



Australian Government

Implementing BBNJ: Three PrepComs and the critical importance of coordination

WCPFC and the new BBNJ Agreement – WCPFC22 Side-Event, 1 Dec 2025

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The PrepCom process: from agreement to implementation

- 19 June 2023 – the BBNJ treaty, a remarkable milestone for the protection of the world's ocean, delivering stronger protections for the ocean under the framework of UNCLOS, is adopted.
- 24 April 2024 – the UN General Assembly passed a resolution to establish a Preparatory Commission to prepare for the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement and the first Conference of the Parties.
- 17 January 2026 – the BBNJ Agreement will enter into force.



- First and second PrepCom meetings held 14-25 April 2025 and 18-29 August 2025.
- Third PrepCom meeting scheduled for 23 March-2 April 2026.
- Australia and Belize are co-chairing the PrepCom process.
- WCPFC represented at both PrepCom meetings.



The PrepCom has discussed pathways forward for the arrangements for the functioning of the BBNJ secretariat, the operationalisation of the BBNJ financial mechanism, reporting requirements, and **cooperation arrangements with IFBs.**

There will be continued discussions on these topics at PrepCom3, including consideration of draft decisions to be submitted to the first meeting of the COP.

Cooperation and coordination with relevant instruments, frameworks and bodies

- A key function for the BBNJ Agreement is to facilitate a holistic system of ocean governance.
- The BBNJ treaty is **not to undermine** and is to **promote coherence and coordination** with relevant instruments, frameworks and bodies (IFBs).
- The numerous interactions of the BBNJ framework with these IFBs provides an opportunity for enhanced cooperation in ocean governance.
- PrepCom 2 discussions highlighted:
 - The success of the BBNJ Agreement is contingent on it working cooperatively with relevant IFBs, taking account of existing mandates and activities;
 - Critical to this cooperation is having **internal coordination within States** to drive coordinated engagement in IFBs of which they are members, and to support the pursuit of BBNJ objectives in those IFBs.
 - The wealth of data, expertise and capability in RFMOs should be leveraged and built upon, not replicated.

“...the goals of the BBNJ Agreement and regional fisheries management organizations such as the WCPFC are aligned in their commitment to safeguarding ocean health and the sustainable use of marine biodiversity, including in areas beyond national jurisdiction.”

WCPFC Submission to the interim BBNJ Secretariat

Cooperation and coordination: a challenge and an opportunity

- Internal coordination within governments is essential – who leads on BBNJ implementation and PrepCom engagement and do you talk to them?
 - Highlight shared goals – bringing interests together.
 - Identify expertise, resources, data
- Need to take into account mandates, capacity constraints and resources of IFBs, and their members, when considering what cooperation with BBNJ could entail.
 - To inform approach to BBNJ PrepCom 3 in March 2026
 - What decision could it be helpful for the BBNJ COP to adopt, to enable cooperation and coordination with RFMOs moving forward?
- WCPFC is playing an active role in preparing for BBNJ implementation – members can support.