

Euroseeds' assessment of the COP 15 conclusions

Brussels, 22 December 2022

On December 19, 2022 the Contracting Parties to [the Convention on Biological Diversity concluded their negotiations](#) at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Montreal, Canada. Without doubt, the biggest achievement of these negotiations is the adoption of the Montreal-Kunming Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) which includes four overarching global goals and 23 targets to be achieved by 2030. Besides the GBF, the COP 15 also adopted a number of important decisions, including a decision on digital sequence information (DSI) on genetic resources.

While applauding Contracting Parties for their achievement in successfully concluding negotiations and agreeing on the GBF, Euroseeds remains concerned about the ambitions of the GBF regarding the sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and DSI. According to Goal C and Target 13 of the GBF, the monetary and non-monetary benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and DSI should be substantially increased by 2050. A substantial increase however first would require a thorough analysis of the weaknesses of the current system on the utilization of genetic resources which has proven to be dysfunctional.

Regarding benefit-sharing from the use of DSI on genetic resources, Contracting Parties decided to establish a multilateral mechanism for the benefit-sharing from the use of DSI, including a global fund, as well as a process to further develop and operationalize the mechanism. The process, thanks to the private sector, leaves space for analysing and adapting the current benefit-sharing mechanism for genetic resources. The work will have to be carried out by an *ad hoc* open-ended working group and is expected to result in a recommendation to the 16th meeting of the COP in 2024.

The decision however leaves several serious ambiguities: the multilateral system for DSI on genetic resources comes on top of a bilateral system for genetic resources themselves for the establishment of a multilateral mechanism, exceptions may be identified and, the approach developed is without prejudice to national access and benefit-sharing measures. This seems to suggest that next to the envisaged multilateral mechanism national measures may exist in parallel for genetic resources and also DSI.

“It is undoubtedly a huge achievement that Contracting Parties concluded on the Global Biodiversity Framework, which is key for shaping our common future and I would like to congratulate them on their efforts.” – Garlich von Essen, Euroseeds Secretary General commented. “Nevertheless, it is regrettable that while setting ambitious targets on increasing the level of benefit-sharing from the use of genetic resources and DSI, Contracting Parties decided to put in place an additional layer of regulation for benefit-sharing instead of revisiting the system that is in place since 1993 and that clearly does not function.”- he added.

In order however to shape the new multilateral mechanism in a way that best fits the principles agreed upon, Euroseeds remains committed to a constructive discussion and will provide its contribution to the work of the newly created working group. In that the main goal for Euroseeds remains to ensure that mutually supportive implementation of the mechanism and the already existing Multilateral System of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture remain possible.



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