



COP16
COLOMBIA
Paz con la Naturaleza

COP16 and Resumed Session (16.2) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):

context and reflections from participants

April 2025

The ICCA
Consortium



About the ICCA Consortium

The ICCA Consortium is a global non-profit association supporting Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities governing and conserving their territories of life. Its members in more than eighty countries are undertaking collective actions at the local, national, regional, and international levels across several thematic streams, including documenting, sustaining, and defending territories of life, youth, and intergenerational relations.

As of April 2025, the Consortium is composed of 244 members (Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities, their organizations, federations, and movements; along with supporting civil society organizations and networks) and 485 honorary members (individuals closely associated with territories of life and those with experience and expertise that can support movements for recognition and support for territories of life).

www.iccaconsortium.org

COP16 and Resumed Session (16.2) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD): context and reflections from participants

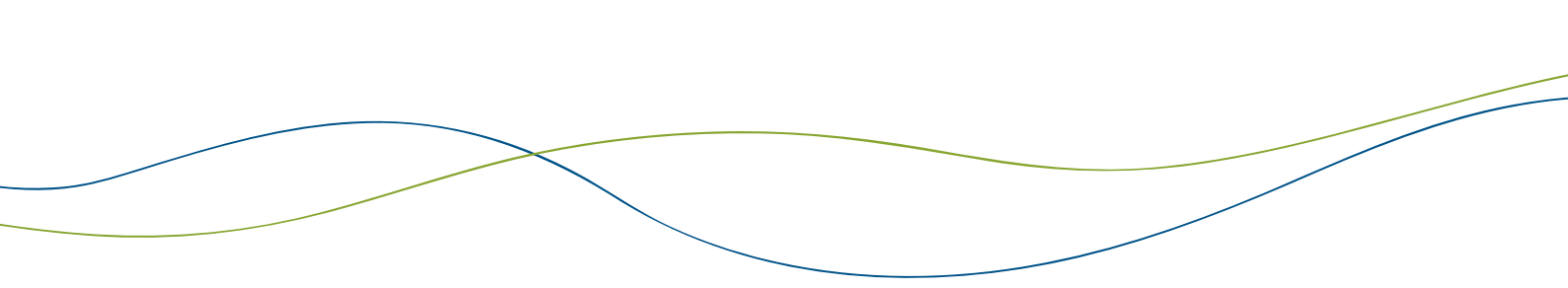
Compilation and editing: Neema Pathak Broome (International Policy Coordinator) with support from Diana San Jose (Internal Team Support Co-coordinator), ICCA Consortium

Contributors: Hanieh Moghani (Regional Coordinator for West and Central Asia and the Caucasus); Asami Segundo (Regional Coordinator for Southeast Asia); Rudrath Avinashi (Kalpavriksh, member), Maurizio Ferrari (honorary member), Meenal Tatpati (honorary member), ICCA Consortium

Copyediting: Chris Jarrett

Photos: ICCA Consortium

The following publication is based on personal reflections from the authors and does not necessarily represent the organizational position of the ICCA Consortium or its members.



Acronyms and abbreviations

AHTEG: Ad hoc technical expert group

BMB: Biodiversity Management Bureau [in the Philippines]

CBD: Convention on Biological Diversity

CEESP: Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy [in IUCN]

COP: Conference of the Parties

DSI: Digital Sequence Information

FPIC: Free, Prior, and Informed Consent

FPP: Forest Peoples Programme

GBFF: Global Biodiversity Framework Fund

GEF: Global Environment Facility

HRBA: Human rights-based approaches

IIFB: International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity

IPs: Indigenous Peoples

IPBC-Ph: Indigenous Peoples and Biodiversity Coalition Philippines

IPBSAP: Indigenous Peoples Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

ITTs: Indigenous and Traditional Territories

KMGBF: Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

LCs: Local Communities

MF: Monitoring Framework

NBSAP: National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

OECMs: Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures

PoW: Programme of Work

SAGE: Site-level Assessment of Governance and Equity

SBI: Subsidiary Body on Implementation

SB8j: Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) of Article 8(j) of the CBD

SBSTTA: Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice

TGER: Thematic Group on Governance, Equity and Rights [in IUCN CEESP]

TILCEPA: Theme on Indigenous and Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas [in IUCN CEESP]

TSL: Thematic group on sustainable livelihoods [in IUCN CEESP]

UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNPFII: United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

