

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE & COP17 ARMENIA: FROM ENGAGEMENT TO IMPACT



Presented on 22.04.2026 in Paris, by Mrs. Sirarpi Khojabaghyan, President, Carota NGO for CO-OP4CBD

TALKING POINTS

INVOLVEMENT IN CBD

Response to the call of
cooperation as a civil
society organisation

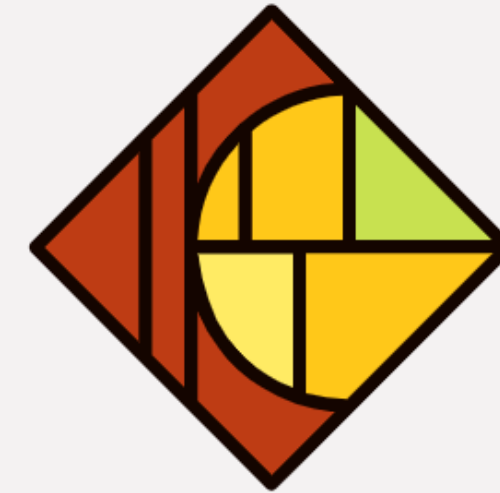
PARTICIPATION AT SB8J & SBI6

Accreditation, MoU and a
joint Side event with MoE at
SR8J, Panama

FURTHER ENGAGEMENT

SBSTTA-28 / SBI-7
COP 17
Nature Culture Summit

INTRODUCTION



CAROTA

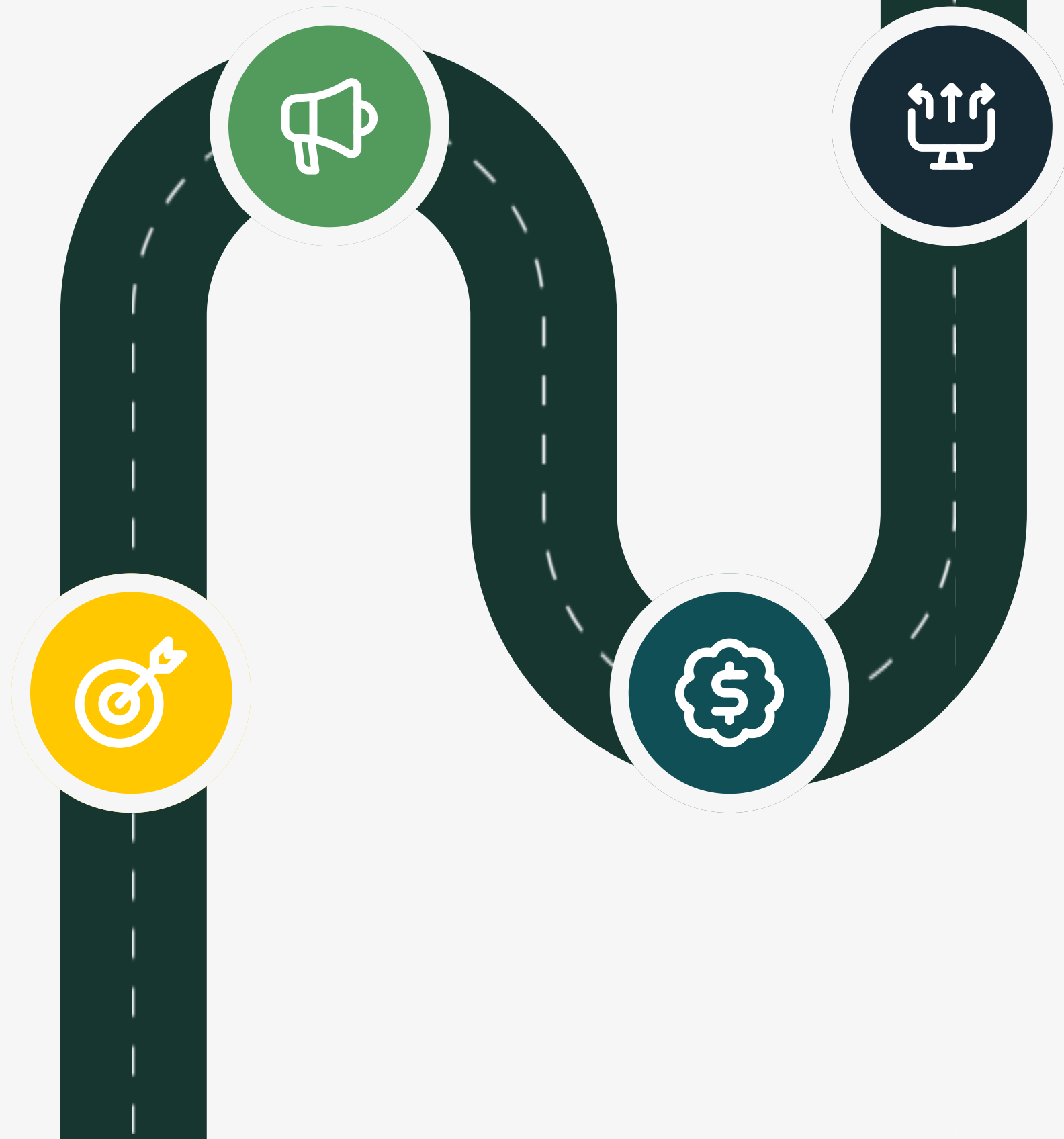
culture
education
development

- Founded in **2017** by Mrs. Sirarpi Khojabaghyan and Mr. Hayk Yeranosyan
- **Accredited as an Observer under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**
- **MoU with Ministry of Environment**
- Bridges culture and biodiversity, reviving ancestral ecological wisdom preserved in art, rituals, and traditions to inspire modern conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.
- Current initiatives include:
 - “Tree of Life” global research initiative (3 year program)
 - “The Culture of Flora and Fauna” – Digitalization of Armenia’s Ethnic Heritage & Traditional Knowledge archives
 - VOROTNABERD — a model for eco-cultural cluster in developing countries.



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TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE & COP17 ARMENIA



01

TEK vs IPLC

It is important to highlight that for our NGO Traditional Ecological knowledge is the core of our research, as Armenia doesn't have IPLC Agenda.

02

Work with Government

Bioculture is a new term for the Government of Armenia, and continues effort is needed to highlight the importance of TEK.

03

MoU and Side Events

Where applies, it is critical to formalize the relations with the Government in a form of MoU, to be able to carry out Side Events and projects.

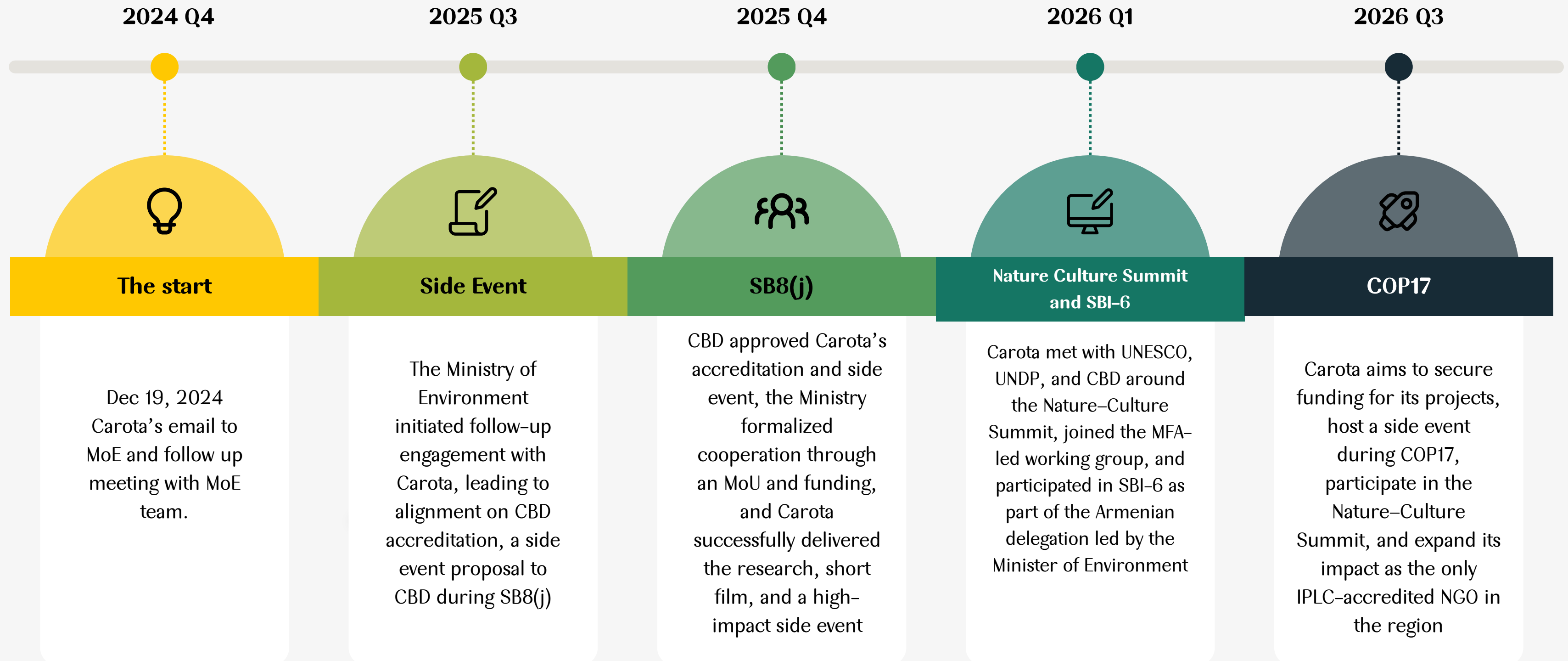
04

Active participation

in CBD processes transforms civil society from observers into contributors, leading to concrete initiatives.

THE JOURNEY OF CAROTA NGO WITH CBD AND COP17

This timeline outlines the high level timeline of events from engaging with MoE till COP17



MoU

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR NATURE & CULTURE

The Ministry of Environment of Armenia, represented by Deputy Minister Aram Meymaryan, and Carota Cultural Educational Development NGO, represented by President Sirarpi Khojabaghyan, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a strategic partnership.

Through this agreement, the parties commit to jointly explore and promote the interconnection between cultural heritage and biodiversity, while fostering active participation of local communities in biodiversity conservation through research, publications, exhibitions, festivals, and public awareness initiatives.

POSITIONING ARMENIA ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

The partnership also envisions collaboration with international organizations and donor institutions to implement joint programs and initiatives. With Carota's involvement, Armenia will be represented on international and regional platforms, including meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

