

# Guidance Note for Delegates to the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP14) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introduction to the CBD

The Convention on Biological Diversity ([CBD](#)) was negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and adopted in 1992. The three main aims of the Convention are to promote “the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources”.

The CBD is a binding and landmark instrument in international environmental law. It establishes the principle of national sovereignty over natural resources, and recognises (for the first time) that the conservation of biological diversity is a common concern of humankind and an integral part of the development process. The Convention covers all ecosystems, species and genetic resources. It sets policies and general obligations, and organises technical and financial cooperation.

Governments that ratify or accede to the Convention agree to be legally bound by its provisions; they are referred to as “State Parties” and each one designates one or more [National Focal Points](#). As of November 2018, there are 196 Parties to the CBD. Responsibility for implementation of the CBD rests with State Parties. The main implementation tools are national biodiversity strategies and action plans ([NBSAPs](#)) and [national reports](#). However, aside from these tools, the CBD does not yet have an effective monitoring and compliance mechanism. Proposals for a voluntary peer-review process for NBSAPs – which will hopefully strengthen monitoring and implementation – will be discussed at the 13<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties in Cancun.

In 2010, CBD Parties adopted the [Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020](#) and the [Aichi Biodiversity Targets](#), which set out five strategic goals and twenty targets for achievement by 2020. The Plan and Targets provide an overarching framework on biodiversity for the entire UN system – not only for the biodiversity-related conventions. Parties agreed to revise and update their NBSAPs to reflect this overarching international framework and to focus their [fifth national reports](#) on progress toward its implementation. The vast majority of NBSAPs and fifth national reports have been submitted.

**Box 1:** Introduction to the CBD, adapted in part from IISD Reporting Services ([http://www.iisd.ca/process/biodiv\\_wildlife-cbdintro.html](http://www.iisd.ca/process/biodiv_wildlife-cbdintro.html))

---

<sup>1</sup> Prepared for the COP14 delegations of the ICCA Consortium and the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI) / Global Forest Coalition (GFC). If you have any questions, please contact Holly Jonas ([holly@iccaconsortium.org](mailto:holly@iccaconsortium.org)).

## 1.1. Convention bodies

The **Conference of the Parties (COP)** is the governing body of the Convention and meets every two years. Its purpose is to review progress in the implementation of the Convention, adopt programmes of work, achieve its objectives, and provide policy guidance.

The COP is assisted by the **Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice (SBSTTA)**, which is comprised of government representatives with expertise in relevant fields, as well as observers from non-Party governments, the scientific community, and other relevant organizations. SBSTTA is responsible for providing recommendations to the COP on the technical aspects of implementing the Convention.

In 2014, the COP established the **Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI)** to replace the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention. The four functions and core areas of work of SBI include: (a) reviewing progress in implementation; (b) strategic actions to enhance implementation; (c) strengthening means of implementation; and (d) operations of

the Convention and the Protocols. The Bureau of the Conference of the Parties also serves as the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation.

The COP has also established other subsidiary bodies to deal with specific issues as they arise. They are called “**ad hoc open-ended Working Groups**”. They are established for a limited mandate and period of time, and open to all Parties as well as the participation of observers. Working Groups make recommendations to the COP and may also provide a forum for negotiations of new instruments under the Convention.

Current Working Groups include:

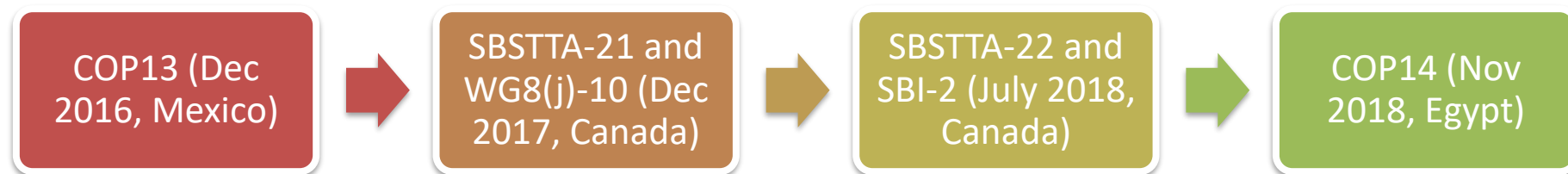
- (a) The [Working Group on Article 8\(j\) and related provisions](#), which addresses traditional knowledge, customary sustainable use of biodiversity and other matters pertaining to indigenous peoples and local communities; and
- (b) The [Working Group on Protected Areas](#), which guides and monitors implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas.