WCPA: World Commission on Protected Areas

WAMIP: World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples

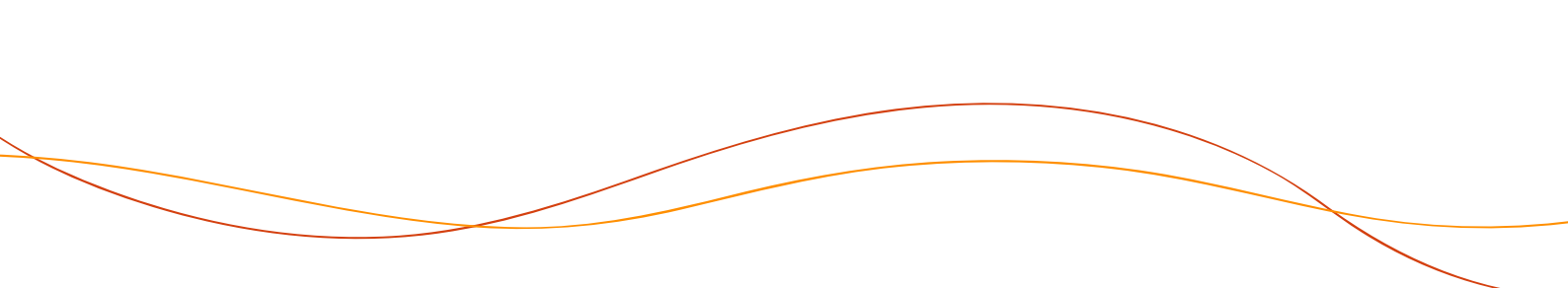


Table of Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations	3
Context and history of the ICCA Consortium's engagement with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)	6
Context, background, and reflections from COP16 and the resumed session (16.2)	8
Reflections on COP16 and 16.2: Progress and Challenges	9
1. The Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j): A Historic Achievement	9
Background and Context	9
Resolving long-standing debates on "Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities" and introduction of "Afro-Descendant communities"	9
2. Biodiversity Credits: Balancing Opportunities and Risks	10
Market-Based Mechanisms: Proponents and Critics	10
Concerns Raised by Indigenous Representatives	10
3. Digital Sequence Information (DSI): Governance at a Crossroads	10
Debates on Benefit-Sharing	10
Indigenous Perspectives	10
Next steps	10
4. Resource Mobilization: Ensuring Equity in Access	11
Challenges Related to Financial Mechanisms	11
The Need for Direct Access	11
Next steps	11
Resource Mobilization: Will the resources ever be mobilized?	11
5. Human Rights-Based Approach to Conservation and Gender Responsiveness	12
6. Reflections on the Monitoring Framework for KMGBF, with a specific reference to Target 3	13
KMGBF Target 3	15
7. Indigenous Peoples and Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan: Collective Action Toward Inclusive Conservation	16
Raising the Bar on NBSAPs: The Case of the Philippines	17
The IPBSAP: A Landmark Document for Indigenous Peoples	17
Walking the Talk: Beyond the Launching	18



COP16 and Resumed Session (16.2) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD): context and reflections from participants



Context and history of the ICCA Consortium's engagement with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)

The ICCA Consortium is a membership-based non-profit association dedicated to promoting appropriate recognition and support for territories and areas conserved by custodian Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (abbreviated as "ICCA" or, more simply, "territories of life").

For over two decades, the ICCA Consortium and its predecessors,¹ along with other groups, networks, and alliances, have played a significant role in discussions, negotiations, and decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), with an emphasis on conservation approaches, implementation, and goals/targets. Our key issues of concern have included the recognition of diverse, effective, and equitable conservation governance, with an emphasis on customary and self-determined governance by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities; the adoption of human rights-based approaches; and indispensable yet long-neglected objectives such as the safety of environmental defenders.

In 2018, in the context of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), the ICCA Consortium prepared a submission regarding the scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, focusing on three key issues:

Appropriately recognizing and supporting Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities and their efforts to govern, manage, maintain, protect, and conserve their collective territories of life on their terms, including through self-determined governance institutions, customary laws and protocols, and systems of Indigenous and local knowledge and customary and communal sustainable use



Halting industrial drivers of biodiversity loss, including eliminating perverse investments and incentives that are harmful to biodiversity



Preventing and prohibiting attacks on the communities, organizations, and individuals who defend biodiversity and territories of life against threats



¹ Origins of the ICCA Consortium: The Consortium emerged from the work of several prior groups, particularly the IUCN CEEP and its thematic groups on governance, equity, and rights (TGER) and sustainable livelihoods (TSL) in the 1990s. In 2000, a collaborative effort between CEEP and the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) resulted in the formation of the Theme on Indigenous and Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas (TILCEPA) working group, which dedicated itself to advancing ICCA work through systematic analysis. This initiative initially focused on specific regions and countries, notably India and Iran. Subsequently, TILCEPA, TGER, and the World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples (WAMIP) spearheaded the increased visibility, discussion, and recognition of ICCAs at major international conservation gatherings and conventions during the early 2000s.

