

High Seas Alliance PrepCom 1 Interventions



Name of meeting: BBNJ PrepCom 1

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Speaker: High Seas Alliance

Intervention on the Scientific and Technical Body

Scientific and Technical Body

Thank you co-chairs for the opportunity to share the views of the High Seas Alliance on the STB. I will continue in English

With regard to your first question on the most important elements to consider in relation to the STB, we would like to quickly highlight [six] points:

First, on the form of the STB: To ensure adequate representation of diverse expertise and knowledge needed to implement the Agreement, we would echo those delegations who recommended enabling the creation of sub-committees and/or working groups that can tackle issues requiring specialized expertise.

Second, to safeguard the credibility of scientific advice, procedures for the disclosure of conflicts of interest and recusal are essential.

Third, we recommend developing modalities for the STB and/or its working groups/sub-committees to solicit advice and data from other scientific entities (e.g., regional fisheries management organizations, academic institutions, etc.) as well as individual experts.

Fourth, we support the many delegations that raised the importance of the STB to communicate and coordinate with other BBNJ subsidiary bodies.

Fifth, we note that the Agreement enables the CoP to assign additional functions to the STB, allowing its role to evolve. Although it has not been assigned specific functions, the STB could evolve to play a helpful role in assisting the implementation of MGR and CB&TMT-related provisions, and assist the ICC and the Finance Committee in their work.

Sixth, funds needed to carry out the STB's program of work should be fully and adequately considered in budgetary decisions by the CoP.

With regard to Question 3 on RoP of the COP applying *mutatis mutandis*, we see this as a potential initial safety net, but could see where the STB would benefit from having some provisions that are tailored to its function. For example, we recommend provisions be included to allow for the publication of "minority" views or recommendations for instances when the STB cannot provide advice or make a recommendation by consensus. As other delegations have stressed, the STB's interactions with IFBs may also need to be included in the modalities.

With regard to Question 4, focusing on the number of members, we recommend specifying a fixed number of members that is large enough to include representatives and experts from regions, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities while remaining small enough to be manageable.

Thank you co chairs