PREPCOM DEEP DIVES

Access and Benefit-Sharing Committee

Briefing: BBNJ PrepCom
April 2025

Executive Summary

The Agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) was adopted on 19 June 2023.

To prepare for the Treaty's entry into force and its first Conference of the Parties (CoP), a UN Preparatory Commission (PrepCom) will meet twice in 2025 (14-25 April and 18-29 August) and at least once in 2026. During these meetings, Parties will develop the operational framework for the Agreement to ensure it can function and work effectively, and prepare recommendations for the CoP. Well-structured, fair, and efficient institutions will shape the Treaty's long-term success and determine how quickly we can turn global ambition into tangible results for ocean protection.

This briefing paper examines the BBNJ Access and Benefit-Sharing Committee (ABSC) and highlights key areas for discussion during PrepCom 1 in April 2025.

Key takeaways:

The ABSC is established under Article 15 of the BBNJ Agreement to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits from marine genetic resources (MGRs), including digital sequence information (DSI).

- It will be composed of 15 members with expertise in relevant fields, ensuring gender balance, equitable geographical distribution, and representation from developing States, including small island developing States (SIDS), least developed countries (LDCs), and landlocked developing countries (LLDCs).
- The ABSC will monitor the implementation of Part II of the Agreement and advise the BBNJ CoP on matters such as:
  - Guidelines for benefit-sharing;
  - Transparency mechanisms for monetary and non-monetary benefits; and
  - Coordination with other subsidiary bodies under the BBNJ framework.
- Key issues for PrepCom include member nomination and election, and establishing terms of reference, modalities, and meeting protocols.
- The ABSC's mandate will likely require it to interact with relevant instruments, frameworks, and bodies (IFBs) (e.g., Nagoya Protocol and the Biosafety Clearing-House), including with regard to the benefit sharing of DSI[1].
- The provisional program of work[2] (PPW) for the first meeting of the PrepCom (April 2025) provides various issues for consideration.

[1] See CBD Decision on Digital sequence information on genetic resources, CBD/COP/16/L.32 (2004) at https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/8125/22ca/baa28ef9465229f7b22cb548/cop-16-l-32-en.pdf. The decision, inter alia, emphasized making DSI publicly available and accessible in a transparent and accountable manner to all Parties.

[2] Consideration for composition could include experts in marine science, technology transfer, finance, and policy to align CB&TMT efforts with international frameworks and funding mechanisms.

1. Purpose and main functions of the ABSC

The ABSC is established by Article 15 of the BBNJ Agreement (see full text in the Annex). Further specifications of its primary and additional functions are outlined in article 14. Its primary purpose is to establish guidelines for benefit-sharing (Art. 14), while providing transparency and ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of both monetary and non-monetary benefits of MGRs and DSI (Art. 15(1)).

The ABSC's functions are outlined in Article 14 (paragraphs 2, 9, 10, and 16) and can be classified as follows:

a) Recommendations on benefit sharing:

- Make recommendations to the BBNJ CoP on future modalities for monetary benefit sharing (Art. 14(7), including rates and mechanisms (Art. 15(3)(c)). These could take into account mutual supportiveness and adaptability to other access and benefit-sharing instruments (Art. 14(9)), based on the ABSC's consultation and exchange with relevant IFBs (Art. 15(5)).
- Make recommendations to the CoP on additional non-monetary benefits to be shared (Art. 14(2)(h)).

b) Monitor implementation and receive reports:

- Review reports on implementation and compliance under Part II of the BBNJ Agreement (Art. 16(2)).
- Receive and analyze aggregate biennial reports on MGRs and DSI access. (Art. 12(7)).
- Analyze the information received through the Clearing-House Mechanism (Cl-HM), which includes legislative, administrative, and policy measures by Parties on access and benefit-sharing under the Agreement (Art. 15(4)), and submit a report, with input from Parties, to the CoP (Art. 16(3)).

c) Make recommendations to facilitate and improve implementation:

- Develop guidelines or codes of conduct for activities involving MGRs and DSI in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) (Art. 15(3)(a)).
- Facilitate the exchange of legislative, administrative, and policy measures through the Cl-HM (Art. 15(5)).
- Make recommendations to the CoP on implementing decisions taken under this part of the Agreement, the Cl-HM, and matters linked to the Financial Mechanism (Art. 15(3)(b),(d),(e).
- Facilitate transparency in all respects concerning MGRs, DSI, and related processes (Art. 15(1)).

