



STATEMENT BY

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

at the opening of

SUSTAINABLE OCEAN INITIATIVE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP MEETING

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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Distinguished participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Government of Korea for hosting this important meeting and to the people of Korea for their warmth and hospitality. My special thanks go to the Ministry of Ocean and Fisheries for sponsoring, and the Korea Maritime Institute for co-organizing this meeting in close collaboration with the Secretariat. I would also like to thank the government of Japan and the government of France for their commitment and support of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative since its inception in 2010.

We all know and appreciate the importance of marine and coastal biodiversity in underpinning a healthy environment, presenting a wealth of opportunities for sustainable economic growth and supporting social well-being. Thus, it comes as no surprise that the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity have taken a prominent place in global policy discussions in various fora.

In 2010, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2010-2020 and twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which lay out an ambitious agenda to reverse the trends of biodiversity loss. The Aichi Biodiversity Targets provide a coherent vision for a sustainable future for global biodiversity as a whole, but there are a number of Aichi Biodiversity Targets that are especially relevant to marine and coastal biodiversity. Through Aichi Targets 6, 10 and 11, respectively, Parties have committed to achieve sustainable fisheries by 2020, reduce the pressures on coral reefs and associated ecosystems by 2015, and protect 10% of coastal and marine areas by 2020. Aichi Targets 3, 4, 9 and 12 are also relevant for marine and coastal biodiversity.

At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012, global leaders recognized that oceans, seas and coastal areas form an integrated and essential component of the Earth's ecosystem and are critical to sustaining it. They stressed the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and of their resources for sustainable development. They committed to protect and restore the health, productivity and resilience of oceans and marine ecosystems and to maintain their biodiversity, delivering on all three dimensions of sustainable development.

The Sustainable Ocean Initiative was established during the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in 2010 at the same time as the adoption of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and seeks to support countries in fulfilling these major global commitments. SOI provides a framework for partnerships and cooperation to build capacity for improved conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity. SOI aims to enhance cross-sectoral linkages, build on lessons learned, and facilitate improved coordination and interactive dialogue to address major capacity needs to support countries in achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

When countries gather together at the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, they will review progress made in achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, among other topics. This provides a key opportunity to craft the future of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative as it moves into a new phase of implementation. SOI will build on the commitments of CBD Parties and the collaboration mobilized through the CBDs work on marine and coastal biodiversity to identify key opportunities to address capacity needs. In this regard, the various areas of work under the CBD on marine and coastal biodiversity provide a solid foundation to make progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The CBD's work on ecologically or biologically significant areas (or EBSAs), marine spatial planning, ocean acidification, and enhancing coral reef resilience, among other areas, provide a robust scientific and technical basis for enhanced collaboration through SOI to identify and address major capacity gaps.

The Sustainable Ocean Initiative Action Plan seeks to mobilize a broad range of technical and scientific cooperation as well as capacity building opportunities in support of accelerating current efforts by countries toward achieving Aichi Biodiversity Targets, particularly in marine and coastal areas, in

particular considering the national priorities and needs as identified in the revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

Throughout the discussions of the next two days, we hope to tap into your knowledge, experience and expertise to help us refine the SOI Action Plan in a way that allow SOI to best support countries in achieving the vision of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. We appreciate your collaboration, in this regard, and will also depend on your continued engagement in the implementation of the SOI Action Plan in the coming years.

The results of this meeting will inform the forthcoming Sustainable Ocean Initiative High-level Meeting, to be convened on 16 October 2014, in Pyeongchang, Korea, as a parallel session of the High-level Segment of COP 12.

Achieving our shared vision of a sustainable ocean can happen only through strong commitments across all sectors, combined with innovative approaches for linking science with implementation through multi-stakeholder partnerships. We thank you for sharing this vision of SOI and working with us to make this vision a reality.

Thank you for your attention.