

JOINT LIAISON GROUP – RIO CONVENTIONS

REPORT OF THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP'S MEETING

19 January 2026 – 13 :00 – 14 :00 CET

Participants :

UNFCCC:

- Simon Stiell, Executive Secretary (Chair)
- Daniele Violetti, Senior Director of Programmes Coordination (sherpa)
- Aiping Chen, Special Assistant to the Senior Director of Programmes Coordination

UNCCD:

- Yasmine Fouad, Executive Secretary
- Andrea Meza, Deputy Executive Secretary
- Xenya Scanlon, Chief, Communications, External Relations and Partnerships (sherpa)
- Louise Baker, Managing Director, Global Mechanism

CBD:

- Astrid Schomaker, Executive Secretary
 - Asad Naqvi, Director of Programmes (sherpa)
 - Tristan Tyrrell, Programme Management Officer
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The UNFCCC Executive Secretary Simon Stiell opened the meeting in his capacity as Rio Conventions Joint Liaison Group (JLG) Chair. The meeting agenda was adopted.

Agenda:

1) Outlook for 2026 and beyond

The JLG welcomed the recent mandates on synergies from the three Conventions' governing bodies, acknowledging the increased momentum on the topic last year. The JLG shared information on their respective relevant activities for 2026 and reiterated their willingness to collaborate moving forward:

- The UNFCCC shared insights on the negotiations' outcomes related to the topic of Rio Conventions synergies at COP 30, including a call for submissions by May 2026 from Parties and observers, which will feed further discussion on this issue.
- The UNCCD secretariat shared information on an existing workplan on mandated work on alignment of synergies.
- The CBD secretariat shared that Parties have called for the development of a multilevel roadmap and mapping exercise on headline options for enhancing policy coherence and cooperation between the Rio conventions ahead of its upcoming COP 17.
- The JLG highlighted that 2026 is a triple COP year, and therefore an opportunity to build momentum on the Rio Convention synergies.

2) Substantive areas for collaboration

a) Food systems synergies flagship

Following the agreement at the previous JLG meeting to develop a joint Rio Conventions food systems flagship initiative, the JLG appreciated the progress of work on this item and welcomed the initial concept note. The JLG provided further guidance to the sherpas for next steps:

- Agreed on the importance of alignment with existing mandates and expressed the shared understanding that this contributes to bringing the process closer to the real economy and people.
- Highlighted the role of the Convention secretariats as conveners, and expressed the need to bring in relevant organizations and partners for implementation, starting with UN agencies such as FAO and others;
- Emphasized the need to focus on the environmental aspect of the broad topic of food systems;
- Requested a mapping of existing initiatives, organizations and support opportunities in the food systems space, as a basis for further developing the concept note.

b) Policy coherence among the three Rio Conventions

The JLG discussed the need to take a deeper look on what are the definitions and understandings of Rio conventions synergies in different contexts (e.g. policy coherence, implementation of mandates, etc.), and in different national circumstances.

The CBD secretariat shared that it is launching a technical process on policy coherence in response to its mandate, with a focus on planning, reporting, indicators for monitoring, and capacity building, among others. It will invite the other two secretariats to engage. The possibility of a high-level and/or civil society gathering ahead of the three COPs was also discussed.

3) Resource mobilization

The JLG recognized that the implementation of any joint activities is dependent on the availability of resources. In this regard, it agreed for the respective resource mobilization teams from each secretariat to work together on a funding plan for this year.