Background

Information sharing is fundamental to the effective implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, with the Clearing-House Mechanism (CI-HM) playing a pivotal role. The CI-HM will primarily be an open-access information platform facilitating information exchange for and across the Agreement's four substantive areas (i.e. MGRs, ABMTs, EIAs, CB&TMT). Beyond its information-sharing role, the CI-HM is a key tool to operationalize capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology, establish accountability and transparency, including the potential to enhance transparency in financing and resource mobilization efforts while also supporting the recognition of the rights, traditional knowledge, and interests of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Operationalizing the CI-HM has undergone extensive discussions and States have agreed to the development of a prototype. With the aim of keeping momentum leading up to the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP1), facilitating hands-on gathering of experience with prototypes for specific functions, and generating learnings that can help the development of the official prototype, the High Seas Alliance and partners seek to organize a series of virtual technical workshops bringing together technical experts, future users and BBNJ negotiators.

Expression of Interest

The High Seas Alliance and its partners are seeking Expressions of Interest from individuals, organizations, or entities with relevant technical expertise to demonstrate, explain, and discuss a prototype or demo version of specific functions of the future BBNJ Clearing-House Mechanism during a two-hour webinar. The webinar will have a mixed audience of policymakers, future users, BBNJ negotiators, national technical experts, IT specialists, and other relevant audiences.

The webinar series will follow a functional approach, focussing on functions rather than specific parts of the Agreement. The second session of the series will explore "Data management and information-sharing between the BBNJ CI-HM and sectoral and regional platforms" during a two hour webinar.

We invite expressions of interest from those wishing to share tools, demos or mini-prototypes that illustrate how this functionality of the CI-HM could be designed and delivered in practice. Presenters will be invited to showcase how a Clearing-House Mechanism can link and/or exchange distributed information (e.g. from other mechanisms or regional nodes), including issues of data security and data ownership considerations.

The second session "Data management and information-sharing between the BBNJ CI-HM and sectoral and regional platforms" will **take place on 10 December 2026, with a tentative timeslot of 15:00 CET,** pending final confirmation with presenters. The proposed time has been selected to accommodate participants across a broad range of time zones; should there be strong interest from participants from other timezones, we will explore an additional alternative time slot where possible.

The **deadline** for Expressions of Interest is **13 November 2026**.

The Expression of Interest and any demonstration must be provided on a pro bono basis and is entirely without prejudice to any future decisions regarding the operationalization of the BBNJ Cl-HM, including decisions that may be taken by BBNJ COP1.

A short summary of relevant background material on the BBNJ Cl-HM and relevant available information is attached as an Annex. The High Seas Alliance and its partners will provide a reasonable level of support to selected presenters in advance of the webinar, including additional background information and inputs where necessary.

Selection & process

The Expressions of Interest shall be made via the ONLINE FORM and will require the following information:

- Name of the individual, organization or entity submitting the expression of interest
- Contact details of proposed presenter(s), including email address and telephone number
- A curriculum vitae (CV) or organizational profile demonstrating relevant technical expertise and experience
- A brief description of the proposed prototype, demonstration, or functionality to be presented, including drawing relevance to the webinar topic
- Disclosure of any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest that may be relevant to the proposed presentation

The High Seas Alliance and its partners will select up to 3 entities that have submitted Expressions of Interests to present at the webinar on “Data management and information-sharing between the BBNJ Cl-HM and sectoral and regional platforms” is set to **take place on 10 December 2026, with a tentative timeslot of 15:00 CET,** pending final confirmation with presenters.

Expressions of Interest that meet one or more of the following additional criteria will be given preferential consideration:

- Opportunities for webinar participants to engage in “hands-on” interaction with mini-prototypes or demo versions prior to or during the webinar
- A commitment to using and sharing open access/ open-source code
- Demonstrated experience in developing Cl-HMs or similar information-exchange portals for international agreements
- Entities based in, or with demonstrated experience working closely with, developing countries, in particular Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Session Format

The webinar will be held via **Zoom**. Participation will be open to interested participants, subject to **prior registration**.

This second webinar will be conducted in English. Interpretation into other languages may also be considered for subsequent sessions in the series, depending on interest and needs. Further information on interpretation arrangements will be provided to registered participants in advance of the webinar.

The webinar will **not be recorded**. The discussion section of the webinar will be conducted under the **Chatham House Rule**, meaning that participants may use information received but may not identify or attribute the information to any particular participant or organization without permission.

Following the webinar, the High Seas Alliance and its partners will compile a concise summary of the most pertinent lessons learned, good practices, and relevant insights emerging from the demonstrations and discussion.

The summary is intended to inform subsequent discussions and processes relating to the operationalization of the BBNJ Clearing-House Mechanism.

