



Secretariat of the
Convention on Biological Diversity



INTERNATIONAL
DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY
22 May 2008
**BIODIVERSITY
AND AGRICULTURE**

WELCOMING REMARKS

by

THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

AHMED DJOGLAF

at the opening of the

**PACIFIC ISLANDS SUBREGIONAL WORKSHOP ON
PROTECTED AREAS**

Nadi, Fiji,

9-12 February 2009

Please check against delivery



ONE NATURE • ONE WORLD • OUR FUTURE
COP 9 MOP 4 Bonn Germany 2008



United Nations
Environment Programme

413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800
Montreal, QC H2Y 1N9, Canada

Tel : +1 514 288 2220
Fax : +1 514 288 6588

<http://www.cbd.int>
secretariat@cbd.int

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you all, to this Pacific Islands subregional workshop on protected areas. It is heartwarming to see participants from all the 14 Pacific small island States, resource persons from the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), a number of international and national non-governmental organizations, the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, and representatives from indigenous and local communities. This gathering testifies to the importance that your countries and the organizations you represent accord to protected areas and to the programme of work on protected areas developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the European Community and the Government of Spain for sponsoring this workshop.

In 2006, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas since its adoption in 2004. In doing so, it recognized the lack of implementation and capacity-building constraints for developing countries and urged Parties to address these constraints as a priority. It also requested the Executive Secretary to organize regional workshops to review the implementation of the programme of work and to build capacity. In pursuance of these requests, the Executive Secretary in collaboration with the PoWPA FRIENDS Consortium organized a series of regional workshops attended by nearly 600 planners, practitioners and policy makers from some 100 countries.

At its ninth meeting, held in Bonn in May 2008, the Conference of the Parties welcomed with appreciation the organization of regional workshops and noted that such workshops need to be held in all the regions and that they provide an important platform for the participating countries to exchange information on the status of implementation of the programme of work on protected areas and to discuss practical ways and means for enhancing its implementation..

The Convention's programme of work on protected areas provides a blueprint of how to establish protected areas, how to manage them, how to govern them and what tools can be used to achieve the planned work. It charts the way forward in detail and with clear targets. The end result will be protected areas that fulfil their key role of conserving *in situ* biodiversity of the world and that help the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target. It is a framework for cooperation between Governments, donors, non-governmental organizations and local communities. Without such collaboration, programmes cannot be successful and sustainable over the long term.

The programme of work on protected areas is now four years old, and some of its ambitious deadlines have passed. That said, there are many signs of progress. The implementation of the programme of work has engendered collaboration and cooperation among a range of partners, including Governments, international and national non-governmental organizations and civil society. These partnerships have enabled learning networks at the national, regional and international level, and the importance of engaging political leadership to challenge and inspire progress at all levels has been extremely productive.

The Micronesian Challenge and the Coral Triangle Initiative from this region are the best examples of such partnerships and political commitments. The programme of work has also enabled resurgence of an appreciation for indigenous and community conserved areas and multi-agency governance approaches for managing protected areas across a spectrum of protected-area categories.

Studies on the valuation of protected-area services in a number of countries have helped to underscore the role of protected areas in social and economic development, including their impact on livelihoods, poverty and food security. There is now a greater appreciation that "making the case" for the economic value of protected areas is growing in importance, and that protected areas can and should be repositioned as underpinning local and global sustainable development

At its Bonn meeting, the Conference of the Parties requested the Parties to designate a national focal point for a better coordination of implementation activities and encouraged Parties, relevant

international organizations and non-governmental organizations to enhance activities and resources towards organizing and forming regional technical support networks to assist countries in implementing the programme of work, through, *inter alia*, the convening regional and subregional capacity-building workshops, making available tools, sharing of information, and establishing subregional forums. Parties were also urged to finalize the ecological gap-analysis no later than 2009 and were invited to develop sustainable financing plans. In addition, they were invited to explore funding opportunities for implementing the programme of work in the context of addressing climate change.

This workshop intends to provide practical capacity-building tools with the ultimate goal of improving on-the-ground implementation of the programme of work. It has two important issues before it: the inclusion of climate change considerations in the ecological gap-analysis of protected areas; and coordination of technical and financial support to improve efficiency and effectiveness. The impact of climate change on small island States and on their biodiversity needs no reiteration. What is needed is planning and implementing actions that will reduce the impact and assist communities to adjust to the changing climate. Effective implementation of programme of work on protected areas with the redesign, consolidation and expansion of protected-area systems so in order to maintain essential refuges and connectivity in the land and sea scapes, is one of the best measures for ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change.

For efficient and effective implementation, availability of funding alone is not sufficient; it should be backed with adequate and focused technical support including availability of tools, approaches for efficient use of available funds. Experiences from the past regional workshops have demonstrated that funding opportunities may have greatest impact when they are reinforced by mechanisms that facilitate technical support. Out of the 14 participating countries 8 countries are currently approved the UNDP/GEF project on supporting country action on the Convention's programme of work. The capacity-building activities included in this workshop also include activities under UNDP/GEF project and this workshop will be useful to them for implementing the GEF project and the programme of work under the Convention.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The programme of work on protected areas is formally linked to the global development agenda and its goals and targets contribute to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals and the 2010 biodiversity target. With the 2010 date looming ever closer, progress in implementing the programme of work will become a focus of attention of preparations for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010. At that meeting, the results and underlying reasons for progress or the lack thereof will be in the spotlight. Regional workshops will provide a platform to analyse the factors of success and identify practical ways and means to improve implementation.

In this room, we have government actors, non-governmental organizations, indigenous and local communities and a regional organization. Building the bridges between stakeholders and national interests is of a crucial importance. We are confident that the workshop will yield fruitful results to promote a regional dialogue and an action plan for furthering the implementation of the Convention's programme of work on protected areas.

I wish to extend my wholehearted appreciation to The Nature Conservancy, WWF, CI-and IUCN-WCPA, active members of the PoWPA FRIENDS, who are significantly contributing to the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas globally. I also convey my thanks to SPREP for facilitating the workshop and hope it will champion coordination efforts for the effective implementation of the programme of work and the Convention in general in the Pacific region.

I once again welcome you all and look forward to open discussions and concrete and practical outcomes.

I thank you for your attention.