



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

STATEMENT

BY

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**AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE CAPACITY –BUILDING
WORKSHOP FOR AFRICA ON ACHIEVING AICHI BIODIVERSITY
TARGETS 11 AND 12**

LAKE VICTORIA HOTEL, ENTEBBE UGANDA

21 MARCH 2016

The representative of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

The Executive Director National Environment Management Authority

Representatives of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies

The participants in your various capacities

Ladies and gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of Government of Uganda, to officiate at the opening of this very important regional workshop for Africa on capacity-building for achieving Aichi biodiversity targets 11 and 12 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

Uganda has a total of 735 protected area systems comprising of 10 National Parks, 12 Wildlife Reserves, 10 Wildlife Sanctuaries, 5 Community Wildlife Management Areas, 506 Central Forest Reserves and 192 Local Forest Reserves.

There are 12 Ramsar sites that have been designated as wetlands of international importance. Furthermore Uganda has 34 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) that overlap with the protected areas.

Uganda is host to 53.9% (400 individuals) of the world's remaining population of the endangered mountain gorillas. The mountain gorillas in Uganda are found in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park and Mgahinga National Park.

Protected areas and species therein are very important tourist attraction in Uganda. The total contribution of tourism to GDP in Uganda was US\$ 2 billion (7.9% of GDP) in 2013. Tourism accounted for 6.8% (452,000) of new jobs created in 2013.

Besides creating jobs and providing habitats diverse species of plants and animals including endangered species, protected areas in Uganda are critical for mitigation and adaption to the adverse impacts of climate change.

As most of you may already know Aichi target 11 deals with conservation and management of systems of protected areas while Aichi target 12 deals preventing extinction of known threatened species at the national level.

Africa is one of the continents in the world with rich biodiversity yet at the same time there are direct threats to the existence of biodiversity in Africa which include among others poaching, encroachment on protected, illegal wildlife trade, invasive alien species, pollution, habitat fragmentation and destruction.

In addition to the direct threats to biodiversity, poverty and high population growth are among the major underlying causes (indirect threats) of biodiversity loss. Information from literature indicate that world population reached 7.3 billion in mid 2015.

Developing countries accounts for most of the global population because of the dual effects of high birth rates and young populations. Africa is estimated to have 1.2 billion people which is 16 percent of the 7.3 billion.

As we all know that we live in a world with limited resources and as human population continues to grow, so is the demand for resources. Achieving Aichi targets 11 and 12 calls for following among others:

1. concerted effort to address the direct and the indirect (underlying factors) of biodiversity loss.
2. programmes and activities for achieving Aichi targets 11 and 12 at the national level should be integrated/mainstreamed in national development plans.
3. making protected areas more relevant to livelihood improvement and wealth creation for local communities.
4. mainstreaming National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP) into national development plans and other relevant national development processes and plans.

Uganda has mainstreamed the revised NBSAP into the National Development Plan II (2015/16 -2019/2020). In NDPII Government has committed itself to achieving the national biodiversity targets. The national biodiversity targets were developed taking into account the Aichi targets. Therefore achieving Aichi 11 and 12 is a priority of Government Uganda.

Ladies and gentlemen I have been informed that this workshop will provide participants the opportunity to share information on the progress of implementing Aichi biodiversity targets 11 and 12 in Africa and to develop priority actions/road maps to be implemented in the next five years.

I look forward to receiving the report of this workshop which I have also been informed will be presented and discussed in a number of CBD meetings including the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Cancún, Mexico in December 2016.

Ladies and gentlemen I would like to end by thanking the following:

1. the CBD Secretariat for organizing this workshop and for choosing Uganda as the host country;
2. the Government of Japan for the financial support provided through the Japan Biodiversity Fund which made it possible for this workshop to take place;
3. the participants for finding time to represent your Governments at this workshop; and
4. the team from the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) that worked with the CBD Secretariat on behalf of Government for the success of this workshop.

With these remarks, I declare the Capacity-Building Workshop for Africa on Achieving Aichi Targets 11 and 12 officially opened.

For God and My Country