# Minutes of the OIBC4 Plenary Meeting held on 25 March 2026

**Present**

Rose Mwebaza (UNEP, Co-convener, Chair)
Matthias Naab (UNDP, Co-convener)
Cosmas Milton Obote Ochieng (UNECA, Co-convener)
Charles Nyandiga (UNDP)
Christopher Ambala (UNEP)
Sall Maha (UNESCO)
Bowe Malebogo (UNESCO)
Kedine Denis (UNESCO)
Excellent Hachileka (former UNDP focal person, invited guest)
Nassim Oulmane (UNECA)
Yosef Amha (UNECA)
Kedine Denis (UNESCO)
Yujin Chang (WFP, on behalf of Pedro)
Nozipho Freya Simelane (RCP Joint Secretariat)
Catherine Mwangi (UNEP, OIBC4 Secretariat)
Omar Zemrag (UNDP, OIBC4 Secretariat)

**Absent with apologies**

James Murombedzi (former UNECA Co-convener; message shared with members as he could not attend)

**Preamble**

As convened by Rose Mwebaza, the OIBC4 plenary meeting was held on 25 March 2026. At the outset, the Chair welcomed members and informed them that, owing to another engagement involving the two principal Co-conveners, the meeting would run on a shortened schedule of approximately 45–50 minutes. It was further indicated that, in addition to the main agenda items, a brief update on COP32 had been proposed, subject to time availability. The meeting thereafter proceeded to consider the agreed agenda items.

**Discussions and resolutions**

**Agenda 1. Communication from the Co-convener and farewell to departing colleagues**

Rose Mwebaza opened the meeting and informed members of the time constraints for the session. She then moved the meeting to the formal farewell segment for Excellent Hachileka (former UNDP focal person in OIBC4) and James Murombedzi (former UNECA Co-convener), noting their longstanding and valued contributions to the work of OIBC4.

In her remarks, Rose Mwebaza recognized both colleagues as highly respected professionals and thanked them for their years of service, professionalism, kindness and collegiality. She noted that she had worked with both of them over many years and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to collaborate with them.

Matthias Naab paid tribute to Excellent Hachileka, describing him as a consummate professional and an outstanding pillar of the Regional Service Centre in support of the nature, climate and environment portfolio. He stressed that Excellent had strengthened collective efforts within UNDP and across OIBC4, and remarked that he leaves behind a legacy that truly reflects his name. Matthias also paid tribute to James Murombedzi, describing him as a valued colleague with strong ideas and continued relevance beyond retirement.

Cosmas Milton Obote Ochieng expressed appreciation on behalf of UNECA colleagues. He thanked both Excellent and James for the work they had done for the continent and for the strong spirit of partnership they had brought to OIBC4. He particularly noted the importance of the partnership extended to James throughout his service.

Catherine Mwangi, speaking from the perspective of the Secretariat, thanked both colleagues for their resourcefulness and reliability, including their support to task forces and Secretariat coordination. She noted that Excellent had often served as a dependable fallback point and also observed that Daisy and Omar were fitting in well in continuing the work. Charles Nyandiga also paid tribute, referring to his close working relationship with Excellent over the past five years in Addis and acknowledging James Murombedzi's strong contribution to the climate agenda.

Rose Mwebaza informed members that a card signed by colleagues, together with a small token of appreciation, would be shared with the departing colleagues on behalf of OIBC4.

Excellent Hachileka thanked members for the gesture and expressed his gratitude to UNDP, the co-conveners, the Secretariat and all OIBC4 members for the opportunity to serve on the platform. He reflected on the spirit of partnership, openness and mutual respect within OIBC4 and made special mention of the contributions of Kindie and Catherine in supporting the Secretariat. He concluded by saying that he was leaving with pride, warm memories and valued friendships, and that he looked forward to remaining connected.

**Agenda 2. OIBC4 ARFSD Resident Coordinators' Dialogue**

The Chair introduced the discussion on the third edition of the OIBC4/Joint Secretariat engagement with Resident Coordinators in Africa, to be organized as a pre-event to the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD). She recalled that members had previously agreed to take a nexus approach and focus this year on the climate-water-energy-food nexus. She also noted that Louis from UNECA had led the preparation of the draft concept note, which had been shared with members together with a draft budget.

Nozipho Freya Simelane (UNECA) briefed the meeting on the budget framework. She explained that the RCP Joint Secretariat would cover the conference package, while OIBC4 had in previous years covered interpretation, panelists/resource persons and, where required, one day of Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) for Resident Coordinators arriving earlier to participate in the dialogue. She indicated that the budget shared was based on the expected number of Resident Coordinators attending and that the resource envelope under discussion was about USD 26,000.

