

FUNGI FOUNDATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COP 17 – UN CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (UNCBD)

Seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UN CBD COP 17) [Yerevan, Armenia]. 19-30 October 2026.

Fungi are fundamental to ecosystem functioning, biodiversity conservation, climate regulation, soil health, sustainable livelihoods and human well-being¹. Despite their essential ecological roles, fungal biodiversity remains significantly underrepresented within international biodiversity policy and the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

Since the launch of the **Pledge for Fungal Conservation at CBD COP 16**², significant progress has been made through the SBSTTA 27 and 28 meetings. In particular, references to fungal biodiversity have been incorporated into draft recommendations addressing **Forest Biodiversity Programme of work (Item 17(b))**, **Protected Areas Programme of work (Item 17(c))**, **Sustainable wildlife management (Item 18(b))**, and **Biodiversity and Agriculture (Item 18(d))**. These developments represent important milestones towards strengthening the integration of fungal biodiversity into the work of the Convention and recognizing its contributions to ecosystem functioning, resilience and human well-being and its essential role in the implementation of the KMGBF.

CBD COP 17 presents a critical opportunity to consolidate this progress and translate the growing recognition of fungal biodiversity into concrete action across conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of fungal biodiversity to contribute to the implementation of the KMGBF.

The Fungi Foundation therefore presents the following recommendations to support Parties in integrating fungal biodiversity into relevant CBD COP 17 decisions, building upon existing commitments and advancing the effective implementation of the KMGBF.

¹ Corbu, V. M., Gheorghe-Barbu, I., Dumbravă, A. Ș., Vrâncianu, C. O., & Șesan, T. E. (2023). Current Insights in Fungal Importance—A Comprehensive Review. *Microorganisms*, 11(6), 1384. <https://doi.org/10.3390/microorganisms11061384>

² Fungal Conservation Pledge. <https://www.ffungi.org/campaign/fungal-conservation-pledge>

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Recognize fungal biodiversity as a critical component of soil biodiversity** by addressing knowledge gaps, strengthening research and monitoring, and developing relevant tools and guidance to reduce the impacts of pollution on soil biodiversity, while promoting evidence-based approaches that incorporate fungi into soil restoration efforts.
2. **Recognize fungal biodiversity as an integral component of sustainable wildlife management** by supporting the adoption of the Global Guidance on the Sustainable Management of Wildlife Applicable to Multiple Species and Multiple Practices, which acknowledges the ecological, cultural and socioeconomic contributions of wildlife, including fungi, to ecosystem health, sustainable livelihoods and Nature's Contributions to People, and by promoting coordinated action with relevant coalitions, partnerships, and multistakeholder initiatives to address drivers of biodiversity loss and challenges to the sustainable use and management of wild species.
3. **Strengthen the integration of fungal biodiversity into the updated Programme of Work on Protected Areas** by recognizing the importance of above and below ground ecological networks and processes in maintaining ecological integrity, connectivity and ecosystem resilience, and by supporting the effective implementation of Target 3 of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).
4. **Promote the use of the best available scientific knowledge and innovative tools to identify and prioritize areas of particular importance for biodiversity, ecosystem functions and ecosystem services**, including underrepresented ecosystems and **areas supporting below-ground ecological networks**, in order to strengthen conservation planning, protected and conserved area management, and ecosystem restoration.
5. **Strengthen synergies between biodiversity and climate change** by supporting the **adoption of the Multilevel road map for enhancing cooperation, policy coherence and synergies across the Rio Conventions**, and by prioritizing the conservation and restoration of ecological integrity and ecosystem functions above and below ground, including the contributions of fungal biodiversity and below-ground ecological processes to carbon cycling, ecosystem resilience and climate adaptation.