



STATEMENT

BY MR. AHMED DJOGLAF

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

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE INTERACADEMY PANEL BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE:
INTEGRATING ECOSYSTEM SERVICES INTO BIODIVERSITY
MANAGEMENT
CELEBRATING 350 YEARS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY**

London, 14 January 2010

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COP 10 / MOP 5

Professor Lawton,
Fellow Panellists,
Colleagues,

Lord Rees, President of the Royal Society, has called the universe a place of mystery and wonder. I am sure we can all agree that no small part of this mystery and wonder comes from the great diversity of life on Earth. That, no doubt, is one of the reasons why the Royal Society called this meeting – to do all they can to prevent the loss of such an irreplaceable treasure.

Allow me to sincerely thank the Royal Society for organizing such an important event. With so many distinguished presenters, our discussions over the last two days could not have failed to have been as interesting and productive as they were. It is truly wonderful that a conference of this calibre, bringing together so many inspired thinkers, could take place at the start of the International Year of Biodiversity.

I do not have to tell you that the International Year is taking place at a critical moment in the struggle to preserve the diversity of life on Earth. Professor Lawton has said, “My deepest worry is that as the fabric of the planet continues to unravel we just do not have that much time.” This sense of urgency, this sense of time slipping by before an impending – and yet avoidable – catastrophe, needs to inform everything we do over the next 12 months. As you know, eight years ago the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity established the 2010 biodiversity target, a commitment to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss worldwide by this time. While the 2010 target has served its function as a rallying point for international conservation efforts, with 2010 now upon us it is all but certain that, as the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook will soon show, the target will not be met. Hence, such strategies as we have discussed at this conference for enhancing preservation efforts in the future absolutely need to be made a reality in the post-2010 era.

With this in mind, the CBD and its partners have been actively developing our 2011-2020 Strategic Plan, to be finalized at the tenth meeting of Conference of the Parties, to be held in October in Nagoya, Japan. Much of what we have discussed at this meeting agrees with the input the Convention has been receiving from various quarters. For example, it is clear that the new Strategic Plan needs to draw strong links between biodiversity, ecosystem services and human wellbeing. It is clear that the plan needs to highlight the economic value of biodiversity and ecosystem services. And it is clear that it needs to make explicit the importance of biodiversity preservation for poverty eradication and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Other key elements also need to be included in future conservation efforts. We need to address both the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss, and particularly the latter since they remain largely unaffected by our efforts to date. These include, *inter alia*, excessive consumption, for example of fossil fuels and meat, population growth, environmentally harmful subsidies, and a lack of public awareness about the harmful consequences of biodiversity loss. We also need to promote concerted action by all by all sectors of government and society in addressing biodiversity loss, and link such action with efforts to combat and adapt to climate change. Further, we need to use our best science to develop comprehensive biodiversity indicators and monitoring programmes, so that we can use concrete evidence to systematically assess the effectiveness of our efforts. A sound science base will be particularly important when it comes to formulating and assessing progress toward the post-2010 targets that the Parties are expected to adopt in Nagoya.

The International Year of Biodiversity presents a historic opportunity to achieve these goals, to create a truly universal alliance of all stakeholders to protect life on Earth. Many different events have been planned over the course of the year to assist our efforts. In a few days a high-level scientific conference in Paris will launch UNESCO's exhibition on the International Year of Biodiversity. In February the sixth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity will take place in Norway, as well as a Global Ministerial Environmental Forum in Bali. In May, the fourteenth meeting of the Convention's Scientific Body will be held. And in September, during the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, for the first time ever a high-level meeting of the Assembly specifically devoted to biodiversity will be convened with the participation of Heads of State and Government. All of this will lead up to the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit, where a broad range of stakeholders – cities and local authorities, youth, indigenous communities, national Governments, the private sector, as well as many others – will gather to help finalize our post-2010 agenda.

Let me conclude by pointing out how fitting it is that the International Year of Biodiversity coincides with the 350th anniversary of the Royal Society, this august institution whose work has so often, to quote Lord Rees, “raised possibilities that are still opening out before us”. Indeed, it is my hope that the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Royal Society, and our partners can build on the discussions at this conference to jointly open out new possibilities for stopping biodiversity loss during this most important year. The integrity of the world's ecosystems, and hence our own wellbeing, ultimately depend on the success of our efforts.

Thank you for your kind attention.