



STATEMENT BY

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON URBAN
BIODIVERSITY AND DESIGN (URBIO)**

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Please check against delivery



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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,

It is fitting that during the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity, URBIO is taking place in Nagoya, which will host the CBD's tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) this October. At COP 10, our post-2010 biodiversity targets and post-2010 strategic plan will be finalized, with a strong contribution being made by cities and local authorities. Hence, four months from now, Nagoya will be the place where a concerted long-term effort for saving life on Earth in our increasingly urban world truly begins.

It is not only fitting that URBIO takes place in Nagoya, but also that the conference overlaps with the celebration of the International Day for Biological Diversity. On May 22nd, celebrations of this important day will take place worldwide, and some of the most far-reaching will be in Aichi: almost all elementary and junior high schools will participate in the tree-planting campaign of *The Green Wave*, a youth environmental education initiative supported by the CBD Secretariat.

I therefore thank the organizers for their foresight in organizing the date and location of this year's URBIO. I also thank you in advance for the important work you will engage in over the next few days. Since the start of the CBD cities and biodiversity initiative, it has been clear to me and our partners that policies and strategies need to be based on sound science. Too often, decision makers do not have access to solid data – and in this case, with cities in the developing world responsible for more than 70 per cent of population growth in this century, this is not an acceptable risk.

This is why the Convention set up its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA). This is why, following the example of UNFCCC's IPCC, there is now a proposal to set up an International Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). This is why, since the inception of the cities' initiative, we have supported URBIO and similar scientific initiatives, including the Urban Biosphere programme proposed by UNESCO, to back-up the plan of action to be proposed for adoption at COP 10.

If we value biodiversity in cities, we need new measuring tools, new management strategies and policies, and new skills for local authorities. For all of this, economics must walk hand in hand with science. Indeed, the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity report, headed by Mr. Pavan Sukhdev of Deutsche Bank, contains a specific chapter for local administrators. In Curitiba last January at the second global meeting on cities and biodiversity, the TEEB report administrators came to listen to cases, expectations and recommendations from local authorities and cities. URBIO is a privileged platform for academia and specialists to discuss concrete recommendations to policy makers with economists, urban planners, developers, infrastructure specialists. COP 10 is the stage where Parties will use this input to define the next steps for the Convention.

With its over 350 submitted papers and 200 participants, URBIO is bringing together the latest research from several schools of thought on urban biodiversity, including the European, North American, Asian and African. One of the challenges you will have at this conference is how to disseminate the knowledge and data brought together here. I encourage the organizers to publish the conference proceedings. To this end, I offer the support of the CBD media, including our website and newsletters. This will make sure the wealth of knowledge and experience brought together in Nagoya through URBIO is available to all users.

URBIO is a key milestone in the roadmap towards COP 10 and the Nagoya City Summit, as it consolidates years of global research on urban biodiversity and its implications for design, planning and development. In a few months, we will review the use of the Singapore City Index on Biodiversity, after which we shall receive the results of Shanghai's Expo 2010. We look forward to your input during the Nagoya City Biodiversity Summit 2010.

It is clear that our future is urban. Designing the city of the future will make, arguably, the most significant difference in the battle for life on Earth. This design cannot be restricted to urban structures and systems: it must encompass the production systems that supply cities, often tens of thousands of miles away from consumption centres. It must consider the life cycle of products, since waste and "subproducts" from urban activities can damage ecosystems far away from mega-cities. Ultimately, it must change the consumption habits of *homo urbanus*.

I deeply appreciate the unique collaboration of specialist networks that came together to make URBIO possible. First, its pioneers such as Professor Dr. Norbert Müller who created the concept and organized the first URBIO conference in Erfurt. And now, the many technical associations supporting URBIO in Japan, as well as its co-chairs, Professor Morimoto and Mr. Inoue.

I wish you a productive conference. Please be assured of my commitment to take the outcomes of this critical meeting to the deliberations of COP 10, where we expect the adoption of a plan of action on cities and biodiversity, and where your words will be heard at the Aichi-Nagoya City Biodiversity Summit between 24 and 26 October. Much is at stake in this fight to make cities more biodiversity-friendly. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki said "The problem of Nature is the problem of human life." During this 2010 International Year of Biodiversity, we at the CBD express it as follows: Biodiversity is life. Biodiversity is OUR life.

Thank you for your kind attention.