In 2020, human rights principles emerged as a fourth and overarching priority. Years of sustained collective effort by many Indigenous Peoples, local community organizations, and other supporting organizations, both within the official CBD processes and national contexts, led to the KMGBF text emerging as the new high watermark in international environmental law. The knowledge, capacities, and rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, as custodians of their territories of life, were unequivocally affirmed.

The ICCA Consortium was actively involved in negotiating the post-2020 framework and has continued to **consistently advocate for** the key issues of concern mentioned above. The intervening period between COP15 and COP16 was significant, and members of the Consortium engaged in the implementation of the KMGBF at national and regional levels while continuing to participate in the international CBD processes. For example, the global Council Co-Chair for documenting territories of life, June Rubis, was elected to serve as the Indigenous Co-chair of the 12th meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity held in Geneva, in November 2023. This Working Group is the primary platform within the Convention for addressing issues concerning the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. As part of her Co-Chair responsibilities, in April 2024, she addressed the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) plenary on the outcomes of the latest



session of the Working Group. The newly elected President of the Consortium, Luis Guillermo Izquierdo, has also followed the CBD processes closely since 2023 and represented the Consortium in panels during the World Summit on Traditional Knowledge held in Bogota in August 2024.

Consultations at national and regional levels were held throughout 2023 and 2024, leading to statements grounded in experiences from diverse territories of life regarding implementation of KMGBF at national and regional levels. ICCA Consortium Members have also participated in various processes led by partner organizations to develop human rights based approaches (HRBA) to the implementation of the KMGBF.

A significant number of ICCA Consortium members and honorary members, elected office holders, and council members at national, regional, and global levels, participated in COP16 in Cali (December 2024) and the resumed session (16.2) in Rome (February 2025). Participating members engaged in a number of activities, including side events, partnership negotiations, and press conferences, in addition to participating in the draft decisions being negotiated by the Parties. Such engagement, including in statements and positions, was direct, as well as in partnership with observer caucuses and other partners. What follows is some brief context and background on some of the draft decisions that were negotiated, reflections from members on the negotiations and decisions and their implications for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, and some possible future actions.





Context, background, and reflections from COP16 and the resumed session (16.2)

The 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was held in Cali, Colombia from October 21-November 1, 2024. COP16 marked a critical turning point in advancing the KMGBF. With the ambitious goal of “living in harmony with nature by 2050,” this conference sought to operationalize global commitments through mechanisms that promote equity, sustainability, and inclusivity. In order to complete the discussions still pending upon conclusion of the Cali meeting, a **resumed session** (referred to hereafter as ‘16.2’) was organized in Rome, Italy from February 25-27, 2025.

Following the adoption of the KMGBF and associated decisions at COP 15 in 2023, COP16 and 16.2 focused on implementation of the framework. Many of the **draft decisions** up for discussion had significant consequences for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, making close engagement by members of the ICCA Consortium paramount. Some of these included:

- i. Revision of the strategy for resource mobilization and the effectiveness of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) that currently hosts the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) for implementation of the KMGBF, and the possibility of establishing a dedicated global financial instrument for biodiversity finance
- ii. Review and updating of the **Monitoring Framework** for the implementation of the KMGBF, planning

and setting the stage for National Reports due in February 2026, as part of the global review of implementation of the KMGBF

- iii. Review of national targets and **revised** National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (**NBSAPS**).
- iv. the **new Programme of Work on Article 8(j)** related to traditional knowledge and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
- v. the multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism for the use of Digital Sequence Information (DSI)

For Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, COP16 brought both remarkable achievements and lingering challenges. While there were several key decisions made at COP16, such as the establishment of a multilateral benefit sharing mechanism and fund for DSI, the adoption of the programme of work and establishment of a new subsidiary body on Article 8(j), and the recognition of the role of Afro Descendants, crucial issues like the Monitoring Framework, Resource Mobilization, and Financial Mechanism did not get adopted in the first phase of the discussions and were taken up during the resumed session in Rome, Italy.

The following are personal reflections from some members and honorary members who engaged with some of the agenda points.



Reflections on COP16 and 16.2: Progress and Challenges

1

The **Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j):** **A Historic Achievement**

Background and Context:

The decision to establish a permanent Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) of Article 8(j) at COP16 is a transformative step in biodiversity governance. For over 20 years, the ad hoc Working Group on Article 8(j) addressed issues related to traditional knowledge and the participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. However, the provisional nature of this working group left it vulnerable to dissolution by member states, creating uncertainty about its future. Efforts to establish a permanent mechanism began at COP13 in Cancun, Mexico, and culminated in this hard-won victory. The first meeting of the SBI on Article 8j will be held in Panama City, Panama from October 27-30, 2025.