Matthias Naab sought clarification on whether OIBC4 was being asked to cover costs linked to the participation of Resident Coordinators. While indicating that UNDP would commit if a collective decision was reached, he cautioned against institutionalizing a practice that may not be sustainable and raised the broader issue that OIBC4 still does not have its own standing funding pot.

Nassim Oulmane emphasized the value of ensuring a hybrid format so that all RC offices could participate, not only those attending in person. He noted that this might carry additional staffing or operational costs

and stressed the importance of reflecting such costs in the budget if hybrid participation was to be guaranteed.

The Chair recalled that the understanding from DCO was that the dialogue would indeed be hybrid, while travel would be limited to a smaller number of Resident Coordinators. Nozipho clarified that 12 Resident Coordinators had at that stage been cleared to travel to Addis, against an earlier planning assumption of 15, and that she would reconfirm the final arrangements with DCO. She added that the conference package from the Joint Secretariat did take the hybrid arrangement into account, although she would verify whether any additional costs on 26 March would need to be met separately.

Catherine Mwangi informed members that the concept note had already been sent to task-force members for inputs. She asked members to notify the Secretariat if they experienced any difficulty accessing the SharePoint document and indicated that inputs were expected by 30 March 2026 so that work on the programme could proceed. Nozipho added that a revised budget would be shared once DCO had confirmed what it would cover.

Rose Mwebaza requested urgent feedback from members on the concept note, including comments, proposals for resource persons and indications of possible support for their participation. She noted that, consistent with previous practice, members would be expected to support the resource persons for the segments they would lead, and she signaled that an additional planning meeting might be required outside the regular plenary schedule to ensure timely preparation.

**Agenda 3. COP32 update**

A brief update on COP32 had been proposed by Cosmas Milton Obote Ochieng. However, in light of the limited time remaining and the expectation that members would have substantive questions, Cosmas suggested that the briefing be deferred. The Chair accepted the proposal and confirmed that the COP32 update would be taken as the number one agenda item at the next meeting.

**AOB**

**Update on the Democratic Republic of Congo request**

Nassim Oulmane briefed members on progress relating to the Democratic Republic of Congo request on the proposed Research Centre for Carbon and Nature. He explained that, following exchanges with the Government of DRC and with UNDP colleagues, the approach had been adjusted to proceed gradually, starting with a GCF Readiness Request of about USD 2-3 million to finance a feasibility study and preparatory work, before moving to a larger full project request. He informed members that a detailed calendar had been prepared and agreed with the DRC side. He further noted that the next step would require dedicated technical support for approximately 11 weeks to help structure and finalize the readiness request for submission to GCF. He asked whether UNDP or UNEP, as accredited entities, might be able to identify a resource person, or alternatively whether resources could be mobilized to recruit a consultant.

**Follow-up on Climate Promise information session**

Omar Zemrag informed members that, following the Climate Promise presentation at the previous plenary meeting, some colleagues had requested additional technical information. He advised that an information session on Climate Promise would be organized and that further details would be shared through the relevant channels with interested colleagues.

**Request from the African Union Commission for technical support**

The Chair informed members that a request had been received from the African Union Commission, specifically from the Commission of Rural Economy/Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment, for technical support. She indicated that the request concerned two specific areas: water and ecosystem restoration. She asked the Secretariat to circulate the relevant terms of reference and encouraged members to consider whether support could be mobilized collectively across OIBC4. In response to a request for clarification from Nassim Oulmane, Rose confirmed the two thematic areas and Catherine Mwangi undertook to circulate the terms of reference.

**Adjournment of meeting**

Before closing, Matthias Naab thanked the Chair for managing the time effectively and reiterated the importance of taking up the COP32 update promptly at the next meeting so that coordination in support of Ethiopia could begin early.

The Chair thanked members for their participation, reminded them to provide feedback on the concept note and the preparations for the dialogue with Resident Coordinators, and closed the meeting.

**Action points**

| No. | Action point | Responsible | Deadline |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Review the ARFSD Resident Coordinators' Dialogue concept note and submit comments, proposals and feedback. | All members | 30 March 2026 |
| 2 | Confirm the final budget coverage with DCO and share a revised budget, including clarification on hybrid arrangements and any additional cost implications. | Nozipho Freya Simelane / RCP Joint Secretariat | As soon as possible |
| 3 | Submit proposals for resource persons and indicate possible support for their participation, in line with previous OIBC4 practice. | All members | Before the next planning step |
| 4 | Explore options to identify or mobilize technical support for the DRC GCF Readiness Request, including a possible resource person or consultant for approximately 11 weeks. | UNDP, UNEP, UNECA and interested | As soon as possible |
| 5 | Circulate the AU Commission terms of reference on water and ecosystem restoration to members. | Catherine Mwangi / Secretariat | As soon as possible |
| 6 | Include the COP32 update as the first agenda item at the next plenary meeting. | Secretariat / Co-conveners | Next plenary |