



PRESS RELEASE

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Fairly and equitably sharing valuable benefits from digital sequence information — the digital versions of plant, animal, and microorganism DNA: crucial week of UN negotiations begin in Montreal 12 August

- Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will negotiate how to operationalise a multilateral mechanism established in 2022 to fairly and equitably share vast financial and other benefits produced by uses of high-tech, digital versions of plant, animal, and microorganism DNA (Digital Sequence Information: DSI).
- Goal of the mechanism and fund, agreed at CBD's COP 15 as part of the historic Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF): to benefit nature and people, including indigenous peoples and local communities as custodians of biodiversity.

Montreal, 6 August 2024 — Marking a potentially pivotal moment, over 300 delegates will convene in Montreal from 12 to 16 August 2024 to advance a 2022 global agreement to share fairly and equitably the multi-trillion dollar annual revenues and other benefits derived from uses of Digital Sequence Information (DSI) on genetic resources, including the DNA of plants, animals, and microorganisms.

The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of DSI on Genetic Resources, established by the 196 Parties to the CBD, will work through options for operationalizing the multilateral mechanism, including a global fund. The multilateral mechanism and the associated global fund were adopted at COP 15 as part of the historic Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)—the world's masterplan guiding biodiversity actions through 2030 towards achieving the vision of a world living in harmony with nature by 2050.

If its operationalization is adopted at COP16 (Cali, Colombia, 21 October -1 November 2024), the multilateral mechanism, including a global fund, is expected to mobilize new streams of additional funding for biodiversity conservation worldwide, and to support the CBD's three overarching objectives: conserving biological diversity, sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

“The Parties are ready to move towards the next stage of considering options on the basis of the work that has been done so far. We appreciate their vote of confidence and commitment towards a pragmatic and adaptive solution that is cost effective, efficient and simple,” said Mphatso Kalemba of Malawi and William Lockhart of the United Kingdom, the Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group within which the negotiations are unfolding. “At this meeting, we hope to hear a clear positive signal of commitment and goodwill to the shape of this multilateral mechanism.”

Sectors that rely on DSI, such as pharmaceuticals, chemicals, cosmetics, agriculture and other consumer products, stand to gain from clearer guidelines on benefit-sharing, while indigenous peoples and local communities, as custodians of biodiversity, stand to benefit from the fund. The talks in Montreal will address

critical operational details: who pays, how much, and under what conditions, and how to ensure transparency and inclusivity in decision-making.

“The multilateral mechanism is a game-changer. It is expected to provide a multilateral solution and policy guidance on benefit-sharing from the use of DSI on genetic resources, address the crucial aspects of equity, fairness and social justice, bolster capacity-building and development and technology transfer, and mobilize new streams of biodiversity finance,” said Astrid Schomaker, Executive Secretary of the CBD, adding that the multilateral mechanism could be a signature outcome of the forthcoming COP 16 in Cali, Colombia.

“In the same manner as the historic KMGBF adopted in 2022, a breakthrough on the DSI multilateral mechanism would signal that environmental multilateralism can deliver for people and nature,” Ms Schomaker said.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Scheduled news conferences:

A closing press conference will be held virtually on Friday, 16 August. The exact date and time will be confirmed shortly. Journalists are invited to pre-register through [this link](#):

Thank you for your attention, and we look forward to your participation.

About the WGDSI-2 meeting:

Visit the webpage dedicated to the meeting on the CBD website for documents, resources and communication products: <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/wgdsi-2>

About COP 16:

COP 16 meeting documents: <https://bit.ly/3zhS7jK>

In Cali, Parties to the CBD will take stock of progress towards the goals and 23 ambitious targets for 2030 agreed to in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Resource mobilisation and technical and scientific cooperation will be central to the negotiations. The financial ambitions set out in the Plan include investing US\$ 200 billion a year from all sources, and reforming US\$ 500 billion in government subsidies that undermine biodiversity.

The upcoming UN Biodiversity Conference in Cali is comprised of:

- the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity
- the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- the 5th meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing.

Learn more: “On the road to COP 16 in Cali: three priority areas for action”: <https://bit.ly/4faX3aN>

About the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD): <https://www.cbd.int/convention/guide/>

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