Potential Additional Functions

Given its overarching role in monitoring the implementation of the Agreement's provisions on MGRs and DSI - and ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits thereof, the ABSC could provide advice and guidance on the implementation of other parts of the Agreement pertaining to Part II, such as:

- Facilitating partnerships for capacity building and the transfer of marine technology (CB&TMT), particularly for developing States, in the context of Part V;
- Advising on links to - and facilitating partnerships with - relevant databases, such as the Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS), the World Register of Marine Species (WoRMS), and the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) in the context of the operation of the Cl-HM (Art.51(3)(c)(d));
- Providing technical input to other subsidiary bodies on MGR-related issues. It has yet to be determined whether the Scientific and Technical Body (STB) will have additional technical expertise relevant to Part II that the ABSC does not have (see section 2 on member nomination and election).

Parties could also consider if they wish the ABSC to:

- Act as a forum for stakeholder engagement on MGR and DSI issues, and for the consultation and facilitation with relevant IFBs foreseen in Article 15(5), including with academia, industry, and civil society.
- Provide capacity building on MGR and DSI and related fields for member States.

2. Relevant items on the PrepCom agenda

Several relevant issues for the ABSC are reflected in the PrepCom provisional program of work (PPW) (A/AC.296/2025/L.2). PrepCom 1 (April 2025) will address a) the rules of procedure of the CoP (PPW Item I(1)), which Parties could decide to apply mutatis mutandis to the subsidiary bodies, additional or separate subsidiary body procedures (PPW Item I(2)), b) selection processes (PPW Item I(3)), and c) initial discussions on cooperation with, and reporting to, external relevant IFBs (PPW Item I(8)).

Regarding PPW Item I(1) and I(2), BBNJ article 47(4) requires that the CoP shall adopt rules of procedure for itself and its subsidiary bodies at its first meeting, and Article 15(2) specifies that the terms of reference and modalities for the ABSC shall also be determined by the CoP, although without explicit reference to its first meeting. One relevant question for Parties to consider in this context is whether the CoP rules of procedure should be applied mutatis mutandis to the ABSC and, if they are, which specific elements of the ABSC would need to be reflected in proposed Rule 26 of the Co-Chairs' aid to discussions, in terms of reference and modalities.

Parties may also wish to determine the timing and frequency of ABSC meetings in relation to meetings of the CoP and other subsidiary bodies (e.g., annual, biennial, or intersessional) and evaluate the benefits of virtual versus in-person meetings to enhance accessibility and reduce carbon footprints and costs.

Regarding PWW Item I(3) (selection process), the BBNJ Agreement stipulates that the ABSC will have 15 members (Art. 15 (2)), whereas it does not specify membership numbers for other subsidiary bodies. Under this PWW Item, a key question for Parties to consider is whether members with technical expertise on Part II issues reside within the ABSC, the STB, or both (Art. 15(1), Art. 15(3)(a) (b), Art. 5(5)).

In light of these considerations, under PPW Item 3, Parties should consider:

- Establishing a selection process that includes transparent criteria for nominating and electing the 15 members.
- Agreeing which fields of expertise are essential to fulfill the requirement that members must have "appropriate qualifications in related fields to ensure the effective exercise of the functions of the committee." "Appropriate qualifications" needs to be further considered. It may be considered that this means that a wide range of qualifications, including in scientific, legal, and financial fields, and expertise in traditional knowledge.
- Ensuring balanced representation, including gender equity and equitable geographical distribution, and providing for representation on the committee from developing States, including LDCs, SIDS, and LLDCs.
- Determining how to fulfill the ABSC's mandate to monitor the implementation of Article 13 and ensuring the meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples, and local communities in the context of MGRs in ABNJ.

3. Connections with the CoP and other subsidiary bodies

The ABSC is the key advisory body for Part II of the Agreement. Interactions with other subsidiary bodies explicit in the Agreement are:

- CI-HM: The ABSC will receive information from the CI-HM and may need to advise the CI-HM on issues such as the technical presentation of MGR and DSI information. It would be helpful if these discussions could take place directly through other avenues rather than only through the CoP to avoid delays during the CoP.
- ICC: The ASBC could provide recommendations on implementation or compliance issues to the Implementation and Compliance Committee (ICC) and refer issues to it, such as difficult compliance issues. This would be appropriate given the ICC's broad mandate to facilitate implementation and promote compliance across the Agreement, its ability to draw upon information from other subsidiary bodies, and its interface with the STB. providing recommendations on implementation or compliance issues.
- Financial Mechanism: The ABSC will make recommendations to the CoP on matters relating to the Financial Mechanism and Part II of the Agreement (Art. 15(3)(e)). However, the scope of this interaction is not defined in Part II or in Article 52.

