



CONCEPT NOTE

Investing in Spatial Intelligence: From Data to Action with UN Biodiversity Lab

A CBD COP17 event convened by Parties, TSCCs, CBD, UNDP & UNEP

VENUE: UN Pavilion

DATE: Thursday, 22 October, 13:15-14:45

FORMAT: High-level presentations, fireside chats, and interactive discussion, with lunch

PARTNERS

CBD, UNDP, UNEP, UN Biodiversity Lab, Colombia, South Africa, Humboldt Institute, SANBI, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Malawi, OSS, GBIF, GEO BON, Global Ecosystem Atlas

Objectives

This dynamic and collaborative event will engage participants around three key objectives:

1. **Celebrate & Inspire:** Showcase country leadership and concrete results where the UN Biodiversity Lab, in partnership with Parties, TSCCs and technical partners, has been pivotal in turning spatial intelligence into insight and action for NBSAP implementation and national reporting.
2. **Identify Priorities:** Facilitate a Party- and TSCC- led dialogue to identify critical needs for strengthening UNBL and the spatial data ecosystem more broadly, specifically addressing the capacity, monitoring, and spatial data gaps highlighted in the Global Report, to support national action through 2030.
3. **Strengthen Partnerships:** Enhance and develop partnerships committed to the long-term success and sustainability of the broader spatial data and planning ecosystem, identifying synergies and opportunities for collaboration.

Background & Framing

The [Global Report on Collective Progress on Implementation](#) confirms that while the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) has inspired global ambition, progress is critically hampered by persistent gaps in data, technical capacity, and financing. The report specifically flags that achieving our collective goals for nature, climate, and land can be accelerated by robust spatial planning that translates global and national ambition into targeted, on-the-ground action.

The [UN Biodiversity Lab \(UNBL\)](#) has been shaped over the last eight years to address this challenge. UNBL has become an essential tool for operationalizing ambition by turning spatial intelligence into the insights that drive action. With over 30,000 users in 160 countries, UNBL is already empowering nations to use spatial data and planning for KMGBF implementation, monitoring, and reporting. Spatial planning, as envisioned in Target 1, is the foundational step for delivering on restoration (Target 2) and conservation (Target 3), and is a key enabler for nearly all other KMGBF targets. It is the mechanism through which we can identify synergies across action for biodiversity, climate, and sustainable development. By providing state-of-the-art data and tools in a free, open-source platform, UNBL empowers countries to take this critical first step. Through strategic collaborations with TSCCs, GBIF, GEO BON, IIASA, the Marxan Planning Platform, and others, UNBL is working to enhance data access, facilitate availability of indicator displays and pipelines, and enable all countries in the world to create biodiversity-inclusive spatial plans for their country.

This event is a call to action. Led by Parties, the South African National Biodiversity Initiative (SANBI), CBD, UNDP, and UNEP, we will celebrate the successes powered by UNBL and partners, but also bring awareness to the difficulties encountered to maintain these resources. Are these tools necessary and how can we sustain them?

Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker
13:15-13:25	Welcome & Setting the Scene: Why Does the World Need Spatial Data?	Melissa de Kock, UNEP-WCMC
13:25-13:30	Importance of Spatial Data and Planning for COP17 & KMGBF Implementation	Jillian Campbell, CBD
13:30-13:40	Four collaborations to drive innovation and enhance interoperability How UNBL is evolving in partnership with GBIF, GEO BON, Global Ecosystems Atlas, and TSCCs	Annie Virnig, UNDP Violeta Muñoz-Fuentes, UNEP-WCMC
13:40-14:10	<i>Fireside chat</i> Three countries on how UNBL has supported countries achieve their objectives around the KMGBF Parties using spatial data and planning via UNBL for tangible impacts	Tiwonge Gawa, Malawi Kim Andrey, Kazakhstan Andrés Factos, Ecuador Abir Ben Romdhane, OSS
14:10-14:40	<i>Fireside chat</i> Panel and participants on the headwinds we face in achieving the KMGBF & the potential for collective action and partnership Interactive discussion on the challenges identified in the draft Global Report, the role for spatial data and planning, and sustainable financing across the spatial data ecosystem	Kieran Noonan Mooney, CBD Mahlodi Tao, SANBI Maria Cecilia Londoño, Humboldt Institute Jamison Ervin, UNDP Wade Crowfoot, California Natural Resources Agency
14:40-14:45	Final Reflections	Neville Ash, UNEP-WCMC

UN Pavilion Location:

