



STATEMENT

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**THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE IUCN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
ONE YEAR BEFORE CBD/COP10**

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ONE NATURE - ONE WORLD - OUR FUTURE
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Ladies and Gentlemen,

In Fontainebleau in 1948, at its first Congress, IUCN noted that, “one of the most effective means of ensuring the protection of nature is to make the world aware of the extreme seriousness of this question.”

At its fiftieth anniversary celebrations, again in Fontainebleau, IUCN highlighted that: “Our challenge is not just to imagine, but to build a world that values and conserves nature, and that is confident in its commitment to equity.”

IUCN, the world’s oldest and largest global environmental network—with more than 1,000 government and NGO member organizations, and almost 11,000 volunteer scientists in more than 160 countries—has a unique contribution make in advancing the effective implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

IUCN has indeed been always a strong partner to the Convention and is ready to continue to do so to support the 192 Parties to meet the challenges of the unprecedented loss of biodiversity compounded by climate change. 2010—the International Year of Biodiversity—is the year for action and the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in Nagoya the place to re-establish the harmonious relation between man and nature. I would like therefore to convey to Mr. Masohito Yoshida, Chair of the Japan Committee for IUCN, my gratitude for organizing this important international symposium one year before the Nagoya meeting. I would like also to thank Mr. Jeffrey A. McNeely for his tireless effort to promote biodiversity agenda.

Thirty-four months ago, here in this same prestigious U Thant International Conference Hall of our host institution, named in honour of the third Secretary-General of the United Nations, who was a strong advocate of the establishment of the United Nations University, I had the privilege of attending an event associated with another IUCN event devoted to the launch of the third revision of the Japan’s Biodiversity Strategy, The meeting took place just five days after the decision adopted by the Japanese Cabinet to offer to host the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. I am not aware of any Government deciding at Cabinet level to host a meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity more than three years in advance.

I am not also aware of any precedent to the decision adopted by the Conference of the Parties on the venue of the next meeting with a powerful delegation representing all the stakeholders as it was the case in Bonn in May last year. One month later, 1,000 citizens gathered in Nagoya for the Commemorative Kick-Off Symposium for the preparation of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. *Our Lives in the Web of Life* was the title of a song dedicated to the meeting and performed by 191 Nagoya children representing, at that time, the number of Parties to the Convention. Meanwhile we have been joined by Iraq, and we have been informed that Somalia has deposited its instrument in New York and that Andorra is seriously considering acceding to the Convention. We sincerely hope that *Our Lives in the Web of Life* will be performed on 19 October 2010 by 195 children representing the newly universal Convention on Biological Diversity, including also the United States of America.

Here we are again today gathered in Tokyo and tomorrow in Nagoya one year before the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. I am not aware of such a precedent also. For the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the network of civil society gathered 100 days

before the meeting. I therefore commend the CBD network of civil society established in early January this year for convening our meeting today 373 days before the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit.

I would like therefore to convey to Mr. Issei Tajima, the Vice-Minister of the Environment of Japan, my sincere gratitude for the unique contribution of Japan, its government and people, for what they have already achieved and for what they plan to achieve for the benefit of the world in Nagoya, in October next year. Thank you, Vice-Minister, and please convey our warm congratulations to the Government and people of Japan.

The great Japanese poet Matsuo Basho said: “There is nothing you can see that is not a flower; there is nothing you can think that is not the moon.” And, indeed, humans are intimately connected with nature.

However, this connection is being lost. As a result, the biological resources of our planet are under threat as never before. Because of human activities, species are currently going extinct at up to 1,000 times the natural background rate. In the year 2000 only about 73 per cent of the world’s original biodiversity levels remained. Last year’s IUCN Red List revealed that 38 per cent of all species examined are under threat of extinction. 60 per cent of examined ecosystem services have been degraded worldwide in the last 50 years. If current loss rates continue, it is expected that an area of 1.3 billion hectares worldwide – about one and a half times the size of the United States – will completely lose its original biodiversity levels by 2050.

