

Submission on SBSTA62 agenda item 14:

Cooperation with other international organizations

September 2025

The Brazilian Climate Observatory (Observatório do Clima - OC) is a Brazilian network of articulation on global climate change established on March 23, 2002. In addition to discussions with experts on climate change, the Observatory promotes the articulation of more than 130 civil society entities to pressure the government for strong actions to mitigate and adapt Brazil in relation to climate change.

This submission is in response to the invitation to Parties and observers, contained in SBSTA62 conclusions on agenda item 14: "Cooperation with other international organizations", to provide further views to inform the SBSTA's consideration of this matter¹

Summary:

1. Connecting the Synergies discussion through strengthening the mandate and resources of the Joint Liaison Group (JLG).
2. A dedicated Climate and Nature Work Programme under the UNFCCC SBSTA/SBI
3. The establishment of an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG)
4. Agree on an action plan to phase out deforestation and forest degradation by 2030
5. Prioritize Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' (IP&LC), including other traditional communities and People of African Descent, land tenure and forest management, and ensure all solutions follow a human rights-based approach.
6. Reinforce the presidential/action agenda initiatives on forests mainly on government and private sector commitments, strengthening synergies on the Global Climate Action Agenda (GCAA).

¹ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sbsta2025_04_adv_0.pdf

I. Introduction

The climate and biodiversity crises are intricately intertwined – meaning that solutions must also be harmonized. Halting and reversing biodiversity loss directly depends on the commitment to similarly halt and reverse the destruction and degradation of forests. Similarly, an attentive look towards ecosystem integrity can also generate larger carbon absorption, leading to climate-nature co benefits. Parties updating their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) should include the evidence-based forest-related interventions that are crucial to the achievement of both the Paris Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)^[2].



(Source: A. Bakhtary, 2025)

So, the establishment of a dedicated agenda aimed at the technical enhancement of synergies among the three Rio Conventions is consistent with recent developments under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and with the evolving cooperation frameworks under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

Notably, in 2023, a joint statement issued by the Presidents of COP-27 (UNFCCC), COP-15 (CBD), and COP-15 (UNCCD) acknowledged the interlinkages among the objectives of the

three Conventions and underscored the imperative of coordinated and integrated action. In 2024, during the presidency of COP-28 of the UNFCCC, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) disseminated a concept note outlining potential areas for enhanced synergy across the three Conventions, with the objective of producing a white paper containing actionable recommendations for operationalizing such synergies.

CBD Decision 16/22 (CBD/COP/DEC/16/22), adopted at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, explicitly recognizes the critical threat posed by climate change to biodiversity and underscores the necessity of strengthening ecosystem resilience through integrated approaches to mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction. This includes the application of nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches. Similarly, Target 8 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework reinforces the imperative to reduce the adverse impacts of climate change on biodiversity through synergistic and coordinated responses.

In addition, the UNFCCC Secretariat, during its engagement in the Bern III Conference, identified Targets 8, 11 (pertaining to nature's contributions to people), and 20 (relating to capacity-building for biodiversity conservation) as strategic entry points for inter-convention collaboration. Moreover, Target 19.e of the Global Biodiversity Framework emphasizes the need for alignment and coherence among financial flows directed toward climate and biodiversity objectives, thereby reinforcing the importance of institutional and programmatic coordination mechanisms such as the one currently being proposed.

Collectively, these elements substantiate the normative and political foundations for strengthening integrated approaches. Such efforts contribute to more coherent and effective implementation of the Rio Conventions, grounded in human rights, climate justice, and environmental equity, while promoting ambition and coherence across the multilateral environmental agenda.

Finally, it is important to note that COP30 presents a key opportunity to establish an actionable framework for zero deforestation, integrating food production, commodity supply chains, and Indigenous Peoples, People of African Descent and Local Communities (IPLC) rights. Given Brazil's leadership on forests, nature and food systems, COP30 is expected to strengthen links between climate, forests, and biodiversity by expanding commitments to the entire land sector (e.g. new and innovative sources of finance for standing forests, sustainable and traceable supply chains, healthy, sustainable, and resilient food systems, partnerships between producer and consumer countries) and reinforcing the decision to end deforestation-related emissions by 2030.

These elements demonstrate that the strengthening of integrated approaches has current normative and political backing, contributing to more effective implementation, grounded in human rights and climate justice, combating environmental racism, and ensuring coherence and ambition in the commitments undertaken under the three Conventions.

