

## EXPECTATIONS FOR COP-16 ON BIODIVERSITY

Between October 21 and November 1, 2024, the sixteenth Conference of the Parties (COP-16) of the Convention on Biodiversity will be held in Cali (Colombia), an event that has been held for 20 years, generally every two years, to follow up on the fulfillment of its objectives and goals.

In 1999, Colombia had already hosted a meeting of this type, when the first extraordinary session of the Convention was held in Cartagena, which approved the Biosafety Protocol to guarantee protection in the handling, use and transfer of genetically modified organisms that may have effects on biodiversity and health.

In some of these meetings, transcendental decisions have been taken at the global level, which have gone unnoticed by many, but which are becoming more relevant as countries feel their effects. Of these, it is worth highlighting four, which have established goals in terms of territorial conservation, due to the impacts they are having on the sovereignty and internal decisions of the countries that are part of the agreement.

The first of these is COP-7, which took place in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) 2004, where the world program of work for protected areas was adopted and established as a goal for 2010 in the terrestrial area and 2012 in the marine area, to have a global network of complete, representative and well-managed national and regional systems of protected areas, understood as territories that are geographically delimited, declared by law or administrative act and managed under specific conservation objectives.

The second is the COP-10 developed in Nagoya (Japan) 2012, where the non-fulfillment of the previous goals was recognized, reason for which the Strategic Plan 2011 - 2020 was approved and 20 new ones were welcomed, known as "the Aichi goals", to be fulfilled in 2020, one of which, one of which, target 11, set the goal of having at least 17% of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10% of marine and coastal areas in member countries declared as protected areas, effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected.

Subsequently, at COP-14 in El Sharm el-Sheikh (Egypt) 2020, the failure to meet these targets was again highlighted

and countries were urged to work not only on the declaration of protected areas but also to include what they called "Other effective area-based conservation measures" OMECs, understood simply as geographically delimited areas, governed and managed for conservation, i.e., they differ from the previous ones in that they do not require declaration by law or administrative act; a very complex situation for countries, because it allows land-use planning decisions to be made without a positive decision by the State, which is questionable for countries that function as a State governed by the rule of law.

And finally, the COP 15 held in Kunming (China) and Montreal (Canada) 2021/2022, which approved a new Global Biodiversity Framework that seeks to implement a roadmap to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity worldwide, in which surprisingly the goal of territories for conservation was ostensibly increased with the objective of having 30% of terrestrial and inland water areas and 30% of marine and coastal areas under protection by 2030.

For these reasons, and being only 6 years away from the deadline of the 2030 agenda, what is expected from the COP-16 is to explain what support will be received and how the implementation of actions to achieve this ambitious purpose will be guaranteed, since in order to declare and manage environmental conservation areas, States must convince communities to change their economic development model and reliably guarantee that such a decision will increase their quality of life. As long as better conditions are not guaranteed, the population will not stop carrying out the activities that, in the government's opinion, cause the loss of biodiversity. The goals will not be met, as has happened in the past, because the demands of the international agenda have remained alien and completely distant from the reality of the territories.

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