It is for this reason that, in 2002, the 110 leaders of the world attending the World Summit on Sustainable Development agreed in Johannesburg to substantially reduce the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010. The 2010 Johannesburg target was reaffirmed by 154 Heads of State and Government at the Review Summit held in 2005. The target was integrated one year later as part of goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals

The Message from Athens on biodiversity, adopted in April this year by the European Union, recognized that the 2010 target will not be met in spite significant progress achieved. This message was confirmed by the 27 Ministers of the Environment of the European Union at their September meeting in Strömstad, Sweden. The same message is emerging from the 80 national reports received so far by the secretariat and we sincerely hope to achieve a 100 per cent rate of submission of national reports before Nagoya.

The submission of national reports is crucial for assessing progress achieved and shaping the way for the future. The third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook being finalized will be based on information contained in those national reports. GBO-3 will be released on 10 May 2010 in Nairobi and simultaneously in Tokyo thanks to the United Nations University (UNU); in Berlin, thanks to the German Federal Ministry of the Environment (BMU); in London, thanks to UNEP/WCMC; in Paris, thanks to UNESCO; in Rome thanks to FAO; and in New York and Washington, as well as through the UNEP regional offices in Panama, Addis Ababa, Geneva, Bahrain and Bangkok.

What was wrong with the 2010 target and how we can learn from the lessons of the past and ensure the success of the post 2010 targets? It is why we are here today in this great building of the prestigious United Nations University and I would like to pay tribute to Prof. Kasuhiko Takeushi, the Vice Rector of UNU, for his continued support for the preparation of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

One lesson of the 2010 Johannesburg target is the need to ensure the ownership of all stakeholders including political leaders. This is the spirit and the letter of the Kobe Plan of Action on Biodiversity adopted in May 2008 by the G8 Ministers of the Environment and their partners. I would like to congratulate Japan for not only promoting the Kobe Biodiversity Call for Action but most importantly to ensure its implementation. I welcome therefore the convening next week of the first Kobe Biodiversity Dialogue as a concrete implementation of the G8+5+3 agreement.

Biodiversity issues have been elevated to the level of Heads of State and Government as evidenced by the outcome of the G8 summits in Heiligendamm in 2007, Hokkaido/Toyako in 2008, and L'Aquila in 2009. As the Japanese proverb says: "Beginning is easy – continuing is hard."

We therefore sincerely hope that biodiversity will be also high on the agenda of next year's Summit of the G8 and the G20 Summit to be held in June 2010 in Huntsville, Canada. Canada has been the host of the Secretariat of the Convention since 1996 and will be the host of the new G8 format to take place during the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity which also coincide with the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

Less than two months after the G20 Summit in Canada, biodiversity will be put on the agenda of the 192 Heads of State and Government attending the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly. For the first time in the history of the United Nations General Assembly, a Summit exclusively devoted to Biodiversity will be held in New York on 20 September 2010. The New York Biodiversity Summit will be followed four weeks later by the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit. .

At the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties itself, the 192 Parties to the Convention will celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity by adopting an International Regime on Access and Benefit-sharing, assess progress toward the 2010 target, and formulate a post-2010 Strategic Plan for the Convention along with post-2010 biodiversity targets.

Elevating the issue of biodiversity to the level of the world leaders will be a major step toward making biodiversity relevant. However, we need also to mainstream the three objectives of the Convention into economic sectors by elevating biodiversity to a priority of the development plans and processes.

Biodiversity loss is linked with range of other pressing international issues, poverty alleviation being a prime example. Three hundred million people worldwide, the majority poor, are estimated to depend substantially on forest biodiversity, including non-wood forest products, for their survival and livelihood. And, yet, about 13 million hectares of the world's forests are lost due to deforestation each year.

One billion people depend on fish as their only or main source of animal protein, while fish provide more than 2.6 billion people with at least 20 per cent of their average per capita animal protein intake. And, yet, about half of marine stocks worldwide were fully exploited in 2005, while another one-quarter were overexploited, depleted or recovering from depletion.

