

**WELCOME MESSAGE FROM YOON SEONG-KYU,
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

Humankind have benefited in a multitude of ways from biological resources and lived in harmony with nature from the primitive times. Biological diversity provides basic needs such as food, energy and medicine, not to mention other essential services including prevention of natural disasters, recreational and cultural benefits.

However, the progress of human civilization followed by the advancement of science and technology, population growth, industrialization and urbanization has accelerated the population decline and extinction of species as well as the degradation of ecosystem.

The international community recognized the danger of global biodiversity loss and pledged to adopt the Convention on Biological Diversity at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 to exert joint effort to conserve biological resources and sustainable use of them.

The twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity with its theme of Biodiversity for Sustainable Development will be held in Pyeongchang, Gangwon Province from 29 September to 17 October 2014, and representatives from 194 governments, head of relevant organizations and NGOs are expected to participate.

The COP 12 will undertake a mid-term review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets and prepare Pyeongchang Roadmap to facilitate their implementation.

The Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea will make a concerted effort to ensure the success of the meeting, especially putting special effort in safety, and will provide convenience for participants, organize eco-friendly as well as smooth and effective meeting to ensure that fruitful outcomes will be generated at the COP 12. Thank you.

Yoon Seong-kyu
Minister of Environment