Resolving long-standing debates on “Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities” and introduction of “Afro-Descendant communities”

The establishment of the SBI was delayed by contentious debates over whether to include “Local Communities”

alongside “Indigenous Peoples” in Article 8(j). The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) recommended in 2019 that “Local Communities” be eliminated and expressed this again in its 2023 recommendation, arguing that conflating the two groups undermines the distinct legal and cultural frameworks that define Indigenous Peoples. This concern resonated particularly with Indigenous Peoples from North America, South America, and the Arctic. While some countries supported this recommendation, others, particularly in Africa and Asia, expressed concerns about eliminating it and even about the distinction with Local Communities.

At COP16, the impasse was resolved. The final text explicitly includes “Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities” without brackets, accompanied by a footnote introduced by the Democratic Republic of Congo, which states: *“Nothing in this convention shall be interpreted as diminishing the distinction between the rights and obligations of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities under international law.”*

COP16 was also significant for including a historic resolution led by Colombia and Brazil to recognize the role of “Afro-Descendant communities” in biodiversity conservation.

2

Biodiversity Credits: Balancing Opportunities and Risks

Market-Based Mechanisms: Proponents and Critics

Biodiversity credits, introduced under Goal 19 of the KMGBF, were presented as a mechanism to attract private sector funding for conservation initiatives. While proponents argue that such credits could unlock significant investment, Indigenous Peoples and local community members expressed skepticism rooted in the problematic history of carbon markets. These markets have often marginalized Indigenous perspectives, commodified ecosystems, and failed to deliver equitable benefits.

Concerns Raised by Indigenous Representatives

At COP16, ICCA Consortium members joined other Indigenous advocates in raising concerns about the unchecked implementation of biodiversity credits. Key issues raised include:

- Commodification of nature: Treating biodiversity as a market commodity risks undermining its cultural and ecological values.
- Erosion of territorial rights: Without robust safeguards, biodiversity credits could prioritize financial interests over Indigenous land governance.



- Accountability and transparency: There is a risk of exploitation and greenwashing without stringent oversight mechanisms.
- Full implementation of FPIC: Decisions affecting Indigenous territories must respect Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).

3

Digital Sequence Information (DSI): Governance at a Crossroads

COP16 reaffirmed the indispensable role of traditional knowledge in biodiversity conservation. Discussions emphasized the need to protect this knowledge from misappropriation, integrate it with scientific approaches, and ensure equitable benefit-sharing.

Debates on Benefit-Sharing

The governance of Digital Sequence Information (DSI) emerged as a focal point at COP16. Parties agreed to establish the “Cali Fund” to ensure equitable benefit-sharing from the use of genetic data, with at least 50% of the fund allocated to the self-identified needs of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. However, reliance on voluntary contributions raises concerns about the fund’s scale and sustainability.

Indigenous Perspectives

Indigenous representatives stressed the need for robust frameworks to prevent biopiracy and ensure FPIC in accessing genetic resources. There were also calls for targeted financial support to address technological and legal challenges in regulating DSI use.

Next steps

Next steps for the operationalization of the Cali Fund must include:

- Clear mechanisms for monitoring and enforcement
- Transparent benefit-sharing processes
- Strong Indigenous participation in decision-making

Contribution: Hanieh Moghani, Regional Coordinator for West and Central Asia and the Caucasus, ICCA Consortium

Resource Mobilization: Ensuring Equity in Access

Challenges Related to Financial Mechanisms

Finance remains the key sticking point. Most of the world's biodiversity lies in developing countries that reasonably expect billions rather than millions to support their efforts to protect and restore nature, yet wealthier countries' pledges at COP16 fell far short of what is needed to meet their commitments, and almost no progress has been made on repurposing nature-harming subsidies. Therefore, resource mobilization was one of the most contentious issues at COP16, revealing deep divides between developed and developing countries. A proposed financial mechanism under COP governance failed to gain consensus, delaying critical decisions on the Monitoring Framework and the CBD Secretariat's budget.

The Need for Direct Access

Indigenous leaders have consistently called for direct access to international funding mechanisms, arguing that reliance on intermediaries leads to delays and diluted impacts. Simplified processes and Indigenous-led funding streams were highlighted as essential solutions.