## 1.2. The Convention 'cycle' of meetings

COPs are held every two years. Within this two-year cycle, the general schedule of negotiations includes:

- SBSTTA (a), usually held late in odd years;
- Working Group on Article 8(j), usually held late in odd years, back-to-back with SBSTTA (a);
- SBSTTA (b), usually held around May/June in even years;
- SBI, usually held around May/June in even years, back-to-back with SBSTTA (b); and
- COP, usually held late in even years.

Each COP is thus the culmination of the previous two years of intersessional negotiation meetings. Decisions adopted by COPs have already been negotiated at one or more of these intersessional meetings. Draft decisions are also shaped between negotiations by written submissions, technical studies and outcomes of expert group meetings.



**Figure 1:** The CBD 'cycle' of meetings leading up to COP14 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt

## 1.3. Further resources

- [CBD in a Nutshell – A Guidebook to the CBD Process](#)
- [CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets](#)
- [Official CBD Handbook](#) (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)
- [Global Biodiversity Outlook](#) (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)
- Past [COP Decisions](#)

## 2. Overview of COP14

### 2.1. Who will participate?

State Parties are the primary participants in COPs, as they are the ones with decision-making power and legal commitments under the CBD. Other participants in COPs include observer States, observers from the UN and its specialised agencies, observers that are qualified in the fields of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use (for example, NGOs and Indigenous Peoples' Organisations), and accredited media.

### 2.2. How will COP14 work?

You may wish to download the COP14 app at: <https://www.cbd.int/cbd-events/>. All of the official negotiation documents (draft decisions, information documents, etc.) are available in Word and pdf in all five UN languages at: <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/2018/cop-14/documents>.

For the **overall and detailed agendas** of COP14, download the documents labelled "*Provisional agenda*" (CBD/COP/14/1) and "*Revised annotated provisional agenda*" (CBD/COP/14/1/Add.1/Rev.1). Detailed information about the **COP schedule**, including the date and location (plenary, Working Group 1 or Working Group 2) where each agenda item will be negotiated, download the document labelled "*Proposed organisation of work*" (CBD/COP/14/1/Add.2). A compilation of all **draft decisions** is included in CBD/COP/14/2.

