



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

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR THE PACIFIC ON ECOSYSTEM
CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION TO SUPPORT ACHIEVEMENT OF THE
AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS**

AND

**THE PACIFIC SUB-REGIONAL CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP ON THE
NAGOYA PROTOCOL ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING**

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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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**Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It gives me immense pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you all to the capacity-building workshop for the Pacific on ecosystem conservation and restoration to support achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Pacific sub-regional capacity-building workshop on the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing.

It is heartening to see here a diverse group of participants from this region, including representatives from governments, indigenous and local communities, NGOs, as well as representatives from the Governments of the Republic of Korea and the European Union. This august gathering validates the importance, which your countries and the organizations you represent accord to ecosystem conservation and restoration, to access and benefit-sharing and to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and its twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets. I thank the Government of Canada, the Government of Japan through its Japan Biodiversity Fund and the Global Environment Facility for generously providing the necessary financial support for these workshops. I also thank the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) for so actively supporting and facilitating the organization of these two important workshops.

The University of the South Pacific in Fiji provides a perfect setting for our work this week and I believe it will play a central role in providing follow up support for actions and targets identified at the two workshops. We can derive inspiration from the Fijian initiative, “Keep Fiji Beautiful” which maintains that every individual is responsible for maintaining and protecting their environment through their daily actions and choices. The approach unites citizens, businesses and government institutions to find common solutions for preventing litter, reducing waste and beautifying communities. “Keep Fiji Beautiful” enables a network of local communities and organizations toward improving environmental awareness and maintaining a healthy community environment.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Nagoya in 2010 adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Three of the Aichi Targets set quantitative global targets to reduce the loss of natural habitats, restore degraded areas and improve protected area networks and can be considered as area-based Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Target 5 calls for the rate of loss of natural habitats to be at least halved; Target 11 calls for the protection of at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland waters and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas; and Target 15 calls for the restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems. There is a need for a coherent approach to the achievement of these targets. Further, achievement of these targets will also contribute to other Aichi Biodiversity Targets: Target 12 (protecting species and preventing extinctions), Target 13 (maintaining genetic diversity) and Target 14 (maintaining ecosystem services). Undertaken in a landscape context, working toward these targets will also contribute to achieving Target 7 (sustainable agriculture and forestry). Further, as the elements of Aichi Target 11 incorporate the tenets of the CBD programme of work on protected areas (PoWPA), further effective implementation of the PoWPA holds the key for achieving target 11. PoWPA implementation also contributes toward achieving targets 1, 2, 5, 10, 12, 14, 15 and 18.

Making use of the work conducted in response to decision XI/16 on restoration, as well as information and support from partner agencies, global initiatives, and from Parties, the Secretariat approach to capacity building entails engaging Parties by providing and requesting information and encouraging discussion prior to and during subregional workshops, as well as encouraging follow-up support for Parties post-workshop through the Life Web Initiative, partner agencies and peer-to-peer exchanges in subregions.

There is certainly a global momentum building for ecosystem restoration. *The Bonn Challenge*, a global movement to restore 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by 2020, has already accumulated nearly 50 million hectares in pledges for restoration. Building on this, the *Hyderabad Call for a Concerted Effort on Ecosystem Restoration* made in October 2012 by concerned stakeholders, (Governments of India, the Republic of Korea and South Africa, SCBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, GEF, UNEP, UNDP, UNFF, FAO, IUCN, and SER) called for coordinated long-term efforts to mobilize resources and facilitate ecosystem restoration activities for the benefit of all.

Distinguished Participants,

As you are also aware, the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, also adopted the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization on 29 October 2010. The Protocol provides a transparent international legal framework to advance the implementation of the Convention's third objective: the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

One of the many benefits of the Nagoya Protocol is that it provides greater legal certainty, clarity and transparency for both providers and users of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge by establishing more predictable conditions for access to genetic resources and for ensuring fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources. By strengthening the opportunities for fair and equitable sharing of benefits from their use, the Protocol will also create incentives to conserve biological diversity, sustainably use its components, and further enhance the contribution of biological diversity to sustainable development and human well-being.

The Protocol will enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession by Parties to the CBD. In this regard, I am pleased to inform you that, to date, 26 Parties to the CBD have deposited their instruments of ratification or accession to the Protocol. Thus, we have crossed the half way mark towards securing the 50 ratifications needed for the entry into force of the Protocol. This milestone was reached during this year's Treaty Event held at UN Headquarters in New York in the margins of the General Assembly. I am also pleased to inform you that the 26 ratifications and accessions are from all the 5 UN regions, including two Pacific Island States, i.e. the host country of this workshop – Fiji, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

A significant number of countries are in the process of finalizing their domestic procedures for ratification. In the Pacific sub-region, I am very happy to learn that Samoa is at an advance stage and that Tonga, Marshall Islands, Cook Islands and Tuvalu have initiated their national processes. Thus, there is a strong momentum towards ratification and we are very optimistic that the 50th instrument will be deposited by 7th July 2014 in order for the Protocol to enter into force in time for the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol to be held concurrently with the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, which will take place from 6 to 17 October 2014 in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea.

I take this opportunity to urge all countries in this sub-region that have not yet done so to expedite their national processes towards ratifying or acceding to the Protocol so that they can participate as Parties in the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol (COP-MOP 1) and play an important role in influencing the first decisions that will guide the implementation of this important international instrument. Please use the opportunity provided by these workshops to develop road maps and action plans towards the ratification and implementation of the Protocol. As stated by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Ban Ki- Moon, in his letter sent last April to all Heads of States, the Protocol will make valuable contribution to sustainable development. It is thus very important to take steps to ensure its early entry into force so that the international community can move on to the implementation phase and contribute not only to achieving the three objectives of the Convention and Aichi target 16 but also to achieving sustainable development and the wellbeing of our planet.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

As countries chart their own courses towards achieving the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, they will be looking for the most efficient and innovative solutions to meet both their social development needs and biodiversity conservation goals. These workshops aim to further develop the capacity to enable countries to set realistic and achievable national targets and ways and means for achieving those targets including tools and resources and linkages to capacity building activities.

As we approach the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the year 2015 which marks the mid-way point to the year 2020 it is important for all countries to take bold steps and real actions towards achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Time is running fast and we cannot spare any minute, otherwise our goals and targets will slip away. COP 12 will be hosted by the Republic of Korea and will assess implementation of the Strategic Plan, including through the launching of the fourth Global Biodiversity Outlook report. Rest assured that all you do will count, no matter whether your actions are big or small. Only collectively can we achieve our global goals and targets.

Let me take this opportunity to extend my wholehearted appreciation to our regional and global partners represented here for your contribution to the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols on the ground and for sharing your expertise. Achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets will require strategic partnerships between Parties, the Convention and our regional and global partners. We will work together in this spirit of collaboration.

I once again welcome you all to the two workshops and look forward to open discussions and concrete practical outcomes.

Thank you.