



Convention on  
Biological Diversity



**STATEMENT BY**  
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**CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**ON THE OCCASION OF**  
**THE NINTH MEETING OF JOINT LIAISON GROUP OF THE**  
**RIO CONVENTIONS**

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Colleagues,

Today's meeting of the Joint Liaison Group precedes landmark events in the history of each of our conventions. Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity are rapidly gearing-up for the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 and its culmination at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which will be held in Nagoya, Japan, in October that year. The Nagoya meeting will review and build on our efforts to slow the rate of biodiversity loss worldwide.

For their part, Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are in the final stages of preparations for the fifteenth meeting of their Conference of the Parties, which will be held in Copenhagen this December. At that meeting, Parties are expected to strive towards the development of an ambitious, far-reaching agreement for addressing climate change over the decades to come.

Even sooner, at their ninth meeting, to be held in Buenos Aires this September, Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) are expected finalize and put into action a 10-year strategy for combating desertification.

Hence, now is an opportune time to review and discuss the increasing synergies between our three conventions. Under each convention, a number of specific requests to the Joint Liaison Group have been made, including calls for enhanced cooperation, strengthening of planning and reporting processes, outreach and awareness raising activities, and collaboration on scientific matters.

Cooperation through the Joint Liaison Group extends beyond our annual meeting. For example, at their ninth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity established an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Biodiversity and Climate Change. The AHTEG has already met twice so far, the first time in London in November of last year and the second time just a few weeks ago in Helsinki. With the UNFCCC Secretariat participating as an observer, several key conclusions emerged from these meetings, for example, that adaptation activities that make use of biodiversity and ecosystem services can, when integrated in an overall adaptation strategy, deliver a cost-effective contribution to climate change adaptation and generate societal benefits. It was also highlighted that non-climatic stresses, such as habitat fragmentation and land degradation, must be reduced or eliminated if the objectives of the Rio conventions are to be achieved.

It is important to build an understanding of these links if we are to achieve the objectives of the Rio conventions.

Enhancing cooperation between the Rio conventions, with the aim of promoting synergies with the common objective of achieving sustainable development, is essential to avoid duplication of efforts, to strengthen joint efforts and to use available resources more efficiently.

In the years to come, this continued cooperation between the conventions will become even more important. At its meeting in Nagoya next year, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity is expected to adopt a new Strategic Plan and a new biodiversity target. The views of a wide range of stakeholders have been solicited to help with the drafting of the new Plan, and are currently under review. Needless to say, the secretariats of the UNFCCC and UNCCD are active contributors to this process.

I therefore look forward to our continued collaboration as the Convention on Biological Diversity continues its progress both towards and beyond 2010, and we help each other tackle the interrelated problems of biodiversity loss, climate change and desertification. To this end, 2010 will provide a unique opportunity to enhance our collaboration during the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity, which will coincide with the convening in September, for the

first time in the history of the United Nations Organization, of a high level segment of the UN General Assembly with the participation of heads of state and government. Your active engagement as the Executive Secretaries of the two other Rio Conventions is essential.

Thank you for your kind attention.