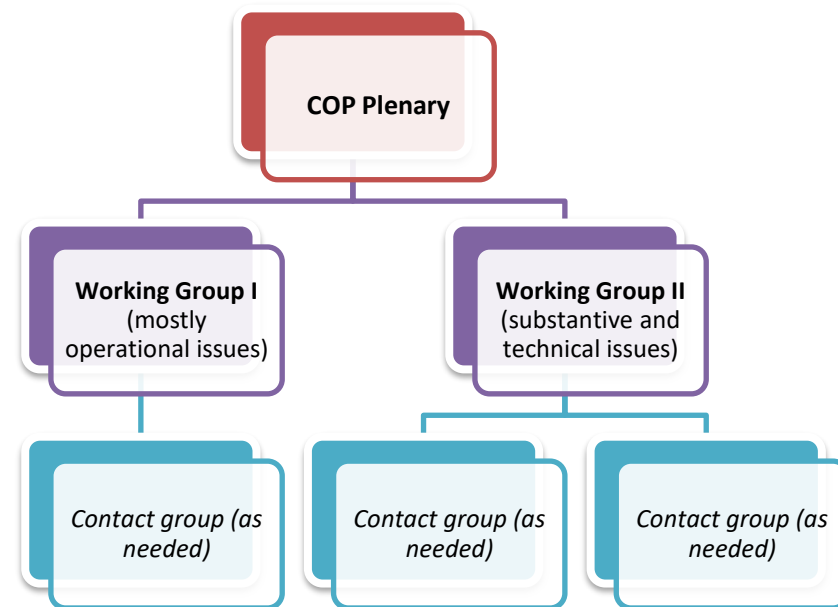


Figure 2: Organisation of COP14

The main negotiations take place from **10:00-13:00** and **15:00-18:00** each day from 17-22 November and from 25-29 November. The COP will first meet in **plenary** for the opening session on 17 November, for a review of progress on 22 November and for the closing session on 29 November. Most of the negotiations will take place in two **Working Groups**. Each Working Group will address a pre-determined list of agenda items and draft decisions.

**Working Group I** will focus on topics such as progress in implementation of the Strategic Plan, resource mobilisation and the financial mechanism, mechanisms for national reporting, and other

aspects of the CBD's operations. **Working Group II** will focus on substantive and technical issues such as mainstreaming biodiversity in different sectors, biodiversity and climate change, protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, marine and coastal biodiversity, and Article 8(j).

If certain issues are controversial, a Working Group may establish a **contact group** (i.e. a smaller group of interested delegates to resolve the issues more quickly). Contact groups report back to the respective Working Group, and the Working Groups report back to the plenary. Decisions are ultimately adopted by State Parties in the plenary (see *Figure 2*). In practice, negotiations can go late into the evening, especially if contacts groups are convened to address more controversial issues.

Many of the draft decisions have '**clean text**' with no square brackets. This means that the text was already agreed by the subsidiary bodies in the intersessional meetings. Delegates (including observers) are strongly discouraged to propose changes

to clean text. Some draft decisions have '**square brackets**' around some text. This means that the text in square brackets was not yet agreed by the subsidiary bodies in the intersessional meetings and still needs to be negotiated at COP. Delegates are strongly encouraged to only focus on bracketed text for the negotiations, but also be prepared if Parties do open clean text in provisions that are supportive of our issues.

Through the negotiation process, a draft decision will be converted to a "Conference Room Paper" (CRP), which is an in-session document containing new proposals or outcomes of in-session work, and later to a "Limited distribution" (L) document, before it is finally adopted at the closing plenary as an official decision. Documents will be labelled accordingly and only available in electronic form in the "In-session" documents webpage of COP14: <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/2018/cop-14/documents>. **Refer to this webpage regularly** during the negotiations to download the latest documents.

### 2.3. Key agenda items

The official theme of COP14 is “Investing in biodiversity for people and planet”. State Parties are expected to adopt decisions on a range of issues relevant to ICCAs—territories of life and community conservation. These include (in chronological order according to the official schedule):

- Review of progress in implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (**COP Agenda Item 8** – first considered by **Working Group I** in the afternoon of 17 November);
- Resource mobilisation and the financial mechanism for the Convention (**COP Agenda Item 9** – first considered by **Working Group I** in the afternoon of 18 November);
- Mainstreaming of biodiversity within and across sectors (**COP Agenda Item 22** – first considered by **Working Group II** in the afternoon of 18 November);
- Biodiversity and climate change (**COP Agenda Item 21** – first considered by **Working Group II** in the afternoon of 18 November);
- Sustainable wildlife management (**COP Agenda Item 20** – first considered by **Working Group II** in the afternoon of 18 November);
- Mechanisms for national reporting, assessment and review (**COP Agenda Item 12** – first considered by **Working Group I** in the morning of 19 November);
- Article 8(j) and related provisions (**COP Agenda Item 19** – first considered by **Working Group II** in the morning of 19 November);
- Enhancing integration under the Convention and its Protocols with respect to Article 8(j) and related provisions (**COP Agenda Item 13** – first considered by **Working Group II** in the morning of 19 November);
- Spatial planning, protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (**COP Agenda Item 24** – first considered by **Working Group II** in the afternoon of 19 November);
- Marine and coastal biodiversity (**COP Agenda Item 25** – first considered by **Working Group II** in the afternoon of 19 November); and
- Long-term strategic directions to 2050, Living in Harmony with Nature (dialogue) and preparation for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (**COP Agenda Item 17** – first considered by **Plenary** in the morning of 20 November).