Contacts

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Annex General information on BBNJ CI-HM

Summary of the history of the BBNJ CI-HM process

At PrepCom 1, delegations broadly supported a phased and incremental approach to operationalizing the Clearing-House Mechanism , including the development of a pilot or interim phase. There was also general agreement on establishing a dedicated intersessional working group to advance operationalization, particularly regarding technical matters. The group's composition, mandate, size, and working modalities were deferred to PrepCom 2. Delegations further agreed that operationalization efforts should focus on the CI-HM's core functions across the Agreement as a whole, rather than addressing individual sections separately.

At PrepCom 2, delegations considered draft terms of reference for an informal group on the technical aspects of the CI-HM but were unable to reach agreement. In response, the Co-Chairs identified a number of tasks to be completed before PrepCom 3 and committed to facilitating their delivery in consultation with the Bureau. To support this work, the UN Division for Ocean

Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) commissioned consultants to prepare technical inputs, including a review of existing clearing-house mechanisms, options for addressing technical requirements, a draft roadmap for phased operationalization, and a draft workplan for the initial phase.

PrepCom 2 also highlighted the need for interim arrangements to ensure that the CI-HM is operational upon the Agreement's entry into force. Although several delegations expressed support for such arrangements, no consensus emerged on how they should be established or implemented.

At PrepCom 3, delegations considered the consolidated study on the technical aspects of the Clearing-House Mechanism, including options for its architecture, functionality, and phased development, prepared by the consultants. Discussions focused on the model, key parameters, and timeline for operationalization. Following informal consultations, delegations reached agreement on a process to develop an operational prototype of the CI-HM prior to COP1, without prejudice to any future decisions on the CI-HM. That process was to take place under the guidance of the PrepCom Co-Chairs, in consultation with the Bureau and supported by the Secretariat, with the aim to develop and refine the prototype and report on progress to COP1.

As of late August it has become apparent that the official BBNJ process will not be able to produce a prototype prior to COP1. This series of webinars does in no way intend to replace the official state-led process, but rather hopes to contribute to help maintain momentum, facilitate technical discussion, and advance thinking on the CI-HM during the intersessional period.

Useful information for further reading

Designing an Effective BBNJ Clearing-House Mechanism: Insights and Guidance Drawn from Comparable Tool, available at: Designing an Effective BBNJ Clearing-House Mechanism: Insights and Guidance Drawn from Comparable Tools

Consolidated draft study on the technical aspects of the operationalization of the Clearing-House Mechanism 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, available at: https://www.un.org/bbnjagreement/sites/default/files/2026-03/20260309ConsolidatedDraftBBNJCHMStudy.pdf

Earth Negotiations Bulletin A Reporting Service for Environment and Development Negotiations; Summary of the Third Session of the Preparatory Commission for the Entry into Force of the Agreement on Marine Biodiversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction: 23 March-2 April 2026, available at: https://enb.iisd.org/sites/default/files/2026-04/enb25262e.pdf

Article in Cambridge International Law Journal A Digital Infrastructure for Ocean Biodiversity: Reimagining the BBNJ Clearing-House Mechanism, available at: https://cilj.co.uk/a-digital-infrastructure-for-ocean-biodiversity-reimagining-the-bbnj-clearing-house-mechanism/

The BBNJ clearing-house mechanism: considerations for its diverse functions, users, and sources, available at: https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/ocean-sustainability/articles/10.3389/focsu.2025.1584927/full

BBNJ Preparatory Commission 3 Informal On Clearing House Mechanism (Co-facilitated by Palau and New Zealand) Outcome Document delivered to Plenary - 2 April, available at: https://www.un.org/bbnjagreement/sites/default/files/2026-04/CHMInformalDiscussionOutcome.pdf

The High Seas Alliance The Clearing-House Mechanism: Consolidated briefing for PrepCom3, available at: https://highseasalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/PrepCom-3-Consolidated-CLHM-_060226.pdf

“Data management and information-sharing between the BBNJ CI-HM and sectoral and regional platforms”

Contributions need not be fully developed or operational systems. We welcome early-stage prototypes, mock-ups, demonstrators, workflows, existing tools or other practical approaches that can help illustrate possible ways of performing data management and exchange functions, linking and/or exchanging distributed information (e.g. from other mechanisms or regional nodes). Based on the discussions during the first webinar and feedback received since them, issues of data security and data ownership considerations are of particular interest to some delegations.
Presenters will be invited to showcase mini-prototypes focusing on one or more functions and to compare their proposed approaches with the interim set-up currently in place within DOALOS, highlighting potential gaps, opportunities for improvement, and areas for further development. The objective is to stimulate a practical discussion on what the CI-HM needs to be able to do, and how its different functions could be designed to work together as a coherent system.