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UN
Office of Legal Affairs
Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea

Convention on Biological Diversity

COP17 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Side Event

From commitments to action: Leveraging synergies between the BBNJ Agreement and the work under the CBD in support of their effective implementation

Friday, 23 October 2026, 13:15-14:45
Komitas - Business and Industry Organizations Group room

Organized by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Objective

The entry into force of the *Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction* (BBNJ Agreement) on 17 January 2026 marks a significant milestone in multilateral efforts to conserve and sustainably use marine biodiversity in nearly two thirds of the ocean. As of 13 October 2026, the BBNJ Agreement has 145 signatories and 104 Parties. Valuable opportunities exist for synergies between the BBNJ Agreement and work under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on marine and coastal biodiversity and the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

With the BBNJ Agreement now in force, the focus has shifted to implementation. In April 2026, the Preparatory Commission, established by the United Nations General Assembly to prepare for the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement and the convening of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement (BBNJ COP1), adopted its report, which contains ten documents recommended for consideration by BBNJ COP1, to be convened from 11 to 22 January 2027. These include a draft decision on arrangements to enhance cooperation with relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies. With BBNJ COP1 fast approaching, continued dialogue on ways to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the Agreement and the CBD in support of their effective implementation is both timely and important.

The KMGBF sets out four outcome-oriented goals to be achieved by 2050 and 23 action-oriented targets to be achieved by 2030 in order to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and to put nature on the path to recovery. The BBNJ Agreement has significant synergies with the KMGBF. Nearly all 23 targets of the KMGBF are highly relevant to the drivers of biodiversity loss that the BBNJ Agreement aims to address, as well as to the measures and tools the Agreement provides for. The BBNJ Agreement can therefore contribute to accelerating the implementation of the KMGBF. Many elements of the BBNJ Agreement also provide clear opportunities for synergies and the sharing of knowledge and experience with work under the CBD, including on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas, impact assessment, biodiversity mainstreaming, area-based conservation, capacity-building, access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources and the clearing-house mechanism. Highlighting these synergies, the expert workshop on scientific and technical work conducted under the CBD relevant to marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction identified some important opportunities for work under the CBD to better contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

Against this background, this side event will provide an update on recent progress towards the operationalization of the BBNJ Agreement, including the outcome of the BBNJ Preparatory Commission and

ongoing preparations for BBNJ COP1, and explore opportunities to enhance cooperation and coordination between the BBNJ Agreement and work under the CBD in that context. It will also facilitate a multi-stakeholder dialogue on how to leverage synergies between the BBNJ Agreement and the work under the CBD, including the KMGBF, in support of their effective implementation.

Programme

1. **Opening *(10 mins)***
   - **Ms. Jihyun Lee**, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
   - **Mr. Vladimir Jares**, Director, Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations (delivered by Ms. Charlotte Salpin, DOALOS)

2. **Panel 1 – Progress towards the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement and opportunities for enhancing cooperation and coordination *(35 mins)***

   Scene-setting remarks and moderator: **Ms. Charlotte Salpin**, DOALOS

   Guiding questions:
   - *For your State, what are the key priorities in the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement?*
   - *What do you see as the key areas for cooperation and coordination between the BBNJ Agreement and the work under the CBD in this context, and what opportunities and challenges exist for enhancing cooperation and coordination in these areas?*

   - **Ms. Cecilia Fischer,** Federal Agency for Natural Conservation of Germany
   - **Ms. Freydis Vigfusdottir***,* Ministry of the Environment, Energy and Climate of Iceland
   - **Ms. Laura Rodríguez**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico
   - **Mr. John Erick Avelino,** Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines

   Moderated open forum and Q&A

3. **Panel 2 – Leveraging synergies between the BBNJ Agreement and the work under the CBD in support of their effective implementation *(35 mins)***

   Scene-setting remarks and moderator: **Mr. Bingzhuo Li**, DOALOS

   Guiding questions:
   - *What opportunities exist for various stakeholders to leverage synergies between the BBNJ Agreement and the work under the CBD, including the KMGBF, in support of their effective implementation?*
   - *What are the key challenges in leveraging these synergies and how can they be addressed?*

   - **Mr. Andy Raine**, Executive Secretary of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
   - **Mr. Sefanaia Nawadra**, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)
   - **Mr. Matt Frost**, Plymouth Marine Laboratory
   - **Ms. Jennifer Tauli Corpuz**, Member of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

   Moderated open forum and Q&A

4. **Looking ahead *(5 mins)***
   - **Ms. Shruthi Kottillil,** Global Youth Biodiversity Network