



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

**STATEMENT BY**

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**ON THE OCCASION OF**

**THE TRILATERAL WADDEN SEA CONFERENCE**

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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,

The rich biodiversity of the Wadden Sea makes it one of the great natural areas of Europe, if not the world, which is why in 2009 it was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Recognizing its importance, Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands first agreed to work together to protect the Sea through a trilateral agreement in 1982, and now again in 2010 through an updated agreement that will ensure Wadden Sea continues to be effectively managed in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

It is fitting that this new joint agreement be made in 2010, the International Year of Biodiversity. As you know, in 2002 the Heads of State attending the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development agreed to substantially reduce the rate of biodiversity loss worldwide by 2010 – the so-called 2010 Biodiversity Target. The European Union established an ever stronger target of stopping biodiversity loss completely by 2010. However, as the fourth national reports we have received thus far from the Parties make clear, neither the global nor the European target will be met: we continue to lose our biodiversity at an unprecedented rate, undermining Nature's ability to provide us with the ecosystem services and biological goods we depend on so deeply.

Hence, during 2010 the 193 Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity are seeking to engage in a level of international cooperation never before seen in order to preserve Life on Earth. Let me thank Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands for leading by example. Through your cooperation, you are paving the way for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) this October in Nagoya, Japan, where the Parties are expected to finalize a comprehensive 2011-2020 strategic plan, which will include a 2020 biodiversity target and a 2050 biodiversity vision. Through your commitment to collaborative action, you are setting the stage for the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly this September, which will devote an entire day to the question of biodiversity, its role in development, and its role in the fight against climate change. Such cooperation as we are seeing here today needs to be the order of the day at these events. To quote the German sociologist Ulrich Beck: "If done in an intelligent way, you attain the sovereignty to better solve national problems in cooperation with others."

Trans-boundary water resource management in particular is an extremely important issue for the CBD, and as such is the subject of one of our technical series publications. Global trends show serious declines in marine and freshwater living resources, losses of coastal habitats, elevated pollution levels, and poor water quality in many areas. In the marine environment, climate change is driving sea-level rise and sea-temperature rise, while ocean acidification is increasing as a direct consequence of increased carbon dioxide emissions.

Against this background, water issues in trans-boundary ecosystems too often continue to be a source of major contention between coastal and riparian States. There is therefore a great need to work together toward common goals. To meet this need, COP 9 in Bonn adopted decision IX/19, which urges Parties to strengthen international cooperation in the allocation and management of water as a means to implement the provisions of the CBD in this area. This adds considerable legal and political weight to ongoing efforts to improve regulatory frameworks for international cooperation regarding water. It also broadens the arguments for such cooperation by highlighting linkages between the management of trans-boundary aquatic ecosystems, the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and human well-being.

Now more than ever is the time for collaborative action to save Life on Earth. I hope that you will follow this 2010 Joint Declaration with concrete long-term action to preserve the Wadden Sea while actively encouraging other nations to follow your lead in their own trans-boundary ecosystems.

Let me finish with a quote from German President Horst Koehler, who said, “Reconciliation and cooperation in Europe have brought us freedom, peace and prosperity. Who would have dared to believe so much 50 years ago?”

I ask: in another 50 years, will we similarly be able to look back and to speak about cooperation between the countries of the world in the fight to save Life on Earth? Cooperation in 2010, when the situation was bleakest? I certainly hope so. Those gathered at today’s conference are doing their part to achieve this vision. Let me ask you to continue to fight for the future wellbeing of our children and grandchildren throughout the International Year of Biodiversity and beyond. As the slogan of the Year reminds us, “Biodiversity is life. Biodiversity is OUR life.”

Thank you for your kind attention.

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