



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

STATEMENT

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

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE 2010 NEW YEAR RECEPTION OF THE BAVARIAN
HUNTING AND WILDLIFE ORGANIZATION**

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Life in harmony, into the future
いのちの共生を、未来へ
COP 10 / MOP 5

Ladies and gentlemen,

Two decades ago, during the first discussions to draft a Convention on Biological Diversity – a legally-binding international treaty on biodiversity – the focus was placed on “conservation”. However, developing countries rightly insisted that “sustainable use” was just as important. Hence, the Preamble to the Convention now speaks not only of the “conservation of biological diversity” but the “sustainable use of its components”.

The overarching principle of sustainable use is that we must use biodiversity such that ecological processes, species and genetic variability remain above long-term viability thresholds. Simply put, having the opportunity to use biodiversity, we also have the responsibility to ensure that we do not exceed nature’s capacity to regenerate itself.

Today, with 193 Parties, the Convention is the most-subscribed environmental treaty on the planet and central to sustainable development efforts worldwide. I am glad to point out that Germany was one of the earliest countries to ratify the Convention, having done so in December 1993. Since then Germany’s commitment to the Convention has not wavered: in 2008, our ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention took place in Bonn, a landmark event that brought together 6000 participants, including inter alia ministers and heads of state, non-governmental organizations, youth, women, indigenous and local authorities, the private sector, the media, and artists.

The continued leadership of Germany and its citizens will be important as we strive to turn existing commitments toward biodiversity into concrete action. Over the years, the Convention has developed extensive implementation guidelines for achieving its objectives. Of particular note for your organization are the *Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity*, which provide official direction in this regard. They also confirm the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources’ “Policy Statement on Sustainable Use of Wild Living Resources”, decided at their General Assembly in Amman, Jordan in 2000.

As you all have a special impact on wildlife, let me appeal to you to observe the articles of the Convention and related guidelines on a daily basis. Indeed, committing to sustainable use is particularly important during 2010, which is the International Year of Biodiversity. It was by this year that the international community resolved to slow biodiversity loss worldwide. And yet it has become increasingly clear that we have fallen short of the mark: because of human activities, species continue to go extinct at up to 1000 times the natural background rate.

2010 is therefore an opportunity to take stock of what needs to be done in the future to preserve our biological resources. On the one hand, such an assessment is set to take place at the international level. In September, the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly will convene for the first time ever a high-level segment on biodiversity with the participation of heads of state and government. And in October, the Convention’s tenth Conference of the Parties in Nagoya, Japan, will formulate a post-2010 strategy for stopping biodiversity loss in the years to come with a broad range of stakeholders.

On the other hand, it is up to you to do your part locally. I know that sustainable use is

already laid-down in much of your national legislation. Nonetheless, laws are only paper until they are implemented. Now more than ever is the time for definitive action on the ground.

Thank you kindly.