



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

STATEMENT

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

ON THE OCCASION

OF THE

**THIRTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY**

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to congratulate Madam Monique Barbut on the substantial progress achieved so far in the negotiations for the fifth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund and through her to all donors for the commitment for an increase allocation for the biodiversity focal area during the fifth replenishment.

The replenishment takes place at a crucial time of the history of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The preliminary findings of the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, to be issued on 10 May 2010 in Nairobi as well as in major United Nations cities, including Washington D.C., is crystal clear. Biodiversity continues to be lost at an unprecedented rate. This third edition of the GBO is the first to be prepared based on national reports submitted by Parties. We have individually and collectively failed to fulfil the Johannesburg commitment to reduce substantially the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. This is a call for action a reminder that business as usual is no longer an option for nations, peoples and international environmental institutions, including the GEF.

Next October, the Aichi-Nagoya Biodiversity Summit is expected to adopt a new Strategic Plan of the Convention with a 2050 vision and a 2020 biodiversity target. The Plan will include not only targets and sub-targets but also means of implementation and a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. A Strategic Plan for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety will be also adopted in Nagoya for the period 2011-2020 and will also include the implementation of the Protocol on Liability and Redress to be also adopted in Nagoya. The multi-year plan of action on South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development for 2011-2020, also to be adopted in Nagoya, will be a major tool for the implementation of the new strategic plans for the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol. A plan of action on cities and biodiversity will be also adopted at the City Summit on Biodiversity, to be held in Nagoya in conjunction with the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The plan of action is expected to include the Singapore Urban Biodiversity Index, which is currently being piloted in five major cities of the world.

The 193 Parties to the Convention will be invited to revise their national biodiversity strategies and action plans to reflect the Convention's 2011-2020 Strategic Plan, which will also include measures for the implementation of the International Regime on Access and Benefit-sharing to be adopted in Nagoya. The Parties will be encouraged to do so before the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties. India has offered to host this major meeting, which will take place four months after Rio+20 Summit. I would like to pay tribute to the Council for agreeing to support the revision of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans, thus contributing to the realization at national and local levels of the Aichi Nagoya Compact. I would like also to convey my gratitude to the GEF Chief Executive Officer for accepting to join forces with the Secretariat to provide urgent assistance to the two new Parties to the Convention, Iraq and Somalia to equip them to raise to the challenges arising from their commitments under the Convention.

The new Strategic Plan will also be a key instrument for the implementation of the International Regime on Access and Benefit-sharing to be adopted at the Nagoya meeting. This week, the eighth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Access and Benefit Sharing, being held in Montreal, is expected to make major advances leading to the finalization of the International Regime at the next and last meeting of the Working Group in March 2010. The adoption of an International Regime on Access and Benefit-sharing is one of the key deliverables of the Nagoya meeting, which will be held during the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity.

The Secretariat today has officially launched the official website for the International Year of Biodiversity with messages from the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the President of the sixty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly, His Excellency Dr. Ali Abdussalam Treki. The website contains also a message by the current President of the Conference of the Parties, the Minister of the Environment of Germany, as well as the incoming President of the Conference of the Parties, the Minister of the Environment of Japan. The event was attended by over 500 participants from among the 193 Parties to the Convention and partner organizations.

The official launch of the International Year of Biodiversity will take place on 11 January in Berlin, under the leadership of Dr. Angela Merkel, the Chancellor of Germany, as the current President of

the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. This will be followed by a high-level event on 21-22 January in Paris at UNESCO, including Heads of State and Government and your Chief Executive Officer, Monique Barbut. In this regard, I am very grateful to Monique for having kindly accepted to chair a panel at that event. A universal IYB exhibition will also be launched in Paris and will tour the world with copies sent to all Parties. This exhibit would not have been possible without the GEF support. The sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly will mark the International Year of Biodiversity on 20 September 2010 at the level of Heads of State and Government. The closing ceremony will take place on 11-12 December in Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan.

The closing of the International Year of Biodiversity will coincide with the launch of the 2011 International Year of Forests, in partnership with the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests. The International Year of Forests will be followed in 2012 with the Rio+20, the twentieth anniversary of the 1992 Rio Conference on Environment and Development. I am confident that 2012 will be the year of the three Rio conventions, translating synergies among the three conventions into proactive joint work programmes, for which the GEF is operating the financial mechanism.

It is in this context and with the renewed sense of urgency that I want to stress the critical importance of substantially replenishing the GEF Trust Fund. The Convention's 2011-2020 Strategic Plan and its programmes of work can not and should not wait for another four years to start to be implemented.

I wish to pay tribute to your Chief Executive Officer, Ms Monique Barbut, for her outstanding spirit of collaboration, and I also wish to pay tribute to members of the GEF Council for your continued support to the implementation of the Convention's three objectives.

I thank you for your attention and wish you a successful meeting.