



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

STATEMENT

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**THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

**12TH ST. PETERSBURG INTERNATIONAL
FORESTRY FORUM**

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Life in harmony, into the future
いのちの共生を、未来へ
COP 10 / MOP 5

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to convey my greetings to the organisers and attendees of the 12th St. Petersburg International Forestry Forum. I would also like to express my regrets that I cannot be with you in person as I am presently attending our Convention's tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Nagoya, Japan.

We are all aware that Russia's vast natural areas are a deeply important part of global biodiversity, and nowhere more so than when it comes to forests. Russia has the world's largest boreal forest reserves, covering approximately 22% of the world's forest area. Russia's forests provide important ecological functions and harbour numerous species at risk, such as the brown bear, the Far Eastern leopard, and the Siberian tiger. In addition, Russia's forests are also "the lungs of Europe," storing significant amounts of carbon dioxide, second only to the Amazon Rainforest. Given the importance of Russia's forests for biodiversity, human livelihoods, and climate change mitigation and adaptation, I applaud the organizers of the 12th St. Petersburg International Forestry Forum for their work in bringing together diverse partners to create solutions for the sustainable use of these forests.

I would also like to congratulate the Russian government for its efforts in designating significant areas of the Russia's forest as protected areas. These measures help to fill a deep need in our conservation efforts. A global analysis carried out in 2009 by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre and the CBD Secretariat reveals that boreal forests globally are still falling short of the CBD target to have at least 10% of all forest types effectively conserved by 2010.

With the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity that we are currently celebrating, and the International Year of Forests 2011 to follow, we need to make sure we are doing all we can to protect forest ecosystems. As you are aware, the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the Expanded Programme of Work on Forest Biological Diversity at their 6th meeting in 2002. The expanded programme's three main elements focus on conservation, sustainable use and benefit-sharing, the institutional and socio-economic enabling environment, and knowledge, assessment and monitoring. The CBD Secretariat has been undertaking various activities to assist Parties in implementing this Programme of Work, to improve the management and conservation of forests globally.

In this regard, I am pleased to inform you of the release of two key reports pertaining to climate change and forests. The first report, entitled *Connecting Biodiversity and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation* (CBD Technical Series No. 41), provides scientific and technical advice on linkages and synergies between biodiversity considerations and climate change mitigation and adaptation activities. The second report, entitled *Forest Resilience, Climate Change, and Forest Biodiversity* (CBD Technical Series No. 43), provides a synthesis of the scientific literature on the relationship between biodiversity, resilience and stability in forest ecosystems in the face of climate change. This has important consequences for example for forest management in light of climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. Biodiversity underpins forest resilience, which in turn underpins the ability of a forest to sequester and store carbon, and to provide other essential ecosystem services for human well-being. Thus, biodiversity is essential to maintain healthy and productive forests. Both reports are available online on the CBD website (www.cbd.int/ts).

I would also like to draw attention to the main CBD highlights of International Year of Biodiversity 2010. In May, the Secretariat released a new edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, which assesses the current status and trends of biodiversity and the key drivers of biodiversity loss, using in part the information submitted by Parties in their fourth national reports. In September, the United Nations General Assembly convened, for the first time ever, a high-level segment on biodiversity with the participation of heads of state and government. And as I am speaking, the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting is considering the adoption of a new Strategic Plan, including new Biodiversity Targets for 2020 and 2050. The CBD Secretariat stands ready to provide further information about the ideas, dialogue and results emerging from these events.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to thank you once again for your interest in the Convention on Biological Diversity. I wish you all a fruitful conference.

Sincerely,

Ahmed Djoghlaif
Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity