

Lidia Arthur Brito
Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences



Lidia Arthur Brito was appointed UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences on 2 November 2023. She had been Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences *ad interim* since June 2023, helping to formulate innovative responses to contemporary environmental challenges.

A forest engineer with a Master's and Doctorate in Forest and Wood Science from Colorado State University-USA, she was born in Mozambique and has been part of Eduardo Mondlane University's staff since her graduation in Forest Engineering in 1981. She has held senior positions in Mozambique such as Head of the Forestry Department from the Faculty of Agronomy (1997-1998), Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs of Eduardo Mondlane University (1998-2000), Minister for Higher

Education, Science and Technology (2000-2005), and Advisor for Strategic Planning and External Relations of the Mayor of Maputo City (2005-2008).

She joined UNESCO in November 2009 as Director for Science Policy and Sustainable Development in the Natural Sciences Sector, in Paris, and in 2014 she was appointed UNESCO Regional Director for Sciences in Latin America and the Caribbean region (UNESCO Montevideo Office). In 2022, she became Director of the UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office for Southern Africa in Harare (Zimbabwe) and UNESCO Representative for Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Her areas of expertise range from forestry and sustainable management of natural resources to higher education, science, and technology policies and programmes as part of public policies for sustainable development. She has chaired several commissions and task teams in Higher Education and STI for Sustainable Development. She co-chaired the Scientific Organizing Committee for Planet under Pressure Conference in London, a major conference for the preparation of Rio+20, and she has been a member of several international Boards such as the African Forestry Forum Governing Board, the Centre for Higher Education Trust (CHET) Board, the Stockholm Environment Institute Governing Board, and the Bioversity Governing Board, among others. From 2018 to 2021, she chaired the regional organizing committee of the Open Science Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean (CILAC), a key regional space for debates and exchanges to promote sustainable policies throughout science, technology, and innovation.