Coral reefs provide food and livelihood for most of the estimated 30 million small-scale fishers in the developing world. And, yet, 60 per cent of coral reefs could be lost by 2030 through fishing damage, pollution, disease, invasive alien species and coral bleaching.

We cannot tackle poverty with also addressing biodiversity loss. That is why the 2010 International Day on Biodiversity will be celebrated worldwide on 22 May under the theme “Biodiversity for Development and Poverty Alleviation”.

To make the Nagoya 2020/2050 biodiversity targets relevant also means that biodiversity must be mainstreamed into the work of development cooperation agencies. To this end, the First Forum on Biodiversity and International Development Cooperation will be held in Nagoya in conjunction with the high-level segment of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, at the level of head of agencies or their deputies. This unique forum will be held back to back with the second meeting of the Private Biodiversity Forum as a follow up of the Berlin meeting held in June this year. I want to convey to Mr Takuya Okada, the honourable President of Aeon Co. Ltd., for joining forces with the Convention Secretariat and the Ministry of Environment of Japan in promoting biodiversity within the business community.

Making biodiversity relevant is also mainstreaming the three objectives of the convention within the business community. We need indeed to make a Business case for biodiversity. This is the objective of the on-going initiative on business and biodiversity initiated by the Parties since Curitiba in March 2006. Last month, the secretariat was honoured to host a meeting of the “Triple Presidency” of the Conference of the Parties (Brazil, Germany and Japan) on business and biodiversity with a view of presenting a coordinated initiative to the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting. Last July, in Curitiba, a Brazilian project called “LIFE certification” was launched which aims to both quantify and officially recognize actions by companies related to biodiversity conservation. In May last year, at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Bonn, the First International Business Initiative for the Protection of Biodiversity was launched. Bringing together a group of 34 companies from Germany and other countries, the initiative aims to more closely involve the private sector in achieving the objectives of the Convention. Last May, the Japanese Business Federation, adopted the Keidanren Declaration on Business and Biodiversity, and the Ministry of the Environment of Japan is finalizing guidelines on integrating biodiversity into the business sector. In Jakarta this coming December, a preparatory meeting to the Nagoya agenda on business and biodiversity will be convened.

Biodiversity is also linked with economic productivity, and its value must therefore be mainstreamed into economic activities. This is the aim of the global study on “The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity”, launched at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties by Germany and the Economic Commission as the result of the G8 Potsdam 2010 Initiative. Approximately half of synthetic drugs have a natural origin, including 10 of the 25 highest selling drugs in the United States of America. Of all the anti-cancer drugs available, 42 per cent are natural and 34 per cent semi-natural. The value of the watershed protection provided by intact coastal ecosystems, such as mangroves and other wetlands, has been estimated at US\$ 845 per hectare per year in Malaysia and US\$ 1,022 per hectare per year in Hawaii. Coral reef recreation has been estimated at US\$ 184 per visit globally, at US\$ 231-2,700 per hectare per year in Southeast Asia and at US\$ 1,654 per hectare per year in the Caribbean. Global coastal capture fisheries yields are estimated to be worth a minimum of US\$ 34 billion annually.

Moreover, an earlier scoping study estimated that, because of biodiversity loss, the international community is currently experiencing a welfare loss of land-based ecosystem services of about 50 billion euros each year, with a projected cumulative loss of 14 trillion euros by 2050, or 7 per cent of projected global GDP. The final report of TEEB will be before the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting.

To make biodiversity relevant is also to promote the inter-linkages between climate change and biodiversity. If climate change is the problem, biodiversity is the solution. Approximately 10 per cent of species assessed so far have an increasingly high risk of extinction for every 1°C rise in global mean surface temperature. This trend is expected to hold true up to at least a 5°C increase, which would result in about 50 per cent of species facing increased risks of extinction. Recently, observed changes in the climate have produced alterations in species distribution and population size, timing of reproduction or migration events, and an increased frequency of pest and disease outbreaks. Climate change has also been implicated in widespread coral bleaching, wetland salinization and salt-water intrusion, the expansion of arid and semi-arid lands at the expense of grasslands and acacia, poleward and upward shifts in habitats, replacement of tropical forests with savannah, and the shifting of desert dunes.

