



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

New York, 18 August 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.
3. The funding mechanism under article 52 of the Agreement is responsible to assist developing States Parties in implementing the Agreement, including through funding in support of capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology. Pursuant to the mentioned article, it also includes a voluntary trust fund established by the Conference of the Parties to facilitate the participation of representatives of developing States Parties in the meetings of the bodies established under this Agreement.
4. As two important duties of the funding mechanism, it is similarly important to analyze how the Conference could promote effective implementation of these provisions. As stipulated in article 52(12) of the Agreement, the eligibility to access to funding thereunder is open to developing State Parties on the basis of needs. The concept of eligibility in the Agreement should be taken into account as a means to consider the specific self-identified needs of developing States Parties and should not be construed as to exclude such States Parties from efficient access to the funding. This needs to be reflected in arrangements with GEF.

Distinguished Co-Chairs:

5. 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. The agreement should also emphasize the objectives of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction of the agreement.

6. 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 and achievement of its purposes depends on the provision and mobilization of new, adequate, predictable and additional resources to developing countries in line with article 52 of the Agreement.

7. On a related matter, the Group firmly believes the Preparatory Commission should take steps forward 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.

Dear Co-Chairs:

8. 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. Given the fact that the COP only convenes a short period every year, or every other year, it seems difficult for the COP to provide timely guidance to GEF during the intersessional period. That said, a standing body, with authorization and under supervision of the COP, that could provide regular and immediate guidance to GEF seems necessary. Possibly, the finance committee on financial resources to be established by the COP could play a role. If so, we suggest to incorporate this approach to the draft agreement at hand.

9. 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 coordination between the GEF with the BBNJ Secretariat and with the Special Fund.

10. Finally, we would like to mention that our Group is considering various aspects of the draft memorandum of understanding between the COP and the Council of GEF and thus reserves its position on this matter.

11. However, our member States will go into further detail in this context, and we look forward to the discussions.

I thank you!