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Press Release

Governments Commit to Significant Funding Increase and Accelerated Action to Achieve Biodiversity Targets and Sustainable Development

Pyeongchang/Montreal 17 October: The Convention on Biological Diversity closed the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties today with Governments committing to step up actions to achieve, by the end of the decade, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets agreed four years ago, and contribute to the sustainable development agenda.

A key outcome was the agreement by Governments on the financial resources to support achievement of the Strategic Plan. Responding to the call initiated at COP-10 in Nagoya, governments today reaffirmed their agreement made at COP-11 in Hyderabad to double total biodiversity-related international financial resource flows to developing countries, in particular least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition by 2015, and at least maintain this level until 2020. The basis for calculating this is to use average annual biodiversity funding for the years 2006-2010 as a baseline. Governments also agreed to increase domestic financing for biodiversity and identified a set of actions to allow the increased mobilizations of financial resources from all sources.

The decisions incorporate actions that demonstrate a re-commitment to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achieve its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, agreed by the international community in 2010. The results of the meeting also respond to the conclusions of Global Biodiversity Outlook 4, which indicated that while progress was being made in conserving biodiversity, governments needed to increase efforts if they were going to end the loss of biodiversity.

Key decisions, including those on resource mobilization, capacity building, scientific and technical cooperation linking biodiversity and poverty eradication, and on monitoring of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, form the "Pyeongchang roadmap for the enhanced implementation of the strategic plan and achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets." These actions will strengthen capacity and increase support for countries and stakeholders to implement their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

The decisions were bolstered by the call in the Gangwon ministerial declaration, the result of two days of high level talks, to link the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda to other relevant processes such as the UN Development Assistance Framework process and the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. The declaration emphasized the relevance and key contribution of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity



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2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Vision for 2050 to the post-2015 development agenda at all levels, and invite the United Nations General Assembly to integrate them effectively in the post-2015 development agenda.

“Parties have listened to the evidence, and have responded by committing themselves to redoubling their efforts in support of the vision of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, including the financial resources needed to make this a reality” said United Nations Assistant-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias.

“Their commitments show the world that biodiversity is a solution to the challenges of sustainable development and will be a central part of any discussions for the post-2015 development agenda and its sustainable development goals” he said.

UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme Achim Steiner, said, "From food and water security to livelihoods and disasters risk reduction, biodiversity is a powerful engine that underpins the delivery of current and future sustainable development objectives. The cost of inaction to halt biodiversity decline would give rise to increasing and cumulative economic annual losses to the value of around US \$14 trillion by 2050."

"The decisions made at COP 12 here in Pyeongchang will leapfrog efforts to achieve the Aichi targets and put biodiversity on a stronger footing for decades to come. The outcome of this meeting shows that plausible pathways exist to realize a reduction in biodiversity loss and in turn address broader global priorities in the context of the Post-2015 development agenda," he added.

Mr. Yoon Seong-kyu, the Minister of Environment for the Republic of Korea, which holds the presidency of the COP for the next two years, said “The Gangwon Declaration has just been adopted during the High-Level Segment, reflecting a strong message from the Parties that the importance of biodiversity should be highlighted in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. We are planning to report and submit it to the UN General Assembly.”

Further, the Minister pledged that the Republic of Korea will fully assume its responsibility to bridge the gap between developed and developing countries by tapping into the creative economy approach in the field of biodiversity.

The Republic of Korea announced four new initiatives in support of the Pyeongchang roadmap and Parties’ efforts to implement these and other decisions of the Conference of the Parties: the Biobridge initiative in support of technical and scientific cooperation, the Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative (FERI), and the peace and biodiversity initiative in support of transboundary cooperation, as well as further support for the Sustainable Ocean Initiative.

The outcomes of the meeting build on growing recognition of the critical role of biodiversity in the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs). Governments were encouraged to fully engage in discussions on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda and SDGs, with the goal of integrating and mainstreaming the objectives of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 into relevant goals, targets and indicators.

