



STATEMENT BY

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

**PACIFIC REGIONAL JOINT PREPARATORY MEETING
FOR THE CBD COP12, CMS COP11 AND RAMSAR COP12**

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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Dear participants,

I would like to begin by thanking the conveners of this meeting, including the Secretariats of our “sister” biodiversity-related Conventions, and our regional partner, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), for the excellent collaboration and effective preparation of this meeting.

The need to address biodiversity as a key element of sustainable development in the post-2015 period has been widely recognised in a variety of ways. For instance, the importance of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets*, adopted in 2010 at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Nagoya, Japan, was reaffirmed by governments at Rio+20, during which it was recognized that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development.

The United Nations General Assembly also encouraged Parties to consider the Strategic Plan in the elaboration of the post-2015 UN development agenda. The upcoming *Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States*, to be held in Samoa in the next few weeks, will be yet another opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to the sustainable development agenda; giving Pacific Island Countries a platform to provide feedback and present a consolidated regional position vis-à-vis the post-2015 development agenda, particularly with respect to the 17 sustainable development goals (SDG) and 169 associated targets adopted on 19 July 2014 by the Open Working Group, many of which resonate with the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Moreover, Pacific Island Countries need to strive for the implementation of the *Regional Framework [Action Strategy] for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region 2014-2020* adopted at the Ninth Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas held in Fiji from 2 to 6 December 2013. This Framework, which was built around the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, provides guidance on recognised best practices for conservation in the region and acts as a bridge between global and national conservation action by showing how the Aichi Targets can be aligned with the conservation priorities in the region. It also recognises the need for greater coordination and cooperation between the region's conservation partners and provides a framework for assessing synergies between the many international and regional conservation frameworks being implemented in the Pacific.

Since the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, we have seen most Parties actively translating the Aichi Targets into national targets as part of updating their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). This is an important step in the right direction as is the recent ratification by 51 countries, plus the European Union, of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits arising from their utilization. However, the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on 12 October 2014 will be just the beginning of the story, not the end. Countries, particularly Pacific Island Countries, must continue to push for ratification and put into place the necessary measures to meet the 2015 deadline for NBSAP revision and to participate as Parties, and not just observers, at the first Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Nagoya Protocol, being held in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea from 13 to 17 October 2014.

We are approaching COP 12, which will undertake a mid-term review of the progress towards the achievement of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets as well as the SDGs, among other issues, to identify where we are in the implementation of the biodiversity agenda and make the necessary adjustments. Making progress in these areas clearly requires an integrated and harmonized approach with the active engagement of various sectors, local communities and governmental authorities. This is why strengthening synergies among our biodiversity-related conventions, which is the objective of this meeting, is so important.

Ladies and gentlemen, your work here this week will have important repercussions for the future of biodiversity, at both national and global levels, as it will guide our preparations to the upcoming meetings of the Conference of the Parties of the biodiversity-related conventions. I wish you all a productive and successful meeting.

Thank you for your kind attention.