



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

## **STATEMENT**

**BY MR AHMED DJOGHLAF**

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE**

**MEETING FOR PROMOTING NORTH-SOUTH, SOUTH-  
SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION FOR  
SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT**

**19 DECEMBER 2009  
YOKOHAMA, JAPAN**



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いのちの共生を、未来へ  
COP 10 / MOP 5

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Colleagues,

We at the CBD Secretariat would like to commend those gathered at this meeting for your efforts to advance the important issue of south-south cooperation in the context of sustainable forest management. Most biodiversity in the world today is in developing countries, and it is therefore extremely important that countries from the South are able to use their vast biological resources both sustainably and to the full benefit of their citizens. Moreover, since a number of ecosystems in the developing world are relatively similar, countries from the South should be able to share their conservation expertise and knowledge with each other. South-south cooperation is an efficient and cost-effective complement to other forms of cooperation: no CBD objectives can be achieved without it.

That is why in decision IX/25 the CBD Conference of the Parties welcomed the initiative of developing countries, represented by the Group of 77, to prepare a multi-year plan of action on biodiversity for development in collaboration with the Secretariat and its partners. We are presently preparing a draft in close collaboration with the chair and Secretariat of G77 and other key stakeholders, building inter alia on several meetings held in Montreal over the course of the past thirteen months. These include a Brainstorming Meeting on South-South Cooperation in November 2008, a South-South-Exchange Meeting on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Forest Biodiversity in July 2009, and the first meeting of the Steering Committee for a Global Plan of Action for South-South Cooperation this past October. The finalized plan will be presented at the CBD's tenth Conference of the Parties in Nagoya, Japan, next October. In the lead up to COP-10, an expert meeting will be organized in Kampala, Uganda, in May/June 2010, after the third meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, to validate the plan and prepare its submission.

Our work is progressing well. At the July 2009 meeting in Montreal, Mr James Seyani, the COP Bureau member for Africa, reminded us that until very recently the development agenda of the G-77 was mostly focused on economic, social and trade-related issues: sustainable management of natural resources was not discussed – an egregious omission in countries where so many people still depend directly on biodiversity, and in particular on forests, to meet their most basic needs. But the agenda is changing. At the meeting we made substantial progress on three technical aspects of sustainable forest management: payments for ecosystem services, access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization, and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD-plus).

The CBD is grateful to the UNFF Secretariat, as well as to ITTO, for their participation in the July 2009 meeting, as well as for organizing the current one. Indeed, as developing countries continue to cooperate, inter-agency cooperation will be equally important. For example, while the focus of UNFCCC efforts has been on greenhouse gas emissions, a major focus of the CBD and of the UNFF has always been on reducing deforestation and forest degradation, and on creating sustainable livelihoods. Hence, joining forces with the climate community will enable us to jointly address biodiversity loss, climate change, and poverty. The provisions of the CBD programme of work on forest biodiversity and the UNFF forest instrument contain specific commitments and activities to slow and revert deforestation and forest degradation. As a result, the expertise of the biodiversity and forest constituencies will be an essential ingredient to any successful forest-based climate change mitigation or adaptation. Only by working together can we effectively implement new and existing international commitments.

Clear economic arguments will facilitate this task. For example, recent studies such as *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity* indicate that the value of intact tropical rainforests far outmatches the economic gains of converting them to plantations or other land uses. Their value comes from inter alia their importance in generating rainfall for agriculture and in providing numerous non-timber products. Through climate change mitigation and other payments for ecosystem services, we have to find a way to recognize and account for these immense values, so our societies can make use of the economic assets of intact forests without destroying them. To quote biologist E.O. Wilson: “Destroying rainforests for economic gain is like burning a Renaissance painting to cook a meal”. Today, we have the knowledge, and increasingly also the political will, to achieve synergies between climate protection, poverty alleviation, and the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity.

The International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 and the International Year of Forests in 2011 will provide excellent opportunities to further intensify the collaboration between the UNFF, the CBD, and other processes. And indeed, just a few days ago at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, our two secretariats signed a Memorandum of Understanding to closely collaborate over the coming two years. We invite you to present the results of your work over the next ten months at COP-10 in Nagoya for inclusion in the CBD Plan of Action. Undoubtedly the closing ceremony of the International Year of Biodiversity – which will take place in December 2010 in Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan – will lead seamlessly into the International Year on Forests. Let us take 2010 and 2011 as an extended opportunity to work together with the countries of the South to manage our forests for the benefit of present and future generations.

Thank you for your kind attention.