



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**



**OPENING REMARKS  
BY THE**

**SECRETARIAT OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL  
DIVERSITY**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE**

**PACIFIC REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE  
FINALIZATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL REGIME ON  
ACCESS & BENEFIT-SHARING**

***15-16 FEBRUARY 2010  
AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND***



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いのちの共生を、未来へ  
COP 10 / MOP 5

Distinguished delegates,  
Mr. Hodges and Mr. Casas, Co-Chairs of the Working Group on ABS  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, it is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the regional consultations for Pacific countries in support of the finalization of the International Regime on Access and Benefit-sharing.

The CBD Secretariat is very pleased to have contributed to the organization of these regional consultations. I wish to express our sincere gratitude to the United Nations Environment Programme for providing the funds necessary for this meeting to take place. I also wish to thank the COP 9 Bureau Member for the region, Ms. Tania Temata from the Cook Islands, for helping to organize this meeting along with Mr. Clark Peteru from the SPREP (South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme) for the very warm hospitality and welcome extended to all participants in the beautiful city of Auckland.

We are certainly most privileged that the consultation is being held in the South Pacific, in the middle of the Southern Summer. The Pacific islands are rich indigenous cultures, steep in traditional knowledge, and contain a wealth of biological (particularly marine) diversity. All very relevant for our discussions concerning issues related to the negotiation of the International Regime on Access and Benefit-sharing.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

This New Year is the start of a new era for the Convention. Indeed, 2010 has been declared by the United Nations General Assembly as the International Year of Biodiversity. This event offers a unique opportunity to elevate biodiversity to the highest level of the political agenda and to raise awareness on the need to conserve it in the minds of people around the world. One of the highlights of the IYB is, of course, the International Regime, which will be adopted in Nagoya, next October. The present meeting is another – small but essential – step on the road to Nagoya.

The last meeting of the Working Group was held in November of last year, in Montreal, Canada. Participants characterized it as a very constructive meeting, carried out in a very positive atmosphere of cooperation and compromise. The Working Group made significant progress by producing - for the very first time - a single negotiating text incorporating all the elements of the International Regime. Progress was also made on the nature of the International Regime.

This meeting takes place only a few weeks before the next and last negotiating session of the Working Group. Time is therefore of the essence. The negotiations are reaching a final stage. Against this background, it is crucial that you take full advantage of this meeting to refine your negotiating positions.

You may wish to identify the issues that are of prime importance for the region and go beyond that stage by taking note of other group's positions and try to identify possible compromise solutions to the most difficult items. Indeed, the negotiations are reaching the final stage and time has come for the regional groups to consider each other's positions and find

compromise approaches. This is very demanding but it is the only approach capable of delivering the International Regime in Nagoya, this coming October.

In summary, the time for advancing one's position has passed. The time has come to engage in frank and open discussions and to move forward through compromises. This is the only way to achieve our common objective. This meeting provides a unique opportunity for the Pacific region to prepare for this give-and-take process that must take place in Cali in a few weeks.

As announced by the Co-Chairs, as part of the inter-sessional work, an inter-regional informal consultation (CIIC) is to be held prior to the ninth meeting of the WG-ABS, from 16 to 18 March, in Cali, Colombia. In December, at the Asian regional consultation, three representatives were nominated for the CIIC. At that time, it was thought that a total of five from the Asia-Pacific region would participate in the CIIC. It has now been clarified that a total of 5+3 can participate (5 negotiators + 2 advisors).

I would therefore recommend that this meeting takes this into account and to this end, I urge the two Bureau members for the Asia-Pacific to actively and urgently consult on this and to provide the full list to the Secretariat on an urgent basis.

To this end, you may wish to take the opportunity of this meeting to work towards designating the representatives of the Pacific to these inter-regional informal consultations.

As always, the CBD Secretariat stands ready to assist you in this process. I wish you a very successful meeting.

Thank you for your attention.

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