



Newsletter

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Picture by AJESH


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DEAR ACBA MEMBERS,

We are happy to relaunch the ACBA Newsletter with the 1st 2025 issue. This issue captures key highlights of ACBA's activities throughout 2024. ACBA achieved significant milestones in 2024 ranging from partnerships for impact, to strengthening its convening of members around common interests to amplify their collective voice in the advancement of biodiversity conservation and climate change efforts across Africa.

In 2024, ACBA continued to champion the implementation of Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) Targets reminding everyone not to lose sight of the principles and objectives of the CBD Convention and driving the agenda for the protection of biodiversity and climate change across the continent. While ACBA is not a signatory to the convention, its diverse membership portfolio stands ready to contribute towards the implementation of the GBF by assisting governments translate these targets into integrated actionable plans.

One of the highlights of the year was our engagement in international forums, such as SBSTTA, UNEA 6, CBD COP16, UNCCD COP 16 and UNFCCC COP 29 among others. These platforms allowed ACBA to showcase the centrality of Africa's biodiversity to national and local economies, the nexus with climate change and the conflicts that arise. ACBA continued highlighting issues of equity, rights of IPLCs and the need for localized funding models.



At the continental level, ACBA participated in the Climate Change and Development in Africa XII Session (30 August-2 September), The International Conference of Afforestation and Reforestation in July 2024.

This newsletter also marks the launch of a new initiative: our 'Member Spotlight' section. ACBA members have been working tirelessly in various countries and each month, we will feature one of our incredible member organizations. This section will highlight their unique contributions to biodiversity conservation, climate change and the impactful work they are doing on the ground.

As we reflect on 2024, we are proud of the strides we've made, but we know there is still much to be done. We invite you to join us in celebrating our successes, failures, and how we can learn from these. Together, we can make 2025 even more impactful for biodiversity and climate change in Africa. Let's re-energize our commitment to the work ahead.

ACBA Coordinator,
Yemi Katerere



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

South Africa Youth Biodiversity Network

Empowering Youth for Biodiversity Conservation

The South African Youth Biodiversity Network (SAYBN) is a vibrant, youth-led nonprofit organization (NPO) founded in 2017. Its primary mission is to foster full and effective youth participation in South Africa's biodiversity policies and projects. Over the years, SAYBN has made significant strides in empowering youth to drive biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

Social Media Campaign: "From Policy to Action: South African Youth Biodiversity Network"



In collaboration with the African Wildlife Foundation and the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN), SAYBN launched an innovative social media campaign to demystify the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) and South Africa's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). The campaign empowered youth to translate biodiversity policies into tangible actions, building on previous initiatives like "From Policy to Action."

Triple COP Year: Biodiversity, Climate, and Land

In 2024, the UN held its three Rio Convention conferences (COPs) in succession to address humanity's most pressing planetary and interconnected challenges (climate change, biodiversity, and land). SAYBN actively engaged in the United Nations (UN) Biodiversity COP16 and UNFCCC COP29 by running targeted social media campaigns aimed at educating youth on two primary conventions: The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). These campaigns highlighted key outcomes from UNCBD COP16 and UNFCCC COP29, with the COP29 campaign executed in collaboration with ACBA.

Participation in CBD COP16 Side Events

SAYBN organized and participated in impactful side events to amplify African youth voices in implementing the KMGBF. Explore financial and institutional support for youth-led biodiversity initiatives. These events fostered new partnerships and showcased youth as critical players in biodiversity conservation.

Looking Ahead: Ecosystem Restoration Project.

In 2025, SAYBN in collaboration with 5 ACBA Member organizations will implement a GEF-funded ecosystem restoration project focusing on wetland restoration, conservation education, and policy engagement. This initiative is part of the 23 projects awarded through the 2023 Global Environment For Inclusive Assembly Challenge Program. For SAYBN, the project will be implemented within the Kruger National Park to Canyons Biosphere Reserve focusing on restoring degraded wetlands to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem health, raising awareness and building capacity of youth through conservation education, and advocating for sustainable biodiversity management policies to ensure long-term impact.

As SAYBN moves forward, it remains committed to empowering South African youth and championing biodiversity conservation for a sustainable future.



2024 ACBA HIGHLIGHTS

The year 2024 has been an eventful and transformative one for the African CSOs Biodiversity Alliance (ACBA).

ACBA's participation in major **global biodiversity and climate events**, including UNEA 6, COP 16, UNCCD COP16 and COP 29, solidified its position as a key voice for African priorities. Members actively hosted and participated in side events, such as discussions on the peace-biodiversity nexus and Afro-descendant contributions to conservation, while amplifying youth and Indigenous voices.

Platforms like the IUCN Africa Conservation Forum provided opportunities to showcase Afro-centric solutions and advance advocacy for the 30x30 initiative.



The completion of the **Capacity Needs Assessment** identified key areas for strengthening governance, resource mobilization and coordination within the Alliance and a recommendation to establish the ACBA Biodiversity Academy as a platform for co-learning.

In partnership with the African Wildlife Foundation Policy Fellowship Programme, proposed thematic topics for the policy fellows to write policy briefs.



Topics included biodiversity credits and offsets, carbon markets, the plight of environmental defenders in Africa, Indigenous People and the political economy of blue carbon. The policy briefs will be published in due course on ACBA's website.

Membership and partnerships thrived in 2024, with ACBA welcoming over 20 new members. This growth is a testament to ACBA's ability to consistently grow its membership across the continent.

In the realm of communication, ACBA, in collaboration with the South Africa Youth Biodiversity Network (SAYBN), spearheaded two **impactful awareness campaigns** aimed at demystifying the purpose of the COPs and create understanding on the the key thematic areas slated for discussion in the lead-up to COP 16 and COP 29. These campaigns significantly enhanced engagement across social media platforms, fostering greater understanding and participation

The campaigns expanded **ACBA's reach**, garnering a 1.5K audience on Facebook, 2.1K on Twitter and 800 on LinkedIn, showcasing the Alliance's growing influence



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- 1.ACBA faced significant funding challenges in the second half of 2024, prompting the secretariat to actively explore funding opportunities. The most promising outcome was the indication by the Oak Foundation to consider providing some funding to ACBA.
- 2.The secretariat continued sharing funding opportunities with members and exploring options for creating consortiums.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 1.IAPB - Biodiversity credits webinars **20 January**, 10:00 – 11:00 UTC ([Zoom Link](#))
- 2.World Wetlands Day- **2nd February, 2025**
- 3.Second resumed session of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity will take place from **25-27 February 2025 - Rome, Italy**
- 4.RAMSAR COP 15 – **23-31 July 2025 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe**
- 5.IUCN World Conservation Congress, **9-15 October in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates**

KEY UN BIODIVERSITY UPDATES

- 1.The operationalization of the multilateral mechanism on Digital Sequence Information (DSI), including the Cali Fund, has started

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