Other decisions taken during the COP reinforced the contribution of biodiversity conservation to social and economic goals of the post-2015 development. A decision on health and biodiversity which will see increased collaboration between the CBD and the World Health Organization. Decisions related to disaster risk reduction and ecosystem restoration, will not only contribute to the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity but also goals related to sustainable development.

The meeting also adopted milestones for the full implementation of Aichi Biodiversity Target 3 on incentives. The decision includes a timetable and concrete activities for the elimination, phasing out or reform of incentive policies that are harmful to biodiversity, as well as the promotion of positive incentive policies.

Governments devoted considerable efforts towards the marine agenda, including: The COP reviewed the results of seven regional workshops for describing ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) and encouraged efforts and collaboration to address knowledge gaps and lack of scientific information regarding areas meeting the EBSA criteria. Together with the results of COP-11, nearly some 75% of the world's oceans have now been assessed scientifically analysed through technical workshops to describe address the worlds' most special ocean areas.

COP also took a decision addressing key threats to marine biodiversity, namely anthropogenic underwater noise and ocean acidification, and encouraged action to enhance knowledge regarding these threats and to mitigate their impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity. COP invited relevant organizations to advance their work on enhancing methods and tools for marine spatial planning. COP also requested additional capacity-building workshops and partnership activities within the framework of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative to address priority issues identified for respective regions concerning the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets in marine and coastal areas.

This decision also adopted priority actions to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 for coral reefs and closely associated ecosystems, focused on enhancing the resilience of these important ecosystems and facilitating the achievement of Target 10. Some of the actions include reducing land based pollution, promoting sustainable fisheries and improving the design of marine protected area networks for coral reefs, implementing poverty-reduction programmes for reef-dependent coastal communities, and developing socioeconomic incentives for coral reef conservation.

Parties also adopted decisions to strengthen the role of business, subnational and local governments, and stakeholders, as well as how to more effectively consider gender in implementation of the Convention.

The meeting also agreed on ways to integrate the work under the Convention and the Protocols, including holding concurrent meetings of the Convention and its protocols, and established a subsidiary body on implementation, replacing the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, to serve all three instruments under the Convention.

The issue of traditional knowledge and the role of Indigenous and local communities under the CBD was also discussed extensively. The programme of work on this issue was endorsed, as was the plan of action on customary sustainable use of biological diversity. Parties also decided to use the terminology "indigenous peoples and local communities" in future decisions and documents under the Convention.

The Conference of the Parties addressed the issues of synthetic biology, urging Parties to have in place risk assessment procedures and regulatory systems to regulate environmental release of organisms, components or products resulting from synthetic biology techniques. It also urged Parties to approve organisms resulting from synthetic biology techniques for field trials only after appropriate risk assessments have been carried out. In addition, it set out a comprehensive plan for further work on this matter under the Convention.

The meeting also adopted decisions that related to the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing from the Utilization of Genetic Resources. With the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol, the third objective of the Convention has now been fulfilled.

The meeting was conducted under a new paper management system, which resulted in a 60% reduction in the use of paper compared to previous COP meetings.

The documents that were presented to the final plenary for adoption are available at:

<http://www.cbd.int/cop12/insession>

Documents relating to the final plenary of the Nagoya Protocol, can be found at:

<http://www.cbd.int/npmop1/insession>

A press release on the outcomes of the Nagoya Protocol can be found at:

<http://www.cbd.int/doc/press/2014/pr-2014-10-17-np-cop-mop-1-en.pdf>

Notes for Editors:

Aichi Biodiversity Targets

In decision X/2, the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, held from 18 to 29 October 2010, in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, adopted a revised and updated Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, including the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, for the 2011-2020 period. Parties agreed on implementation of the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan, and progress achieved towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. For more information on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, please see: www.cbd.int/sp/targets/default.shtml

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 194 Parties up to now, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous peoples and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 167 countries plus the

European Union have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and to date has been ratified by 53 countries plus the European Union. For more information visit: www.cbd.int.

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