



**United Nations Decade on Biodiversity**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Ministers commit to integrate biodiversity into key economic sectors in order to achieve global biodiversity targets.**

- *Ministers of Environment, Agriculture, Tourism, Fisheries and Forestry agree on urgent coordinated action to advance progress on biodiversity targets*
- *Meeting adopts Cancun Declaration on Mainstreaming the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity for Well-Being*
- *Countries also announce ambitious commitments in support of Aichi Targets.*

**4 December 2016** - Ministers from around the world committed to working together to save biodiversity and take urgent action to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and backed this with a host of specific commitments.

In the “Cancun Declaration,” agreed on 3 December 2016 as part of the UN Biodiversity Conference, ministers dealing with environment, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism, declared that they would make the additional efforts needed to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols, including the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said “The Cancun Declaration, and the powerful commitments made here at the High Level Segment send a strong signal that countries are ready to increase efforts to achieve the Aichi Targets. I look forward to this momentum carrying through the next two weeks, and then the coming years of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity.”

H.E. Rafael Pachiano Alamán, Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources of Mexico, said “I thank all the participating countries for showing political will and achieving this Ministerial Declaration that ensures your commitment to the mainstreaming of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for well-being.”

“I’m optimistic because in the Ministerial Declaration we are all committing to raise the level of our ambition to ensure mainstreaming. The best investment that we can make for the well-being of our people is stopping the loss of biodiversity.”

UN Environment Executive Director Erik Solheim said, “UN Environment welcomes the Cancun Declaration as a timely and absolutely critical commitment to meeting the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. For



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**

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the first time, through the efforts of all parties, we are really speaking meaningfully to one another about the real value of biodiversity to tourism, to agriculture, to forestry, to fisheries – to the very lifeblood of our economies.“

"We call on countries to use the momentum of this declaration to lay out in practical steps over these next two weeks how they will meet the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Biodiversity makes business sense. Biodiversity makes common sense. It's the food we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breathe. Let's follow this declaration with action."

Naoko Ishi, CEO of the Global Environment Facility, said "The continued loss of biodiversity is part of a broader pattern of unsustainable pressure on our global commons such as the climate, forests, water, land and oceans. We have reached a dangerous point, and we now need a fundamental transformation in our key economic systems if we are to avoid devastating consequences in the future."

"We need to continue our efforts to strengthen biodiversity mainstreaming, and the Cancun Declaration on Mainstreaming Biodiversity can serve as an important guidepost in that regard" she said.

### **Agriculture**

Participants recognised the importance of mainstreaming and enhanced policy coherence for environmental protection as well as for the vitality and profitability of agricultural sectors. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, through its integrated nature, was seen to be a major driver of the transformation needed to make agriculture more sustainable and to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

### **Tourism**

Delegates discussed the importance of reducing adverse impacts of tourism development on ecosystems and local communities while also leveraging the capacity of tourism to be a unique tool for financing conservation, and for raising awareness and educating travellers on the value of nature and culture.

### **Fisheries**

Fisheries discussions looked at ways that legislation and policies could resolve issues of overfishing in small-scale and large scale fisheries, and emphasised the important role of regional fisheries organizations in coordinating responses. Ensuring sustainable fisheries and aquaculture is possible through commitment to work together, and with various stakeholders, including industry, consumers, retailers and trade, academia, and various other civil society groups.

### **Forestry**

Effective mainstreaming of biodiversity into the forestry sector will need continued strengthening of technical capacities, and enhanced partnerships among stakeholders. The need for new and additional resources for sustainable forest financing was also noted, as well as the role of international cooperation. Several participants expressed support for the collaborative work between CBD and other organizations and agencies. Some noted the role of organizations in raising awareness of mainstreaming approaches and drew attention to reports on forest genetic diversity.

This declaration will be forwarded to the United Nations General Assembly, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2017 and the Third United Nations Environmental Assembly.

The Cancun Declaration was supported by strong commitments from countries representing all United Nations regions, and a variety of Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including:

- Presented by Guatemala, a commitment by the Like Minded Mega-Diverse Countries, which harbour over one third of all terrestrial biodiversity, to carry out over 200 priority actions to support actions that will enhance implementation of Aichi Target 11.

- France and other participants in the International Coral Reef Initiative agreed to a variety of targets and actions to in support of Aichi Target 10 to protect coral reefs and their ecosystems, including actions to reduce pollution from plastic microbeads and sunscreen, actions to harmonize monitoring and other long-term management activities and actions which encourage financing for projects and initiatives which help protect and restore coral reefs, mangroves and seagrasses.
- Netherlands and 11 other European Countries, inspired by the IPBES report on pollinators, announced the creation of a “coalition of the willing” to protect pollinators, contributing to Aichi Targets 7 and 14.
- For Target 9, Brazil committed that at least three invasive alien species will be brought under control and an early warning system will be designed by 2020. Brazil also committed that 100% of threatened species will be under conservation tools by 2020, and 10% of them shall have their conservation status improved by the same date, contributing to Aichi Target 12.
- Germany announced support for Aichi Target 20 with the continuation of funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation projects through its International Climate Initiative (IKI) for 500 million euros per year.
- Japan will continue its support to capacity-building activities in developing countries through to the end of the Decade with a multimillion dollar commitment through to 2020 and will mobilise individuals to take action to support achievement of all the Aichi Targets.
- New Zealand committed to bring together a broad coalition of actors from all levels to develop new initiatives, methodologies and techniques to increase the effectiveness control of invasive alien species in support of Aichi Target 9.
- In support of Aichi Target 16 on the Nagoya Protocol for Access and Benefit Sharing, South Africa will develop and implement species management plans for high value plant species through its BioPANZA programme and will set milestones for the cultivation of indigenous biological resources and community participation in product development.
- Peru, Mexico, Ecuador and Guatemala, together with FAO, the Darwin Initiative and Bioversity, in support of implementation of Aichi Biodiversity Target 13. The initiative is entitled “Towards the Implementation of Aichi Target 13 in centers of origin Coalition For food and agriculture countries”. It encourages countries to take action to preserve genetic diversity and safeguard both native varieties of crops and their wild relatives. The commitment proposes a roadmap of collaborative engagement and action to be implemented before 2020.

The High Level Segment closes today. The UN Biodiversity conference continues on 4 December 2016, with the opening of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Meetings of the Parties to the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols. The conference continues until 17 December 2016.

## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

The UN Biodiversity Conference takes place at the Moon Palace Resort in Cancun Mexico, from 2 to 17 December 2016 with its High Level Segment taking place from 2 - 3 December 2016

Other meetings of the Convention and its Protocols take place from 4 to 17 December 2016

All documents and information relating to the meeting can be found at: [www.cbd.int/COP2016](http://www.cbd.int/COP2016)

The Schedule of Press Conferences can be found at: [www.cbd.int/cop2016/media/](http://www.cbd.int/cop2016/media/)

Live and on demand webcasts of negotiations, press conferences and selected side events are available at: [www.cbd.int/cop2016/webcast/](http://www.cbd.int/cop2016/webcast/)

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### **The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 Parties so far, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force on 11 September 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 170 Parties have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and to date has been ratified by 91 Parties.

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### **About SEMARNAT**

SEMARNAT is the Mexican Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources. Its mission is to incorporate criteria and instruments that ensure the optimal protection, conservation and sustainable use of Mexico's natural resources.

### **About the Global Environment Facility (GEF)**

The Global Environment Facility, established on the eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, is a catalyst for action on the environment—and much more. Through its strategic investments, the GEF works with partners to tackle the planet's biggest environmental issues. [www.thegef.org](http://www.thegef.org)

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