II. Recommendations for SBSTA63 discussions under the agenda item on Cooperation with other International Organizations

1. Connecting the Synergies discussion through strengthening the mandate and resources of the Joint Liaison Group (JLG)

With the aim of ensuring effective policy coherence among the secretariats of the CBD, UNFCCC, and UNCCD, it is recommended to reinforce the mandate and resourcing of the Joint Liaison Group. This includes advancing a synergistic agenda among the Conventions, developing technical documents to inform the mandates of subsidiary bodies, and enhancing coordination among national focal points—particularly as countries implement their NDCs, NAPs, NBSAPs, and related frameworks.

2. ***A dedicated Climate and Nature Work Programme under the UNFCCC SBSTA/SBI:*** to operationalize the GST commitments to conserve ecosystems and halt and reverse deforestation by 2030 and the alignment with the Global Biodiversity Framework, with a focus on implementation including of national plans such as NDCs, NAPs, NBSAPs, and enhancing coherence between different workstreams that address forests and other ecosystems, including the Mitigation Work Programme (MWP), the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP), the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) and Article 6.
3. ***The establishment of an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG)*** with an overarching mandate to advise and support countries in implementing Article 5.1 of the Paris Agreement and paragraphs 33 and 34 of the first GST.
4. ***Agree on an action plan to phase out deforestation and forest degradation by 2030:*** a concrete action plan is needed that addresses all the factors that contribute to deforestation or forest degradation in all forest biomes. This action plan should consider the implementation of national plans, enhancing forest finance, addressing drivers of deforestation, improving monitoring, strengthening land tenure of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' (IP&LC), including other traditional communities and People of African Descent, synergies between climate and biodiversity, just transitions in the agriculture and forest sectors and strengthening international cooperation for forest protection.² This would be important to drive implementation and guarantee greater transparency and follow-up on implementation of this agenda across the globe.
5. ***Prioritize Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' (IP&LC), including other traditional communities and People of African Descent, land tenure and forest management, and ensure all solutions follow a human rights-based approach.***

² A proposal is available at:

<https://www.greenpeace.org/static/planet4-international-stateless/2025/06/4a3f1b85-cop30-forest-action-plan-proposal.pdf>

The synergistic implementation of the three Rio Conventions must fully observe social and environmental safeguards and uphold human rights, recognizing the central role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, as well as people of African descent, traditional communities—including small-scale fishers—and other marginalized groups who are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, and land, coastal, and marine ecosystem degradation.

The plan must explicitly recognize the central role of Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' (IP&LC), including other traditional communities and People of African Descent as guardians of forests and biodiversity. The traditional knowledge held by these communities constitutes an essential asset for the effectiveness of mitigation, adaptation, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration measures, and for advancing climate justice. Therefore, it is recommended that the submission underscore the indispensable inclusion of representatives from these peoples and communities in the work of the discussion group to be established, ensuring their effective and informed participation in defining concepts, priorities, and actions, as well as the recognition, respect and integration for their ancestral knowledge systems.

This approach aligns with the spirit of decisions adopted under the UNFCCC, which have consistently acknowledged the importance of Indigenous Peoples, people of African descent, local communities, and other social actors in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. It also contributes to ensuring that proposed synergies are developed in a just, equitable, and legitimate manner.

Ensure that the definition and implementation of synergistic initiatives fully take into account human rights and the fight against environmental racism, including the rights of Indigenous Peoples, people of African descent, local communities – including coastal ones – and vulnerable groups, in order to guarantee equity and legitimacy in the process. This strengthens the interface between policies, science, and local knowledge, as well as the recognition of these populations, which is essential to improving synergies among the Rio Conventions.

6. Reinforce the presidential/action agenda initiatives on forests mainly on government and private sector commitments, strengthening synergies on the Global Climate Action Agenda (GCAA).

The Global Climate Action Agenda has achieved a greater degree of maturity than those linked to the other Rio Conventions—on biodiversity and desertification. Nonetheless, there is growing momentum toward cross-convention synergies. For instance, CBD COP16 adopted a decision on “Biodiversity and Climate,” and initiatives such as the “Rio Trio” aim to reinforce these links. In this context, the Action Agenda and Champions can serve as bridge-builders, activating engagement across conventions and promoting synergetic actions

at both global and national levels. Finally, the GCAA should align action, enhancing integrated solutions that address interconnected global challenges, enhancing synergy across multilateral environmental regimes and link with WHO, ICJ, and other global processes.

[1] https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sbsta2025_04_adv_0.pdf

[2] Rynearson, A. Bakhtary, H. Dyck, M. 2025.