Conference of the Parties set out to achieve at its sixteenth meeting:

- By elevating the recognition of the role and knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities.
- By taking inspiration from the fresh pledges made this week to the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund and finding the path to agreement on resource mobilization.
- By operationalizing the much-needed multilateral mechanism on benefit-sharing from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources.
- By ensuring that we have a strong global review mechanism, so that we know where we stand as we come together at the seventeenth meeting.

Here in Cali you can also give the world the first action plan on biodiversity and health, a key component of the Framework.

This action plan is part of our common insurance policy against zoonotic diseases and pandemic-induced shocks.

In this last stretch, I plead with you to encourage your negotiators to go the full mile and deliver what we have all come to Cali for.

Environmental multilateralism remains a beacon of hope in a complicated world. We need peace with nature and peace among ourselves.

As the Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres told media representatives this morning, there is a palpable constructive spirit and a strong appetite for success.

Let us seize the moment to achieve success.

We owe success in Cali, the capital of the mega-biodiverse Valle del Cauca, not only to its people, who have so generously and warmly welcomed us for these negotiations, but also to the entire world and to future generations.