Next steps

Next steps toward achieving equity in resource mobilization will need to be focused on:

- A dedicated mechanism to ensure direct funding for Indigenous-led projects

- Greater transparency and accountability in financial flows
- Collaboration with Indigenous organizations to design and implement funding strategies

Contribution: Hanieh Moghani, Regional Coordinator for West and Central Asia and the Caucasus, ICCA Consortium

Resource Mobilization: Will the resources ever be mobilized?

Resource mobilization was one of the most sensitive and historically tricky items on the agenda. Although Article 20 of the Convention states that developed countries have the responsibility to ensure the flow of financial resources through various channels, diverging views on the subject arise when it comes to the modalities for administering the resources.

The discussion of resource mobilization during week 1 of COP started with developing countries expressing concerns over the existing instrument—the **Global Biodiversity Framework Fund** (GBFF) under the Global Environment Facility (GEF)—which has been ineffective in channelling funds to them. Their demand was for a separate dedicated financing instrument for biodiversity. However, the developed countries cautioned against the need for establishing new mechanisms and urged reflection on how the existing ones could be utilized to close the biodiversity financing gap. The parties further deliberated on the need for a new financing instrument and discussed the criteria for its establishment in the future, but no consensus was reached on the recommendations adopted at the **fourth meeting** of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI).



The Co-chairs of the contact group meetings toward the end of the first week focused on streamlining the negotiations by prioritizing specific operational parts of the text of the strategy. They provided an alternative paragraph incorporating most of the suggestions shared by the parties with reference to Article 20 of the convention, existing obligations of the parties, while being conscious of the overlaps with other parts of the text that may share the same suggestions but in detail. Most parties echoed the point of using this strategy as a flexible guidance document in line with national circumstances and priorities. There was also in-depth discussion of enabling conditions for the resource mobilization strategy, in particular the role of national central banks in conducting environmental risk assessments and reporting on environmental and social risks. There were concerns about not stepping into mandates of national central banks and about operationalizing this action, as it could be cumbersome for many parties.

The slow pace of the negotiations for this particular agenda item was evident to the contact group; however, given the complex and critical nature of this topic, the chairs stressed the importance of sufficient time for deliberations. Interestingly, eight governments pledged an additional USD 163 million to the GBFF. To close the remaining biodiversity finance gap, the co-chairs proposed establishing an expert advisory committee, but no consensus was reached for an intersessional process to further develop the modalities. Timely access to financial resources and capacity-building for rights holders, including IPs and LCs, women, and youth was identified as a key enabling condition for the strategy, and some of these points in the text were resolved.

COP16 under CBD could not have come at a more crucial time. With COP29 under the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and COP16 under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to follow, the parties in Cali could have set the tone through inclusive and ambitious targets and, even more importantly, by acting on them. It had the potential to create a positive ripple effect for the rest of the world in the times to come. COP16 did make some landmark decisions such as the establishment of a permanent subsidiary body on Article 8(j) as well as operationalizing the modalities of a global fund, now known as Cali fund, for the fair and equitable benefit-sharing from the use of DSI on genetic resources. However, the fact that the parties were unable to reach a consensus on resource mobilization means further delay in closing the biodiversity financing gap at this crucial moment in time. The lack of political will, especially among the developed countries, is also demonstrated by their inability to mobilize the required amount of \$20 billion per year by 2025. The effectiveness of the existing funding instrument, as supported by the developed countries, will now unfold in time.

Contribution: Rudrath Avinashi, Kalpavriksh
(Member, ICCA Consortium)

5

Human Rights-Based Approach to Conservation and Gender Responsiveness

The Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework has stated that the implementation of the framework must be consistent with following a human rights-based approach by respecting, protecting, and fulfilling human rights. At the same time, it has also stated



that implementation of the framework is contingent on ensuring gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Therefore, any decisions related to the implementation and operationalization of the framework must follow a human rights-based and gender-responsive approach.

However, the negotiations around some of these agendas at COP16 revealed a concerning disregard for gender equity and human rights. Procedural issues marred transparent observer participation. For instance, several agenda items were relegated to contact groups rather than being discussed in the initial plenaries. A lack of transparency with documents for review also limited observer participation (entirely up to the discretion of the contact group chairs).

Conflicting views between the developed and developing countries pertaining especially to 'common but differentiated responsibility' around resources and procedures took up space and hindered integration of human rights into key decisions. This resistance weakened commitments to gender equality and the whole-of-society approach by excluding references to Target 23, the Gender Plan of Action, and non-state actor commitments in the Global Review. The decisions texts on Biodiversity and Climate Change, Updating NBSAPs, Marine and Coastal Biodiversity, as well as the contact group text on Resource Mobilization, removed key references to human rights, including language on the protection of human rights defenders. Critical language, especially around the importance of legally-binding social and environmental safeguards for biodiversity finance, were also contested in the contact groups.