### 3. How to Participate in COP14

Observers may participate in several ways, including by: (i) **attending preparatory meetings** of key caucuses and civil society networks; (ii) **discussing the recommendations** in our position paper with State Party delegations and National Focal Points; (iii) helping prepare and deliver **oral statements**; (iv) presenting at or attending **side events**; and (v) helping **track and share information** about the negotiations. These are considered in brief below.

#### 3.1. Attend preparatory meetings

Four main ‘caucuses’ and **civil society networks** are involved in the CBD and each will have strategy and preparatory meetings:

- (a) The [CBD Alliance](#);
- (b) The [International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity](#) (IIFB);
- (c) The [Global Youth Biodiversity Network](#) (GYBN); and
- (d) The Women’s Caucus, and [Indigenous Women’s Biodiversity Network](#) (IWBN).

Delegates are encouraged to participate in at least one of these caucuses, and preferably to stick with the same one for the duration of COP to ensure consistency. If you have not yet done so, please **contact the coordinators** specified below to sign up for the relevant e-list.

Please refer to the official information note for participants (provided by the CBD Secretariat) for logistical information about the venue, local transportation, on-site registration, side events, and more. Unfortunately it is only [available in English](#).

Caucus	‘Audience’	Coordinator / Contact
<b>CBD Alliance</b>	Civil society and non-governmental organisations	Coordinator: Gadir Lavadenz ( <a href="mailto:gadirlavadenz@gmail.com">gadirlavadenz@gmail.com</a> )
<b>IIFB</b>	Representatives from indigenous governments, indigenous organisations and indigenous scholars and activists	Coordinators: Ramiro Batzin ( <a href="mailto:batzinzr@gmail.com">batzinzr@gmail.com</a> ) and Lucy Mullenkei ( <a href="mailto:mullenkei@gmail.com">mullenkei@gmail.com</a> )
<b>Women’s Caucus and IWBN</b>	Delegates supporting women and gender-related considerations	Coordinator of both: Lucy Mullenkei ( <a href="mailto:mullenkei@gmail.com">mullenkei@gmail.com</a> ) Supporting coordination of Women’s Caucus: Tina Rai ( <a href="mailto:mrinalini.rai@globalforestcoalition.org">mrinalini.rai@globalforestcoalition.org</a> )
<b>GYBN</b>	Youth organisations and individuals	Christian Schwarzer () and Melina Sakiyama ( <a href="mailto:melina.sakiyama@gmail.com">melina.sakiyama@gmail.com</a> )

## 3.2. Discuss our recommendations with State Party delegations and National Focal Points

Each State Party to the CBD has one or more designated **National Focal Points**. Please search for the names and contact details of your country's Focal Points here: <https://www.cbd.int/countries/nfp/default.shtml>. If you do not have existing contacts in the relevant ministries, please consider writing to the Focal Points to introduce yourself and to send them our position paper, with a request that they consider supporting our recommendations in their positions.

It is much more effective (and likely to be successful) if a State Party introduces a proposed change to a draft decision. If an observer (such as an NGO) proposes a change to a draft decision in a Working Group or plenary, at least one State Party must explicitly state their support for the change. Otherwise, it will not be included. The greater number of State Parties that are aware and supportive of our recommendations, the more likely they will be picked up and proposed as changes to the text.

It is thus **essential** to **share our recommendations** with National Focal Points and other people on the State Party delegations, and to keep in contact with them throughout COP. As part of this, it is very important to build personal relationships with State Party delegates and to assist them to understand the reasons for and implications of the proposed changes. Please keep Holly informed of your communications with Focal Points and State Party

delegations and ask if you'd like support in approaching them ([holly@iccaconsortium.org](mailto:holly@iccaconsortium.org)).

