



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DELIVERED BY THE
DELEGATION OF IRAQ AT THE FIRST SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION
OF THE BBNJ AGREEMENT – ITEM 5 (CLUSTER III: ISSUE 9): ARRANGEMENTS WITH
THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE RELEVANT
PROVISIONS ON FUNDING**

New York, 17 April 2025

Dear Co-Chairs:

1. I would like to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. Generally, in the view of our Group, all bodies envisaged by developing states that were advocated for during the negotiations need to be as fully as possible in place for the first COP as we attach its importance for a fully functioning of the BBNJ Agreement including arrangements with the Global Environment Facility. As our Group is still considering the various aspects of arrangements with the Global Environment Facility, for the moment, we would like to touch upon a few general points along with some observations in relation to those arrangements. Our members will subsequently go into more detail in their subregional or national capacity.

Distinguished Co-Chairs:

3. The Group of 77 and China wishes to stress that the provision of support to developing States through capacity-building and the development and transfer of marine technology are essential elements for the attainment of the objectives of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. In light of this and given the fact that these essential elements have been addressed in various provisions of the Agreement, including Article 52, appropriate consideration should be given, among others, to the arrangement with GEF to support developing States Parties in implementing the Agreement, while taking into account the special circumstances of small island developing States and of least developed countries.
4. In this context, we would like to stress the need for funding, in support of the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, to enable developing States to fulfil their obligations and secure their rights in the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of the ocean in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction. We further stress that the financial resources under the BBNJ Agreement shall be adequate, accessible, new, and additional and predictable. Needless to say, the effective and full implementation of the BBNJ Agreement depends on the provision and mobilization of new, adequate, predictable and additional resources to developing countries in line with article 52 of the Agreement.
5. On a related matter, the Group firmly believes the Preparatory Commission should advance on all three operating entities of the financial mechanism, namely the Special Fund, the GEF trust fund, and the voluntary trust fund. We believe that it is crucial that the Preparatory Commission have a scheduled discussion on the operationalization of the Special Fund. We request the Co-Chairs to consider preparing a working document with options for the governing instrument for the Special Fund, to be considered at the second meeting of the Preparatory Commission.

Dear Co-Chairs:

6. As one of the operating entities of the financial mechanism, the GEF should act under the Authority of the COP. The guidance process should reflect this reality in a robust manner, including through the capacity of the COP to determine programming directions and priorities for the funds to be allocated in support for the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement.

7. The reporting of the GEF should allow for the COP to have a full picture of the current portfolio of projects under the BBNJ funding window, as well as information on access modalities, programming streams and priorities and their respective gaps. We see the need to further specify the provisions on the cooperation between the GEF with the BBNJ Secretariat and with the Special Fund.

8. Finally, as mentioned earlier, the Group recalls its view on a comparative analysis of existing multilateral Secretariats, including their degree of linkage or relationship with the GEF, among others. It is highlighted that the GEF trust fund should serve the dual goals of the BBNJ agreement, i.e. the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

9. As mentioned earlier, our member States will go into further detail, and we look forward to the discussions.

I thank you.