Potential connections with other subsidiary bodies:

- STB: As noted, a key question for Parties to consider is whether the technical expertise required to implement Part II will sit within the ABSC, the STB, or both. Whichever choice they make, it seems likely that the ABSC will interface with the STB on scientific and technical issues relating to MGRs or DSI, for example.
- CBTMT: It may be useful for Parties to consider how the ABSC will interface with the CBTMT committee on matters related to MGRs and DSI, on capacity building to implement Part II of the Agreement, and on the alignment of benefit-sharing mechanisms with capacity-building priorities.

Given the wide range of (mandated and probable) interactions between the ABSC and subsidiary bodies, it would be beneficial for Parties to devise modalities that allow subsidiary bodies to communicate intersessionally to avoid unnecessary delays. They could also consider whether it would be beneficial for some members of the STB and ICC to have expertise in MGRs and DSI so that such experts can advise the respective bodies on these issues.

4. Considerations for PrepCom 1

In its note on the BBNJ's subsidiary bodies[3] (A/AC.296/2025/4), the Division of Oceans and Law of the Sea (DOALOS) offers general considerations on a) rules of procedure, b) terms of reference, and c) modalities for subsidiary bodies (paragraphs 6-23), general aspects with regards to membership (paragraphs 24-31), and specific considerations for the ABSC (paragraphs 32-39).

One question raised by the Secretariat is whether the CoP's rules of procedure will apply *mutatis mutandis* to some or all of its subsidiary bodies or whether specific rules will be adopted for each subsidiary body (paragraph 7). Draft rules of procedure for the BBNJ CoP are contained in the Annex to the Co-Chairs to aid discussions (A/AC.296/2025/3)).
If Parties choose this pathway, draft Rule 26 would allow subsidiary body-specific considerations to be reflected in the CoP's rules of procedure.

Rules of procedure, terms of reference, and modalities

The BBNJ Agreement requires the terms of reference and modalities of the ABSC to be determined by the CoP (Art. 15(2)) but does not stipulate the first CoP as a deadline.
Parties may wish to consider whether the CoP's rules of procedure could be applied *mutatis mutandis* to the ABSC and, if so, whether any specificities of the ABSC should be reflected in proposed Rule 26 of the Co-Chairs' aid to discussions, the terms of reference or modalities. Specific considerations could include:

- Defining the ABSC operational guidelines, including the scope of its activities;
- Clarifying the decision-making process and process for submitting recommendations to the CoP; and
- Determining the timing and frequency of meetings: would the ABSC meet before or during the CoP? Would it meet, intersessionally? Would it hold in-person or virtual meetings?

Since the ABSC will interface with other subsidiary bodies and be instrumental in the implementation of Part II of the Agreement, it would be strongly advisable to address these provisions during the PrepCom and decide on them during the first CoP. This would set a good precedent in ensuring the equitable and transparent operationalization of the Agreement.

Composition, selection of members and term

BBNJ Article 15(2) specifies that:

- The ABSC shall be composed of 15 members possessing appropriate qualifications in related fields to ensure the effective exercise of the functions of the committee;
- Members shall be nominated by Parties and elected by the CoP; and
- The ABSC will take into account gender balance and equitable geographical distribution, and provide for representation on the committee from developing States, including from the LDCs, SIDS, and LLDCs.

[3] Full title: "Terms of reference and modalities for the operation of, and rules of procedure for, the subsidiary bodies established under 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, including the selection process for their members: Note by the Secretariat".

As mentioned, Parties may wish to further define the meaning of "appropriate qualifications in related fields" (Art. 15(2)). Consideration should also be given to the representation of Indigenous Peoples, and of local communities in the ABSC.

The term of ABSC members is not specified in the Agreement. Three or four years may be suitable (the Nagoya Protocol Compliance Committee provides for four years), and the CoP may wish to consider appointing alternate members so that there are staggered terms. The election of the Chair and Co-Chairs also needs to be considered, as does their term of office (the Nagoya Compliance Committee provides for two-year terms for its Chair and Vice-Chair).