Contribution: Meenal Tatpati, honorary member, ICCA Consortium; and member of the CBD Women's Caucus

6

Reflections on the Monitoring Framework for KMGBF, with a specific reference to Target 3

Article 7 of the Convention on Biological Diversity is about Identification and Monitoring. It recognizes the fundamental importance of monitoring and of indicators for addressing biodiversity loss. CBD describes indicators as “information tools which summarize data on varied and complex environmental and socio-economic issues to indicate overall status and trends. They can be used to assess progress toward desired objectives at various scales and to signal key issues to be addressed through policy interventions and other actions.”

To monitor progress toward the goals and targets established in the **KMGBF**, a detailed **Monitoring Framework** (MF) was adopted by COP15 via **Decision 15/5** in December 2022. The MF includes headline indicators recommended for national, regional, and global monitoring, as well as more detailed component and complementary indicators. COP15 also decided to establish an **ad hoc technical expert group (AHTEG)** and requested the convening of **moderated online discussions** to provide guidance to further develop and operationalize the MF. Additionally, in **decision 15/6** an enhanced multidimensional approach to planning, monitoring, reporting and review was adopted, which links with the MF. The MF was up for discussions during COP16 in Cali and during the reconvened session COP16.2 in Rome. The AHTEG, established for the period between COP 15 and 16, had 45 members, including 30 from the Parties and 15 nominated by the Observers. The latter included Maurizio Ferari from Forest Peoples



Programme (FPP) and Joji Carino representing International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB). Below are reflections from Maurizio Ferari, who has been part of the discussions regarding the status of the MF after COP16 and what still needs to be done from the perspective of IPs and LCs.

The decision on indicators has been shaped by many members in the CBD (Parties and Observers) and in many rooms, including in the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and COP14 in 2022, in the AHTEG on Indicators, in the Working Group on **Article 8(j)**, in the SBSTTA in 2023, in COP16 in 2024, and in COP16.2 in 2025. In my view, the AHTEG overall did a good job as I think that the revised and updated monitoring framework adopted at COP16.2 is an advancement compared with the one adopted at COP15. One of the significant changes, for example, was inclusion of “land use change and land tenure in the traditional territories of IPs and LCs” as a headline indicator for **Target 22**. This is a positive development, as are other indicators in the framework and the addition to the guidance regarding taking **section C** into consideration when monitoring the implementation of KMGBF at the national and local level.

However, one area of serious concern in the monitoring framework is the lack of progress on indicators related to **Target 3**, on which the AHTEG could/should have

done a better job. Other problems with the Target 3 indicators include:

1. The headline indicator “Coverage of protected areas and OECMs.” When it was proposed during the discussions to add “and Indigenous and traditional territories” to the headline indicators, the reply was that there is no consensus and guidance on Indigenous and traditional territories, so guidance is needed before that can be discussed.
2. The IIFB, building on the work of the AHTEG on Indicators and the Working Group on 8(j)’s scientific and technical review of the traditional knowledge indicators, proposed to use the new component indicator “Participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in decision-making related to the implementation of the Convention at all levels” for Target 22 also as a component indicator for Target 3, but that did not fly as some Parties did not want repetition of indicators (and this one on participation could apply to many targets). Consequently, there is now no indicator on participation for Target 3; we may need to find a way in next steps to put that back on the table.
3. There was a complementary indicator on FPIC of IPs and LCs in a previous version, but the AHTEG was asked to check all the component and complementary indicators, and if there was no existing methodology or a weblink to something resembling a methodology, they were deleted (including the one on FPIC).

In any case, with the completion of COP16.2 in February 2025, the AHTEG no longer exists (as its mandate was up to COP16). So, at the moment, there is no group that is deciding or rejecting indicators. However, there may still be some opportunities. Below are some opportunities and possible follow up actions:

The AHTEG on Indicators pointed out that there are still gaps in the monitoring framework, and further work will be needed up to 2030 and beyond. For instance, Paragraph 30(b) of the Decision states: “Requests the Executive Secretary.....To compile submissions from Parties, the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements, relevant academia and research institutions, other relevant organizations, including the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, women and youth for the inclusion of additional headline, component and



complementary indicators that meet the criteria for inclusion in the monitoring framework in order to help to address the gaps in the monitoring framework.”

