



Achieving the  
**2010**  
Biodiversity  
Target

# Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

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CBD

## **Statement by**

**Dr. Ahmed Djoghla**

**Executive Secretary  
Convention on Biological Diversity**

**To the**

**Workshop  
On**

**Implementing the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas  
in the Caribbean**

**Miami  
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United Nations  
Environment Programme

413, rue Saint-Jacques Ouest, Suite 800  
Montréal, Québec, Canada H2Y 1N9

Tel.: +1.514.288.2220  
Fax: +1.514.288.6588

[www.biodiv.org](http://www.biodiv.org)  
[secretariat@biodiv.org](mailto:secretariat@biodiv.org)

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me immense pleasure to address this workshop on “Implementing the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas in the Caribbean”.

Protected areas are, and will remain, cornerstones of biodiversity conservation. These priceless places, which serve as the green lungs of the planet, are among the best means to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target. Protected areas are also critical to human welfare, poverty alleviation and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Globally, the number of protected areas has been increasing significantly over the last few decades, currently covering 12 per cent of the Earth’s land surface, an area the size of India and China combined. However, the existing system of protected areas is insufficient in several ways. They do not adequately represent all ecosystems, habitats and species important for conservation, and those already established are beset with managerial and financial difficulties that impede their effective management.

Against this setting, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, at its seventh meeting in 2004, adopted a programme of work on protected areas to support the establishment and maintenance of comprehensive, effectively managed and ecologically representative national and regional systems of protected areas with ambitious goals and clearly defined time-bound targets. As the deadline for achieving the 2010 biodiversity target just around the corner, the effective implementation of the programme of work on protected areas for achieving this target, needs no further emphasis.

The recently concluded eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, held in Curitiba, Brazil, heralded a new era in the history of the Convention. The meeting witnessed landmark events in terms of participation, not only in the official, non-governmental and indigenous peoples’ segments, but also in the ministerial and heads of States segment, wherein the ministers were engaged in the first-ever interactive dialogue, toward charting a course for achieving the 2010 target.

In the backdrop of, the decree by the President of Brazil that 6.4 million hectares of the Amazon rainforest were to be protected and the “Micronesia Challenge”, launched by the President of Palau and the Vice-President of Micronesia aimed at placing 30% of marine areas and 20% of forest areas under protection, COP-8 decided to enhance the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas and to convene the second meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas prior to its ninth meeting to review progress and improve implementation.

The COP, in its review of the programme of work on protected areas for the period 2004-2006, identified lack of implementation and capacity-building constraints for developing countries, especially for the following activities: conducting gap analysis, developing country-level sustainable financing strategies, integrating protected areas into wider landscapes and seascapes, and evaluating the management effectiveness. The COP urged Parties to address these gaps and constraints and requested the Executive Secretary to organize regional workshops to review the implementation of the programme of work and to build capacity, and urged Parties and relevant organizations to support and implement capacity-building activities.

This is the context of the present workshop for the Caribbean region, the first in a series of such workshops to be held in various regions around the world. I am happy to note that this workshop is aimed to provide practical, hand-on tools and training to assist Parties from the Caribbean region to complete some of the above-mentioned priority key activities of the programme of work. I am confident that this workshop will significantly build the capacity of countries in the region to effectively implement the programme of work on protected areas.

This workshop is indeed an important initiative. It takes place at a time when the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is increasing the attention it devotes to the provision of technical support services to assist Parties to implement the Convention. I extend my wholehearted appreciation to the Nature Conservancy, a noteworthy partner recognized by the COP for its contribution to the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas, for organizing this workshop. The new enhanced phase of the implementation of the Convention calls for a strategic partnership between the Convention and its partners. TNC is fulfilling this role in a commendable manner.

It is one thing to make a commitment; it is quite another to deliver. But deliver we must. We must deliver to protect life on our planet. Our own survival, indeed, survival of the Earth, depend on it.

In the face of increasing human pressure on the planet's resources, an effective protected area system is the best hope for conserving ecosystems, habitats and species and to help achieve the 2010 biodiversity target. To this end and to raise heightened public awareness and to galvanize support of the civil society as a whole for achieving this crucial target COP 8 recommended to the next meeting of the United Nations General Assembly to proclaim 2010 as the International Biodiversity Year. The support of the Caribbean countries for the success of this initiative will be crucial.

I wish you a very successful meeting.