



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY**

**(CARICOM)**

**DELIVERED BY THE DELEGATION OF ST. LUCIA**

**AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION**

**FOR THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE BBNJ AGREEMENT**

**ON ITEM 5 (CLUSTER I: ISSUE 2) – TERMS OF REFERENCE AND**

**MODALITIES FOR THE OPERATION OF, AND RULES OF**

**PROCEDURE FOR, THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES**

**15 April 2025**

## **Subsidiary Bodies: cross cutting issues**

**15 April 2025**

I have the honour to deliver this intervention on behalf of the 14 Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and in alignment with the Group of 77 & China and the Alliance of Small Island States.

This intervention will focus on commonalities across the subsidiary bodies in addition to some critical cross cutting matters that the PrepCom will have to address that would also be common across the bodies.

We will then intervene separately with your permission on each of the SBs, with respect to the more tailored elements required.

In that vein, and for the information of the co-chairs (when giving the floor) and for all delegations, I'll take this opportunity to introduce CARICOM's burden sharers for the subsidiary bodies as follows:

- STB - Trinidad and Tobago
- CBTMT - Saint Lucia
- ABSC - Barbados
- Finance - Antigua and Barbuda
- ICC - Barbados

As always CARICOM has an open-door policy for engagement and consultation with a view to advancing our work in this process. So please feel free to engage with us throughout the two weeks.

And while I have the mic I might as well introduce our other burden sharers so that we can foster the exchange of views and ideas beyond the room.

- RoP - Jamaica
- Secretariat arrangements - Trinidad and Tobago
- CHM - Bahamas
- GEF MOU - Antigua and Barbuda
- Financial Rules - Saint Lucia

Thank you for your indulgence.

What are the commonalities across all bodies?

### **1. Limited membership**

For all the subsidiary bodies.

### **2. Eligibility and Criteria**

CARICOM believes that experts should serve in their personal capacity across the subsidiary bodies.

### **3. Selection Process**

As provided in the agreement - Nominated by the parties and elected by the COP, as contained in the agreement.

### **4. Equitable geographic representation**

Also provided for in the agreement and so should be guaranteed across all the bodies and be accounted for in the seat arrangements and allocations in the various bodies.

### **5. Gender balance**

While we appreciate that the text of the Agreement prescribes gender balance be taken to account for representatives of the various bodies, and the nominating parties will have that responsibility to fulfil this mandate, in practice we know that it is not always guaranteed.

CARICOM is considering language to affirm minimum representation of women across the bodies.

### **6. Renewal of term of office**

Individuals can serve a maximum of two terms - they can be consecutive or reelected at a future date.

### **7. Elections**

Elections to SBs should be staggered, to ensure continuity of work, without having the entire committee term out at the same time.

### **8. COP Rules applying mutatis mutandis**

As we heard yesterday from AOSIS and CARICOM the COP rules as mutatis mutandis for the subsidiary bodies can be applied as a fail-safe if that is necessary. But as we examine each

subsidiary body and determine whether or not each body would need its own rule set, we can then return to rule 26 and adjust it if necessary.

## **9. Work programmes**

CARICOM believes that subsidiary bodies should determine their own work programs rather than having these prescribed by the COP.

While not a commonality per se, it would be useful if treated in this discussion rather than when we take up each SB.

## **10. Terms of reference and modalities for the operation of, and rules of procedure for, the subsidiary bodies established under the BBNJ Agreement, including the selection process for their members**

Should all be contained in one document. So while we will treat with each body separately, to pronounce on the tailored elements during the PreCom, we do not expect separate documents for each body to capture the elements discussed, rather CARICOM believes that all the TORs, Modalities, RoPs, in relation to the SBs should reside in one document.

Important cross cutting issues that CARICOM believes could be common across the bodies:

### **• Early Career Oceans Professionals (ECOPs)**

CARICOM believes that consideration should be given to the nomination of Early Career Oceans Professionals across the subsidiary bodies. It is our considered view that if we are to really live up to not only the letter but the spirit of the Agreement, we should ensure that we take a holistic approach to capacity building as a critical part of this agreement. And so CARICOM views their consideration, and inclusion would facilitate the sustainable widening of the pool of experience and expertise across the BBNJ regime while enhancing capacities.

And for those who are unfamiliar with ECOPs the IOC UNESCO is home to a robust Early Career Ocean Professional (ECOP) Network Programme. And their websites can provide more information.

### **• Interlinkages**

Another cross-cutting issue, relates to the interlinkages between the SBs and how they communicate and collaborate with each other, the clearing house mechanism and the secretariat, CARICOM believes that provisions for this communication and collaboration should also be clearly defined, and can be included in that one consolidated document with the TORs RoPs and Modalities of the SBs.

- **Timing**

CARICOM believes that in order to give the BBNJ regime the best chance at smooth operationalisation, and to mitigate as many hiccups and hindrances as possible, it would be necessary for us to pay special attention to the timing of the commencement of the work of each SB and the timing of their election cycles.

- **Connection to PrepCom 2 matters**

While CARICOM recognises that there is an agenda item at the end of next week to have a preliminary discussion on the issues for consideration at the second session of the PreCom, we thought it be useful to make a general link now as we're discussing cross cutting and commonalities across bodies to the following two issues, namely, ***Reporting requirements and Arrangements to enhance cooperation with relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies***. We just wanted to flag that they have a connection to SBs, as we work to put the puzzle pieces together, and we will of course come back to this at the appropriate agenda item.

I thank you all for your attention and look forward to engaging with all to cross fertilise our ideas and proposals with a view to a blossoming consensus.