COP16 in Cali, with the adoption of the new **Programme of Work on Article 8(j)**, is now tasking the Subsidiary Body on 8(j) to develop the guidance on Indigenous and traditional territories (see task 1.1 in the PoW). The development of that guidance during 2025 and beyond will be very important for further development of indicators related to this topic, so it would be good for IPs and LCs to participate in that process at the regional and global level (a first meeting was held in Nairobi in early 2025).

I think that we need to make the best use we can of the COP Decision that adopted the monitoring framework and other related COP decisions, including on planning, monitoring, reporting and review, and the new programme of work on Article 8(j), as they open the door to further improvements of the monitoring framework in the years ahead. Probably even more important is the effective participation and recognition of rights in national and sub-national level processes, as NBSAPs and national reports are directly related to the monitoring framework and its indicators.

It would be important for organizations like the ICCA Consortium and IIFB (and any other relevant network/organization) to have internal discussions, as well as joint meetings on these matters in the next few months (and the outcome could be important for the SBSTTA and SB8j meetings in October 2025).

Contribution: Maurizio Farhan Ferrari, honorary member, ICCA Consortium; and Senior Policy Advisor, Forest People’s Programme (member, ICCA Consortium)

KMGBF Target 3

Target 3 of the GBF builds on Aichi Target 11 by ensuring that at least 30% of terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures. It lays down three approaches toward achieving this ambitious target: Protected Areas (PAs), Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (**OECMs**) and Indigenous and Traditional Territories (ITTs). As per the **Protected Planet report**, the progress toward Aichi Target 11 has been slow, with up to 16% of terrestrial areas and around 8% of marine areas designated as protected areas.

There are concerns regarding this Target voiced by several civil society actors, especially across the global south regarding the expansion of Protected Areas without respect being given to access and tenure rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities and their evictions without seeking free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC). Civil society actors have come up with dedicated **publications** to advance rights in the context of area-based conservation for actors responsible for,



participating in, and potentially impacted by Target 3 implementation.

While the KMGBF acknowledges the need to ensure that the rights and practices of Indigenous Peoples are safeguarded while implementing the framework, it also places the responsibility for this **squarely with national governments and in accordance with national legislations. As shared** by civil society members present in the sub-regional workshop for Target 3 in Kathmandu, Nepal there is a lack of laws and policies to recognize and protect customary governance systems, based on international human rights standards.

Negotiations at COP16 identified one headline indicator, three component indicators, and six complementary indicators for **Target 3**. The headline indicator, 'Coverage of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures' enables tracking of the '30 per cent' target. The indicator on site-level assessment of governance and equity (**SAGE**) has been included as a component indicator, but the reporting element is only the number of protected areas that have completed this assessment, with no information on the analysis and corrective steps taken toward equity and justice. At the same time, disaggregation of targets is optional for Parties, with no incentives for the Parties to provide the disaggregated data. Furthermore, there is no incentive to improve or design indicators to report on the governance and FPIC provisions for conservation since they have not been included in the current draft of the monitoring framework as is shown below.

Beyond Target 3 within the Monitoring Framework, the decision on **Sustainable Wildlife Management** adopted at COP16 recognizes that monitoring of wild species is inclusive of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities,

women, and scientific approaches, and facilitates the equitable participation of all key actors who can better inform decision-making. It encourages Parties, other governments, and sub-national governments to ensure the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, women, girls and boys, youth, and persons with disabilities in the decision-making processes related to wild species. The decision also calls Parties to address the needs and circumstances of people living in vulnerable situations, as well as challenges relating to land tenure, resource use rights, and the inequitable distribution of costs and benefits derived from the sustainable use of wild species, for the achievement of the objectives of the Convention and goals and targets of the Framework.

Contribution: Meenal Tatpati, honorary member, ICCA Consortium; and member of the CBD Women's Caucus

7

Indigenous Peoples and Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan: Collective Action Toward Inclusive Conservation

In 1992, world leaders acknowledged the planet's worsening state and established three conventions to address climate change, biodiversity loss, and desertification. Within the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Western perspective has dominated, promoting fortress conservation—the idea that protecting biodiversity requires restricting human access. This approach has further marginalized the true guardians and protectors of biodiversity, the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.



For decades, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities were excluded from biodiversity discussions and decision-making, especially at the national level. **Global Biodiversity Outlook 3**, launched 18 years after the inception of the Biodiversity Convention, revealed that protection levels are higher under Indigenous community management than government management alone. Yet, despite this evidence, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities remain sidelined in policy and decision-making spaces.

The ratification of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) has begun shifting attention toward Indigenous Peoples and Local Community-led conservation. To align National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) with the KMGBF, parties must now ensure the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in biodiversity governance.