The CoP may also wish to consider whether there are specific numbers of representatives from developing States, LDCs, SIDS, and LLDCs.

Article 48(2) sets out that all meetings of subsidiary bodies shall be open to observers in accordance with the applicable rules of procedure unless otherwise decided by the CoP. Given the importance of a diverse group of stakeholders for the implementation of Part II, ensuring transparency and a diverse representation of stakeholders seems particularly important for the ABSC.

Lessons from relevant international agreements

While no other subsidiary body closely matches the role of the BBNJ's ABSC, Parties may draw upon some lessons from other relevant IFBs on related topics when considering the ABSC's mandate to consult and facilitate the exchange of information (Art. 15 (5)).

- **Nagoya Protocol:**
  - Procedures for free prior informed consent (FPIC) and mutually agreed terms (MAT) could inspire similar mechanisms for MGRs & DSI under BBNJ.
  - The establishment of a Compliance Committee, with rules of procedure, and an Access to Benefit-Sharing (ABS) Clearing-House to facilitate information exchange provides a model for transparency and accountability, while the Advisory Committee on Capacity-Building supports national implementation. The SBSTTA (rules of procedure are here).
- **Biosafety Clearing-House:**
  - Modalities for information sharing, risk assessment, and capacity building serve as a precedent for the CI-HM.
  - Public access to information and regulatory coordination ensures trust and stakeholder engagement.
  - A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the CBD providing for cooperation between secretariats may be beneficial.
- **The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA):**
  - The use of standardized agreements (e.g., Standard Material Transfer Agreements) could streamline benefit-sharing under the BBNJ framework, particularly under Article 13. Some possible conditions for such agreements are provided in Article 14(4).
  - Rules of procedure: The governing body's rules of procedure can be referred to when drafting the ABSC rules of procedure.
- **The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO):**
  - Intellectual property frameworks developed for genetic resources could address benefit-sharing challenges specific to DSI.
  - WIPO has established guidelines for how ABS mechanisms can be implemented in relation to intellectual property, ensuring fair compensation for the use of genetic resources and related traditional knowledge. These could inform similar rules of procedure for the ABSC.
  - Rules of procedure: WIPO has general rules of procedure and some special rules of procedure for the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) that could inform discussions.

- **The Intergovernmental Negotiating Body to draft and negotiate a World Health Organization convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (INB):**
  - Currently under negotiation, with a key remaining issue being the establishment of a Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing System (PABS) to govern the sharing of pathogens of pandemic potential.
  - Current draft text highlights difficulties with the specialized international instrument process, as well as ensuring consistency with other ABS agreements.
  - Given the contention of the issue, it will likely be annexed and negotiated further after adoption by the 78th World Health Assembly in May 2025, but still may be helpful in this context.

5. Recommendations

Core ABSC recommendations:

- Ensure strong transparency provisions throughout the ABSC, in alignment with Article 48 of the BBNJ Agreement.[4]
- Ensure meaningful representation and participation of Indigenous Peoples, and local communities:
  - Consider direct representation as full members rather than solely as non-State observers;
  - Enable full participation in monitoring Article 13 implementation and making recommendations on how to improve it. Recognize the need for meaningful consultation with and to respect, promote, and uphold the knowledge of Indigenous Peoples, and the traditional knowledge of local communities. Ensure their full and effective participation with regard to monitoring the implementation of Article 13 and make recommendations on how to improve it. Parties should consider their direct representation in the ABSC as full members rather than solely as non-State observers.
- If Parties decide that members of the ABSC will serve in an expert capacity, develop a conflict of interest policy in the terms of reference to ensure their impartiality, objectivity, and independence.
- Ensure the ABSC is empowered to communicate with other subsidiary bodies intersessionally to avoid unnecessary delays. For example, Chairs of subsidiary bodies could be empowered to interact between subsidiary bodies, within their designated mandate. This could be specified in either the rules of procedure or the modalities.
- Develop modalities for intersessional decision-making when urgent decisions cannot be deferred to the next scheduled meeting.
- Develop modalities to enable the ABSC (or its working groups and sub-committees) to solicit expertise, advice, and data from other scientists, scientific institutions, and other bodies, including IFBs. This could include inviting external experts to attend ABSC meetings - or any working groups it may establish - in an advisory, non-voting capacity. This is of particular importance to the ABSC given its small size and its mandate to analyze potentially large volumes of highly technical data for its reports to the CoP (Art. 16(3)).
- Ensure the ABSC is empowered to proactively establish interactions with relevant IFBs, within the scope of its mandate. One option would be to allow the Chair of the ABSC to fulfill certain functions with regard to interaction with external IFBs, within their designated mandate.
- Support the development of the ABSC's role in advising on capacity building with regard to MGR & DSI, including liaising with relevant regional centers of excellence.