Moreover, just as climate change contributes to biodiversity loss, biodiversity loss also contributes to climate change. Deforestation is currently estimated to be responsible for 20 per cent of annual human-induced CO₂ emissions, as forests account for as much as 80 per cent of the total above-ground terrestrial carbon. Further, peatlands, which cover only 3 per cent of the world's terrestrial surface, store 30 per cent of the carbon contained in both terrestrial vegetation and soils. Hence, as forest and peatland loss continues, a much greater proportion of global carbon ends up in the atmosphere and not in terrestrial biomass. Likewise, intensive agricultural practices that destroy ground cover and increase soil erosion decrease the retention time of carbon in the soil.

Today, the Secretariat issued a No. 41 in its Technical Series, devoted to climate change and biodiversity. The publication contains the report of the two meetings of an ad hoc technical expert group, held in London and Helsinki, respectively, and represents the most comprehensive scientific review to date on the interlinkages between climate change and biodiversity. It will be presented in later this year to the ministers attending the Copenhagen Climate Change meeting

In creating the post-2010 Strategic Plan of the Convention, strong consideration will also be given to formulating a quantitative biodiversity target, a concrete goal that stakeholders can strive to achieve. Such a goal should make it easier to communicate why it is important to preserve biodiversity and how to go about doing so. The Plan will also establish a sound scientific basis for these targets: the post-2010 targets need to be commensurate with the challenge we face, and based both on the best science available and the experience of countries in implementing the Convention to date. .

Finally, the new Strategic Plan will strive to facilitate and support national action. It is vital that countries critically evaluate how global targets and indicators apply to their particular situation. Only when countries individually go through their own processes and set targets at the national, provincial and municipal level can they ensure that biodiversity concerns are raised when legislative decisions are taken.

Many of these issues parallel issues brought up in Japan's fourth national report under the Convention. The report lists three future challenges that Japan must tackle in addressing the ongoing loss of its biodiversity:

- First, public understanding of the meaning and value of biodiversity is not sufficient: most people do not consider biodiversity loss to be their problem;

- Second, scientific knowledge is still insufficient to properly assess the precise rate at which biodiversity loss is occurring; and
- Third, cross-sectoral measures for addressing biodiversity loss have not yet been adequately developed in Japan.

These are recurring themes in the fourth national reports of most countries, and therefore are of utmost importance as the Convention develops and finalizes its post-2010 strategy. I am pleased to note that Japan has already developed an outline of its own post-2010 vision, and has also been conducting a comprehensive assessment of its biodiversity in order to estimate trends and changes since 2008, and to evaluate progress toward the 2010 biodiversity target. I commend Japan for this initiative, and urge you expand on the excellent work you have done to date.

With the International Year of Biodiversity around the corner, there are number of things you can do as the host of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

- First, you can follow your rich historical example and promote the *satoyama* initiative for the sustainable management of biological resources;

- Second, you can engage the research community to promote strategic monitoring of biodiversity and the testing of innovative ideas and solutions;
- Third, you can strive to make biodiversity information accessible to underpin the decision-making process at the Conference of the Parties;
- Fourth, you can communicate the problem of biodiversity loss as widely as possible so as to involve all stakeholders in its conservation;
- And finally, as individuals you can organize and take part in the various events of the International Year of Biodiversity, including the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Nagoya and the closing ceremonies of the International Year of Biodiversity in Ishikawa.

Ryunosuke Satoro said that: “Individually we are one drop. Together we are an ocean.” What the international community now needs is increased commitment to develop and carry out a robust, long-term strategy for ultimately stopping biodiversity loss beyond 2010. I am convinced that we will be successful in this task, and that Nagoya will be remembered as a watershed moment in the environmental movement – the time when we finally put into practice a comprehensive strategy for saving our biological resources and passing on a rich and stable planet to future generations.

Thank you for your kind attention.