Raising the Bar on NBSAPs: The Case of the Philippines

In the Philippines, 96 out of 128 Key Biodiversity Areas fall within delineated and government-recognized Indigenous territories. This data alone shows the vital role Indigenous Peoples play in the protection of the country's biodiversity. In 2023, the Philippine government through its Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), spearheaded the updating of the NBSAP to align it to the KMGBF. For this iteration, they invited Indigenous Peoples representatives in their consultations.

To ensure the meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous Peoples Organizations and supporting Civil Society Organizations—later formalized as the Indigenous Peoples and Biodiversity Coalition Philippines (IPBC-Ph)—convened to discuss and identify key priorities based on lived experiences in Indigenous territories. Roundtable discussions, both national and local, were organized to further refine key messages and recommendations. Inputs from these discussions were synthesized and aligned with the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), outlining commitments and contributions to these targets. Additionally, case studies showcasing Indigenous Peoples' biodiversity conservation practices from across the country were collected to further strengthen their contributions.

The IPBSAP: A Landmark Document for Indigenous Peoples

In the first days of COP16 in Cali, Colombia, a landmark document—born from the work of Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines—was officially launched. The Indigenous Peoples Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (IPBSAP) was introduced by Indigenous Peoples with the support of the Philippine government. Written by and for Indigenous Peoples, the document outlines their commitments and contributions to the 23 targets of the KMGBF. It also provides an overview of the status and context of biodiversity in Indigenous territories from their perspective and aims to communicate their key contributions to biodiversity conservation to the Philippine government and the public.

During the launch, Josefa Tauli, a Kankanaey-Ibaloi from Baguio City, shared that the IPBSAP presents an overview of biodiversity conditions in Indigenous territories from the perspectives of those who inhabit and steward the land. The plan also includes Indigenous worldviews on nature and culture, along with a summary of the relevant policy, governance, and financing landscape.

Dave de Vera, a long-time Indigenous rights advocate, explained that while decision-makers frequently acknowledge the important roles of Indigenous Peoples in conservation, no document had previously outlined and specified their key contributions in a comprehensive manner. Hence, the launch of the



IPBSAP marks a historic milestone. It not only formalizes Indigenous Peoples' commitments to biodiversity conservation but also serves as a vital tool for advocacy, policy influence, and securing support for Indigenous-led conservation efforts.

As the launch concluded, a video of the turnover ceremony of the IPBSAP to the Philippine government was presented. In the video, Ms. Armida Andres, Officer-in-Charge Assistant Director of the Philippines' Biodiversity Management Bureau, reaffirmed the government's commitment by stating that the IPBSAP would be incorporated into the country's latest iteration of its NBSAP. On January 22, 2025, the Philippines submitted its national targets to the CBD's Online Reporting Tool, officially including the IPBSAP under Target 22 as part of **non-state commitments** toward the national target.

Walking the Talk: Beyond the Launching

Authors of the IPBSAP mentioned during the launching that localization workshops will be held in regions and provinces in the Philippines to further explain and refine the IPBSAP targets. A few weeks after COP16, the first workshops were held in Mindanao, the southern island group of the country, where Indigenous community leaders further outlined and specified their targets and commitments, mainly focusing on Targets 1, 2 and 3.

For 2025, the IPBC-Ph aims to expand its impact by conducting more localization workshops across various regions, to wider engagement and deeper integration of the IPBSAP at the local level. Another key priority

will be resource mobilization to sustain and scale up the implementation of the IPBSAP across Indigenous territories. Additionally, IPBC-Ph plan to establish a monitoring system to track their progress, evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives, and ensure Indigenous leadership in biodiversity conservation.

Following the launch of the IPBSAP, IPBC-Ph members were invited to several COP16 side events to present the IPBSAP and share their experiences. The initiative garnered significant interest, with many expressing a desire to conduct learning exchanges and replicate the IPBSAP in other countries. However, IPBC-Ph consistently emphasizes that the launch is merely the beginning. The true challenge lies in its implementation, which is essential to the success of this groundbreaking initiative.

As IPBC-Ph members remind their audiences, the real work has already been and is being carried out by Indigenous Peoples on the ground for millennia—this is precisely why the remaining biodiversity we enjoy today still exists. However, another crucial facet of this work is only just beginning with the launching of IPBSAP: the strengthened collective effort to secure recognition, resources, and policy support for Indigenous-led conservation. As implementation moves forward, sustained collaboration, advocacy, and commitment will be essential to ensuring that Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and rights are fully integrated into national and global biodiversity policies.

Contribution: Asami B. Segundo, Regional Coordinator for Southeast Asia, ICCA Consortium





The ICCA
Consortium