## 3.3. Help prepare and deliver oral statements during negotiations

Observers (such as the CBD Alliance, IIFB, GYBN and other organisations) may propose changes to the text of draft decisions after all State Parties have made their interventions. This is done by delivering a **concise oral statement**, preferably identifying specific text-based suggestions. Statements must be under two minutes in length and an electronic copy should be provided to the CBD Secretariat for their records.

Due to time constraints, priority will be placed on addressing unresolved issues (i.e. text in square brackets) and issues that have not yet been addressed by a subsidiary body – rather than revisiting text that has already been agreed by the subsidiary bodies. However, Parties retain the right to raise issues as necessary. This again underscores the critical importance of engaging with State Party delegations.

It is also essential to prepare oral statements in **close collaboration** with other organisations and caucuses, to ensure we are proposing



mutually supportive views and avoiding creating unhelpful political dynamics.

*If you have been invited to present at one of these events, here are some basic **tips for effective participation**:*

- ✓ *Contact the event organiser ASAP to confirm the date, time and location as well as the specific topic of your presentation*
- ✓ *Prepare and practice your presentation in advance – include high quality images and double-check for typos*
- ✓ *Arrive early at the venue and introduce yourself to the organiser*
- ✓ *During the event, speak clearly and with passion and confidence – you are an ambassador for your community / organisation!*
- ✓ *After the event, share notes, photos and/or a brief report back to Holly ([holly@iccaconsortium.org](mailto:holly@iccaconsortium.org)) and Emma ([emma@iccaconsortium.org](mailto:emma@iccaconsortium.org))*

**Box 2:** Tips for effective presentations at side events

### 3.4. Present at or attend other events

In addition to the COP negotiations, hundreds of events will be held at the conference venue, including several co-organised by the ICCA Consortium and by our Members such as the Global Forest Coalition, Forest Peoples Programme and Natural Justice. The full list of side events can be viewed online at: <https://www.cbd.int/side-events/> and in the TVs in the COP venue.

Additional parallel meetings and events can be viewed online at: <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/2018/parallel-meetings>. The ICCA Consortium and/or our Members are involved in the following:

- [Rio Conventions Pavilion](#) events (17-27 November)
- [Wildlife Forum](#) (21 November)
- [Sustainable Ocean Day: Ocean Voices](#) (23 November)
- [The Nature and Culture Summit](#) (22-24 November)

### 3.5. Help track and share information about the negotiations – internal and external communications

**Communication** is very important for effective participation and advocacy in the COP negotiations. We have a Whatsapp group for ICCA Consortium Members and Honorary members at COP14. If you are not yet in this group, please send a message to Holly (+60105880016).

Ideally, we will have small **teams focusing on each key agenda item** – including note-taking, preparing statements, engaging with State Party delegations, and reporting back to the group. All notes and statements should be emailed to Holly. Please **share key updates and developments** in the negotiations by email or Whatsapp.

If you are on **social media**, please use the following hashtags: #COP13, #biodiversity and #Aichi. GFC will be tweeting (@gfc123) and posting photos on Instagram (@global.forest). The ICCA Consortium will be posting on [Facebook](#) and Twitter

(@ICCAConsortium). If you are on Twitter, you may wish to use the following hashtags: #UNBiodiversityConference, #EgyptCOP14, #COP14 and #PeopleAndPlanet.

Communicating with key networks and contacts in your home countries can also help influence State Parties' positions. We have contacts with different journalists, so please inform Holly if you are interested to give a statement or quote.

In addition, please consider contributing a short article to **ECO**, the **daily NGO newsletter** at COP, on key issues arising in the negotiations. Contact the editor, Antje Lorch at [lorch@ifrik.org](mailto:lorch@ifrik.org) or antjelorch (Skype) for more information.

Finally, detailed **daily summaries** of the negotiations (and later, an analysis) will be available at: <http://enb.iisd.org/biodiv/cop14/enb/>.