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[4] **Example text proposals (Transparency)**

Co-Chairs proposed Rule 7: "Such observers may, upon the invitation of the President, participate without the right to vote in the proceedings of any meeting of the COP and of its subsidiary bodies in matters pertaining to the COP in which they have an interest, unless otherwise decided by the COP."

· **Recommendation**: Delete the words "at the invitation of the President," and, taking into account Article 48, add at the end of the sentence: "for exceptional circumstances and for temporary purposes by a 2/3 majority vote."

Co-Chairs proposed Rule 27.2: "Meetings of subsidiary bodies shall be held in public unless the Conference of the Parties decides otherwise."

· **Recommendation**: taking into account Article 48, add at the end of the sentence, "for exceptional circumstances and for temporary purposes by a 2/3 majority vote."

Co-Chairs proposed Rule 30: "Sessions of a meeting of the COP shall be held in public, unless the COP decides otherwise."

· **Recommendation**: taking into account Article 48, add at the end of the sentence, "for exceptional circumstances and for temporary purposes by a 2/3 majority vote."

Civil society priorities:

- Advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, and local communities in benefit-sharing arrangements consistent with Article 13, including representation in the ABSC. Consider the allocation of Special Fund and GEF funding to Indigenous Peoples, and local communities.
- Ensure transparency in ABSC operations through publicly accessible reports, stakeholder consultations, and the presence of observers.

Stakeholder engagement:

- Promote mechanisms for civil society and private sector participation in ABSC deliberations, and allow observer participation in committee meetings.
- Encourage collaborative partnerships with international organizations across intergovernmental fora to leverage existing expertise and resources.

Recommendations for early action:

- Establish interim notification and benefit-sharing guidelines to ensure early implementation while comprehensive mechanisms are developed.
- Create an expert advisory panel to provide technical input on MGR and DSI-related issues to address issues such as definitional and scope issues, with expert participation and equitable representation from different regions.
- Support a working group (set up during Prepcom and intersessionally) to develop technical specifications for the interim operation of the CI-HM pilot phase.[5]
- Develop capacity-building programs tailored to the needs of developing States, LDCs, and SIDS.
- Consider MOUs to engage the regional centres of excellence established under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

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[5] Pilot phase" in this context is not intended to mean the building of a prototype that is then discontinued and replaced by a full version later, but rather an early version of the CI-HM that can be incrementally built and expanded.

Article 15

Access and benefit-sharing committee

1. *An access and benefit-sharing committee is hereby established. It shall serve, inter alia, as a means for establishing guidelines for benefit-sharing, in accordance with article 14, providing transparency and ensuring a fair and equitable sharing of both monetary and non-monetary benefits.*
2. *The access and benefit-sharing committee shall be composed of 15 members possessing appropriate qualifications in related fields, so as to ensure the effective exercise of the functions of the committee. The members shall be nominated by Parties and elected by the Conference of the Parties, taking into account gender balance and equitable geographical distribution and providing for representation on the committee from developing States, including from the least developed countries, from small island developing States and from landlocked developing countries. The terms of reference and modalities for the operation of the committee shall be determined by the Conference of the Parties.*

3. *The committee may make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties on matters relating to this Part, including on the following matters:*

(a) *Guidelines or a code of conduct for activities with respect to marine genetic resources and digital sequence information on marine genetic resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction in accordance with this Part;*
(b) Measures to implement decisions taken in accordance with this Part;
(c) Rates or mechanisms for the sharing of monetary benefits in accordance with article 14;
(d) Matters relating to this Part in relation to the Clearing-House Mechanism;
(e) Matters relating to this Part in relation to the financial mechanism established under article 52;
(f) Any other matters relating to this Part that the Conference of the Parties may request the access and benefit-sharing committee to address.

