**BBNJ Pre-CoP1 Retreat for the Asia Region**
27-29 October 2026 | UN Conference Center, Bangkok

**Background Information**
The much anticipated first meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP1) is happening on 11-22 January 2027, one year after the BBNJ Agreement has entered into force and became an international law. Prior to this, the BBNJ Preparatory Commission held three two-week meetings from 2025 to 2026, where delegations have negotiated and generally agreed on the preparations for CoP1, including the institutional set-up of BBNJ, which will be the backbone of its implementation. The challenge is clear – how to translate the BBNJ provisions to actionable points to ensure effective, transparent, and inclusive implementation of the Agreement.

In preparation for CoP1, the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources of Maldives and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, in collaboration with the High Seas Alliance and International Union for Conservation of Nature Asia Regional Office, are convening a two-day retreat to facilitate knowledge exchange and a capacity-building session on BBNJ institutional issues and key aspects of implementation.

The retreat, which will be held at the margins of the Asia-Pacific Ocean Week in Bangkok on 26-30 October 2026, will also provide a one-day participation for delegates to learn from relevant sessions.

**Objectives**
The regional retreat aims to convene Asia government delegates for a learning exchange in preparation for CoP1. It aims to facilitate constructive discussions among countries and share informed views by the experts.

**Agenda**

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| **DAY 0 / 26 October 2026**<br>Arrival of participants | |
| **DAY 1 / 27 October 2026**<br>Conference Room 3<br>Participate in Asia-Pacific Ocean Week | |
| **DAY 2 / 28 October 2026**<br>**Meeting Room G**<br>Deep dive on key institutional arrangements ahead of CoP1 | |
| **Time** | **Detailed Agenda** |
| 9:00 AM to 9:20 AM | **Opening Programme** |

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| | Welcome Messages<br>● Dr. Charlie Garnjana-Goonchorn<br>Director of Legal Affairs Division, Department of Treaties and Legal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand<br><br>● Dr. Hussain Sinan<br>Director General of Fisheries and Ocean Resources Management, Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Ocean Resources of Maldives<br><br>● Dr. Dindo Campilan<br>Regional Director for Asia and Hub Director for Oceania, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)<br><br>● Ms. Rebecca Hubbard<br>Director, High Seas Alliance<br><br>*(quick photo op after the messages)* |
| 9:20 AM to 9:30 AM | **Objectives of the workshop/Mode of Working**<br>Rizza Sacra-Dejucos \| Asia Regional Coordinator, High Seas Alliance |
| 9:30 AM to 9:45 AM | **Introduction of delegates** |
| 9:45 AM to 10:00 AM | **Session 1: Recap of PrepCom3 and what to expect at CoP1**<br>Speaker: Athina Chanaki \| Legal Office, UN DOALOS |
| 10:00 AM to 10:10 AM | Q&A |
| 10:10 AM to 10:20 AM | **Presentation on EU Global Ocean Programme Technical Assistance Facility Component 1**<br>Speaker: Umaira Ahmed \| Ocean Programme Officer, IUCN Ocean Team |
| 10:20 AM to 10:30 AM | **Q&A** |
| 10:30 AM to 10:45 AM | Coffee/tea break |
| 10:45 AM to 11:30 AM | **Session 2: Why the timely set-up of Scientific and Technical Body and other subsidiary bodies matter for effective implementation of the Agreement**<br><br>Speakers:<br>● Nichola Clark \| Senior Officer for Ocean Governance, Pew Charitable Trust (online)<br>● Tekau Frere \| ABMT Coordinator, High Seas Alliance |

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| 11:30 AM to 12:00 PM | Q&A |
| 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM | Lunch |
| 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM | Breakout session for Session 2 (subsidiary bodies/institutional arrangements); report back to plenary |
| 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM | **Session 3: What do effective cooperation arrangements between BBNJ and relevant IFBs look like**<br><br>Speakers:<br>● Duncan Currie \| International Legal Advisor, High Seas Alliance (online)<br>● Maeve Nightingale \| Coastal and Marine Coordinator, IUCN Asia Regional Office<br>● Dr. Hussain Sinan \| Director General, Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture, and Ocean Resources |
| 3:00 PM to 3:30 PM | Q&A |
| 3:30 PM to 3:45 PM | Coffee/tea break |
| 3:45 PM to 4:45 PM | Breakout Session for Session 3 (IFB cooperation); report back to plenary |
| 4:45 PM to 5:00 PM | Day 1 wrap-up |
| 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM | Welcome dinner (details to be shared on the day of the workshop) |
| **DAY 3 / 29 October 2026**<br>**Meeting Room J**<br>Thinking early implementation: Urgent needs across the four pillars of the BBNJ Agreement | |
| 9:00 AM to 9:40 AM | **Session 4: Equitable sharing of benefits under MGR-DSI: What follows for developing countries?**<br><br>Speakers:<br>● Mr. Matthew Carvalho \| The Earth Commons, Georgetown University (online)<br>● Dr. Siva Thambisetty \| Professor, London School of Economics (online) |
| 9:40 AM to 10:00AM | **Q&A** |
| 10:00 AM to 10:10 AM | Coffee/tea break |
| 10:10 AM to 11:10 AM | Breakout Session for Session 4 (MGR and benefit-sharing); report back to plenary |
| 11:10 AM to 11:50 PM | **Session 5: The Ad Hoc Group to operationalise the Special Fund has been agreed: what's next at CoP1 and beyond**<br><br>Speakers: |

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| | • Daniel Kachelriess \| Cross-cutting Coordinator/COP1 Lead of High Seas Alliance (online)<br>• Eliza Northrop \| Director of UNSW Centre for Sustainable Development Reform (online)<br>• Asia Williams \| UNSW Centre for Sustainable Development Reform (in-person) |
| 11:50 AM to 12:15 PM | Q&A |
| 12:15 PM to 1:15 PM | Lunch |
| 1:15 PM to 2:15 PM | Breakout session for Session 5 (finance); report back to plenary |
| 2:15 PM to 2:45 PM | **Session 6: Putting in practice the BBNJ Clearing-House Mechanism**<br><br>Speakers:<br>• Dr. Johannes-Alexander Müller \| Ocean Policy Specialist, OceanCare<br>• Glen Wright \| Independent expert |
| 2:45 PM to 3:15 PM | Q&A |
| 3:15 PM to 3:25 PM | Coffee/tea break |
| 3:25 PM to 4:30 PM | Breakout session for Session 6 (CI-HM); report back to plenary |
| 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM | End of the workshop;<br>Government delegates meeting (to be facilitated by Maldives) |
| **DAY 4 / 30 October 2026**<br>Departure/back to duty station | |

Note: The agenda was developed based on the input gathered from informal meetings with delegates in the region.

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## Annex

**Participating countries**

1. Bangladesh
2. China
3. India
4. Indonesia
5. Japan (online)
6. Kyrgyz Republic
7. Lao PDR
8. Malaysia (in-person and online)
9. Maldives
10. Nepal
11. Philippines
12. Singapore (in-person and online)
13. Sri Lanka
14. Thailand

**Non-Government delegates (in-person)**

1. High Seas Alliance and experts from OceanCare and University of New South Wales Centre for Sustainable Development Reform
2. IUCN Asia Regional Office
3. IUCN Ocean Team

**Materials and reference:**

- Report of the Preparatory Commission
- PrepCom summary and deep dives