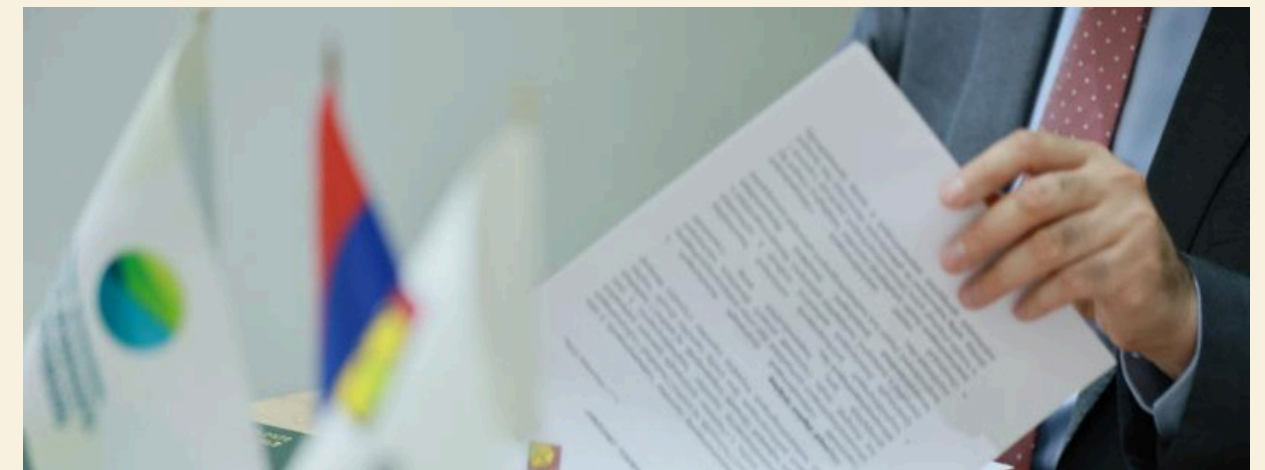
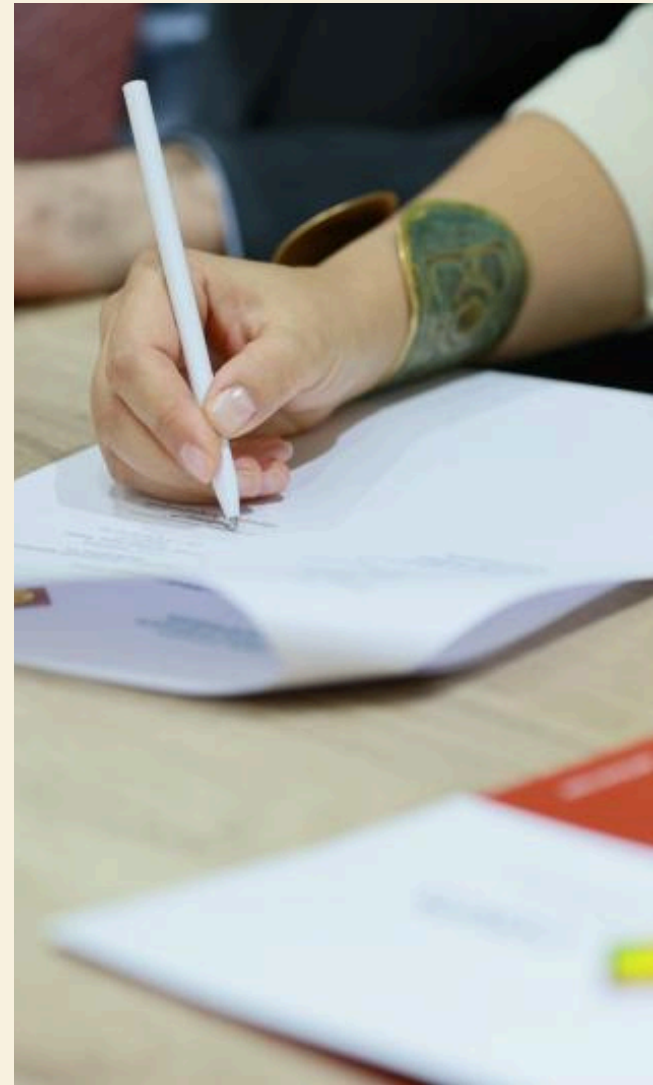
This Memorandum marks an important step toward integrated nature-culture preservation, positioning Armenia as a country where care for nature and safeguarding cultural heritage are recognized as interconnected and mutually reinforcing values.



REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
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Meet Our Keynote Speaker

Sirarpi Khojabaghyan
President, Carota NGO

October 28, 2025
18:15

Atlapa Convention Center, Panama City



*Topic: "Sustainable Use of Biodiversity Through Cultural Memory - From Petroglyphs to Living Traditions."
Exploring how Armenia's cultural heritage - songs, embroidery, manuscripts, and rituals - preserved ecological knowledge and helped maintain species for millennia.*



COLLABORATIONS



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Professionals Involved in the Project

- Historian (PhD) – RA NAS Institute of History
- Ethnographer / Cultural Anthropologist – RA NAS Institute of History
- Art Historian – Matenadaran
- Ethnographer – Sharambeyan Museum
- Ethnographer – RA NAS Institute of Art
- Ornithologist – WWF Armenia
- Zoologist (Carnivores) – WWF Armenia
- Biologist (Ungulates) – Independent
- Ecologist – Independent
- Cantor – Armenian Apostolic Church
- Musicologist (Lullabies, Folk) – “Kayt” NGO
- Musicologist (Tree of Life) – RA NAS Institute of Art
- Film Director – New-Arena
- Diplomat / International Advisor – Independent
- Research Assistant – Carota NGO
- Coordinator (Focus Groups) – Carota NGO

BLACK STORK

Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*) — a shy, elegant bird slightly smaller than the White Stork, easily recognized by its black plumage with green-violet gloss and red bill and legs. Breeds in old mixed forests near rivers and marshes, nesting high in tree crowns. A summer visitor to Armenia, migrating south to Africa in winter.



Armenian Manuscripts,
13th century



Black Stork
Source:
Collins Bird
Guide

The trace of the Bezoar Ibx in culture through centuries



5-3 mill B.C



10th century



15-16th century B.C



21st century

ARMENIAN COCHINEAL



- The Vortan Karmir State Reserve (Armenia), founded in 1987, protects the last habitat of the Armenian Cochineal.
- Its range shrank from 10,000 ha in the early 20th century to only 2,000 ha by 1990, due to land privatization and overgrazing.
- The species depends on two native plants — *Aeluropus littoralis* and *Halocnemum strobilaceum* — without which it cannot survive.
- Each gram of dye required about 150–175 insects, carefully harvested once a year — a practice based on precise ecological knowledge and seasonal timing. Due to high demand of the dye in trade, the insect has been maintained for centuries, pointing to sustainable use.
- The decline of the insect habitat paralleled the loss of its cultural and economic role in the 16th–19th centuries



ARENI 1 CAVE



One of the worlds oldest wineries, 4100 BC, Armenia

2010 Joint Project of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at UCLA, and the University College Cork, Ireland

Key Findings:

- A complete winemaking installation: fermentation vats (made of clay), a wine press, storage jars, cups, and grape seeds (mainly *Vitis vinifera* — the same species used in modern winemaking).
- Chemical analyses (tartaric acid and malvidin) confirmed the presence of red wine residues.
- Grape stems, dried vines, and even pruning tools were preserved, showing that people had already developed systematic viticulture.
- The site also contained burial chambers, suggesting wine was used in ritual or ceremonial contexts, not just daily life.

Cultural and Ecological Significance:

- Demonstrates that organized winemaking began in the Armenian Highlands, using local wild grape varieties adapted to the highland climate.
- Reflects early Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) — understanding of fermentation, soil, and seasonal cycles.
- Connects to Armenia's living heritage of wine — the same region today produces Areni Noir, a direct descendant of those ancient grapes.



Tree of life | Armenia

Carota NGO



Watch on  YouTube



CAROTA

SBI-6 IN ROME, 16-19 JAN

ARMENIAN DELEGATION

I joined the Armenian delegation at SBI-6 in Rome, engaging in global biodiversity discussions, building strategic partnerships, and advancing the role of civil society in CBD processes



LOOKING AHEAD

SIDE EVENT SBSTTA-28 &SBI-7

Carota is now preparing two side events with the MoE to submit to CBD

NATURE & CULTURE SUMMIT

Carota is engaged in the working group lead by MFA ahead of Nature Culture Summit COP17

CAROTA PROJECTS 2026

- The Culture of Flora and Fauna
- Tree of Life
- Herbs, Manuscripts & IP



THANK YOU
AND SEE
YOU AT



COP17
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