4. *Each Party shall make available to the access and benefit-sharing committee, through the Clearing-House Mechanism, the information required under this Agreement, which shall include:*

(a) Legislative, administrative and policy measures on access and benefit-sharing;
(b) Contact details and other relevant information on national focal points;
(c) Other information required pursuant to the decisions taken by the Conference of the Parties.

5. The access and benefit-sharing committee may consult and facilitate the exchange of information with relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies on activities under its mandate, including benefit-sharing, the use of digital sequence information on marine genetic resources, best practices, tools and methodologies, data governance and lessons learned.

6. The access and benefit-sharing committee may make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties in relation to information obtained under paragraph 5 above.

Article 14

Fair and equitable sharing of benefits

2. *Non-monetary benefits shall be shared in accordance with this Agreement in the form of, inter alia:*

> *(h) Other forms of benefits as determined by the Conference of the Parties, taking into account recommendations of the access and benefit-sharing committee established under article 15.*

7. The Conference of the Parties shall decide on the modalities for the sharing of monetary benefits from the utilization of marine genetic resources and digital sequence information on marine genetic resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction, taking into account the recommendations of the access and benefit-sharing committee established under article 15. If all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted, a decision shall be adopted by a three-fourths majority of the Parties present and voting. The payments shall be made through the special fund established under article 52. The modalities may include the following:

> *(a) Milestone payments;*
> *(b) Payments or contributions related to the commercialization of products, including payment of a percentage of the revenue from sales of products;*
> *(c) A tiered fee, paid on a periodic basis, based on a diversified set of indicators measuring the aggregate level of activities by a Party;*
> *(d) Other forms as decided by the Conference of the Parties, taking into account recommendations of the access and benefit-sharing committee.*

9. In deciding on the modalities for the sharing of monetary benefits from the use of digital sequence information on marine genetic resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction under paragraph 7 above, the Conference of the Parties shall take into account the recommendations of the access and benefit-sharing committee, recognizing that such modalities should be mutually supportive of and adaptable to other access and benefit-sharing instruments.

10. *The Conference of the Parties, taking into account recommendations of the access and benefit-sharing committee established under article 15, shall review and assess, on a biennial basis, the monetary benefits from the utilization of marine genetic resources and digital sequence information on marine genetic resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction. The first review shall take place no later than five years after the entry into force of this Agreement. The review shall include consideration of the annual contributions referred to in paragraph 6 above.*

Article 16
Monitoring and transparency

1. Monitoring and transparency of activities with respect to marine genetic resources and digital sequence information on marine genetic resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction shall be achieved through notification to the Clearing-House Mechanism, through the use of "BBNJ" standardized batch identifiers in accordance with this Part and according to procedures adopted by the Conference of the Parties as recommended by the access and benefit-sharing committee.

2. Parties shall periodically submit reports to the access and benefit-sharing committee on their implementation of the provisions in this Part on activities with respect to marine genetic resources and digital sequence information on marine genetic resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction and the sharing of benefits therefrom, in accordance with this Part.

3. The access and benefit-sharing committee shall prepare a report based on the information received through the Clearing-House Mechanism and make it available to Parties, which may submit comments. The access and benefit-sharing committee shall submit the report, including comments received, for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties. The Conference of the Parties, taking into account the recommendation of the access and benefit-sharing committee, may determine appropriate guidelines for the implementation of this article, which shall take into account the national capabilities and circumstances of Parties.

Additional relevant references

Article 12
Notification on activities with respect to marine genetic resources and digital sequence information on marine genetic resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction

7. Parties shall ensure that repositories, to the extent practicable, and databases under their jurisdiction prepare, on a biennial basis, an aggregate report on access to marine genetic resources and digital sequence information linked to their "BBNJ" standardized batch identifier, and make the report available to the access and benefit-sharing committee established under article 15.

Article 13
Traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local communities associated with marine genetic resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction

Parties shall take legislative, administrative or policy measures, where relevant and as appropriate, with the aim of ensuring that traditional knowledge associated with marine genetic resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction that is held by Indigenous Peoples and local communities shall only be accessed with the free, prior and informed consent or approval and involvement of these Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Access to such traditional knowledge may be facilitated by the Clearing-House Mechanism. Access to and use of such traditional knowledge shall be on mutually agreed terms.

High Seas Alliance

The High Seas Alliance is a group of 50+ non-governmental members who work together to inspire, inform and engage the public, decision makers and experts to support and strengthen High Seas governance and conservation.