



October 17, 2024

H. E. María Susana Muhamad González
Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia

H. E. Ms. Susana Muhamad,

We, the undersigned organizations and members of the Latin American and Caribbean Network for a Sustainable Financial System (REDFIS), address you in your capacity as President of the Sixteenth Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP16), a key space to advance the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and, especially, to enhance the visibility of environmental justice at the global level.

We believe it is imperative that the COP in Colombia promotes robust and transformative diplomatic action to halt and reverse the path of destruction and damage, while protecting and strengthening the actions of defenders, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, who have demonstrated for millennia their valuable role in biodiversity conservation. It is also critical that synergies between climate action and biodiversity conservation are not just a list of beneficial interactions, but a requirement in the process of updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Advancing the biodiversity agenda will require a solid commitment that must be translated into prompt mobilization of sufficient and accessible financial resources, as established in Target 19 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. It is imperative to increase the resources allocated to the implementation of NBSAPs in a significant, progressive, effective and timely manner, as well as to ensure direct access to funding by different key stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth.

Like Colombia, Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole, also holds a critical interest in achieving the resource mobilization target, due to its rich biodiversity and commitment to conservation. We ask you, as President of COP16, to take timely and assertive action to motivate the fulfillment of the established commitments on biodiversity financing.

In this regard, we respectfully submit to you a list of actions that, in our opinion, should be included in the decisions to be adopted at COP16:

- To establish a timeline for meeting the commitments made by developed countries to comply with Target 19 of the Global Biodiversity Framework.



- To move forward with responsibility in establishing the Multilateral Mechanism for the sharing of monetary and non-monetary benefits derived from the utilization of digital sequence information on genetic resources.
- To request the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to establish channels and mechanisms for easy, direct and timely access for Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth, acknowledging their contributions and fundamental role in biodiversity conservation, and to prioritize funding for projects proposed and implemented by these groups.
- To urge Parties, other Governments, and other relevant actors, including financial institutions, to avoid and reduce the financing that leads to biodiversity loss.
- To mandate Parties, and urge other Governments and other relevant actors, including the private sector and financial institutions, to implement social and environmental safeguards to ensure that the human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including their rights to lands, territories, resources and traditional knowledge, are respected, in accordance with international instruments and standards.
- To mandate Parties, and urge other Governments and other relevant actors, including the private sector and financial institutions, to implement full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-sensitive representation and participation in decision-making, with the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, as appropriate and in accordance with international instruments.
- To mandate Parties, and urge other Governments and other relevant actors, including the private sector and financial institutions, to implement monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure effectiveness and transparency in the use of financial resources for biodiversity conservation, including its protection and sustainable management.
- To insist on the call to reform and redirect harmful subsidies, and to provide public funding for biodiversity conservation as grants, in a proportionate, fair, effective and equitable manner.
- To promote the establishment and utilization of innovative financial instruments to channel resources towards ecosystem conservation and restoration projects, through less bureaucratic and more direct calls for proposals, by means of strategic alliances that promote transparency, speed and efficiency.



COP16 is a unique opportunity for Colombia to demonstrate its leadership in biodiversity conservation. It is also the ideal opportunity to chart the path towards a peace with nature that implies well-being, food security and economic development, benefiting Latin Americans, Caribbean and all peoples of the world, through real and effective solutions to halt and reverse the biodiversity loss, and strengthening partnerships between the governmental, private, academic and civil society sectors, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth.

The undersigned organizations are committed to building a present and future in which biodiversity, social well-being and economic development can coexist in harmony and peace. We respectfully request your support and collaboration to promote these proposals during COP16, the COP of Colombia, the COP of the people. And thus guarantee a legacy of sustainability for future generations, reflected unequivocally not only in the speeches, but also in the letter of the texts of the decisions taken.

Without further ado, we thank you for your attention, your commitment, conceptual clarity and efforts in pursuit of objectives that benefit most people and build care for our common home, and we reaffirm our commitment to work together for a sustainable, just and thriving future.

