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Policy Brief April 2025

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Presentation

Almost two years after the adoption of the so-called High Seas Treaty, the international community is pursuing two parallel objectives. The first is to ensure the swift entry into force of the international agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement). Many States and stakeholders hope that the finish line of 60 ratifications can be reached by the third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in Nice in June 2025. The second objective is to set up the institutions foreseen in the Agreement that will play important roles in

its implementation. In this regard, discussions will be held for two weeks as of 14 April 2025 to prepare for the Agreement's implementation through a Preparatory Commission (PrepCom); PrepCom1 will prepare for COP1. This *Policy Brief* focuses on this important milestone, explaining the context, mandate and programme of work of the PrepCom as well as highlighting key recommendations.

Key Messages

- The PrepCom meetings will be crucial for laying solid foundations for the operationalization and implementation of the BBNJ treaty.
- PrepCom1 will focus significantly on the five subsidiary bodies established under the BBNJ treaty. In this regard, States should consider best practices from subsidiary bodies already established under existing international frameworks and bodies (IFBs).
- The Clearing-house mechanism (CHM) will play a pivotal role in the future implementation of the treaty, and discussions at PrepCom1 will center on its operational modalities. The diverse structures and functions of existing CHMs offer valuable insights for the development of a future BBNJ CHM.
- Additionally, preparing the BBNJ financial mechanism will be a key priority during the PrepCom meetings. Beyond the arrangements with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), it is essential to explore modalities for the operationalization of the special fund established under Article 52 of the BBNJ Agreement.

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