

Reference: C.N.344.2023.TREATIES-XXI.10 (Depositary Notification)

AGREEMENT UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW  
OF THE SEA ON THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF  
MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL  
JURISDICTION

NEW YORK, 19 JUNE 2023

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND: SIGNATURE

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting in his capacity as depositary,  
communicates the following:

The above action was effected on 20 September 2023, with:

Declarations (Original: English)

“In signing the Agreement, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the “United Kingdom”) recalls Article 71 of the Agreement and has the honour to convey the following declarations:

1. The United Kingdom welcomes the general obligation to interpret and apply the BBNJ Agreement in a manner that promotes coherence and coordination with and that does not undermine other relevant instruments, frameworks and global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies. In this context, the United Kingdom notes that the Antarctic Treaty system comprehensively addresses the legal, political and environmental considerations unique to that region and provides a comprehensive framework for the international management of the Antarctic.
2. The United Kingdom notes references in paragraph 8 of the Preamble to “the existing rights of Indigenous Peoples, including as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, or of, as appropriate, local communities,” and in Article 7(k) to “the rights of Indigenous Peoples or of, as appropriate, local communities”. The United Kingdom’s long-standing and well-established position, set out in its annual explanation of position at the UN General Assembly on the rights of indigenous people, is that human rights are held exclusively by individuals. With the exception of the right of self-determination (Common Article 1 of the two International Human Rights Covenants), the United Kingdom does not recognise collective human rights in international law. The United Kingdom consider this important in ensuring that individuals within groups are not left vulnerable or unprotected by allowing the rights of the groups to supersede the human rights of the individual. The United Kingdom therefore understands any internationally-agreed reference to the rights of indigenous peoples or local communities, including those in the UN

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and, in the Agreement signed today, to refer to those rights bestowed by governments at the national level. The United Kingdom further understands the term “local communities” to be used consistently with the way it is used in the Convention on Biological Diversity.”

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21 September 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized letters that appear to be 'DN' with a horizontal line underneath.