



**MESSAGE BY**

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**ON THE OCCASION OF**

**THE 4<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM OF THE NATIONAL  
INSTITUTE OF BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES, THE MINISTRY  
OF THE ENVIRONMENT, REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

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

Distinguished delegates,  
Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Republic of Korea (Korea), with its bountiful mountains and rivers, and marine environment where warm and cold ocean currents converge, is endowed with diverse landscapes and ecosystems hosting a rich biodiversity. The National Institute of Biological Resources (NIBR), although still young, already preserves almost 2 million specimens. Its clear prioritization of collecting native Korean species and involving the public by providing educational programmes for youth and adults promises that the people of Korea will develop a high level of awareness of the biodiversity surrounding and sustaining their lives. I would like to congratulate all of you on your accomplishment in opening the first national natural history collection and research institute dedicated to biodiversity sciences.

Two years ago, the world welcomed the Korean government's Low Carbon, Green Growth policy, and Korea has achieved remarkable growth in green technology and economy since then. Korea is now ranked as a high-income economy by the World Bank. Indeed, Korea is the current chair of the Group of Twenty (G-20) and will be the first country in Asia to host the G-20 summit in Seoul in November 2010. Moreover, Korea is one of the 24 selected OECD members in the Development Assistance Committee, a group of the world's major donor countries contributing to development aid and poverty reduction in developing countries. The theme of today's symposium, "Biodiversity and Development" is indeed timely and appropriate for the NIBR to host as the leading national institute for the science of biodiversity resources.

Biodiversity is essential to achieving the green economy, as biodiversity is part and parcel of the sustainable development agenda, and is an important tool for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, particularly Goal 7. It is for this reason that the Johannesburg target of substantially reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 was included as part of Goal 7. Also, a unit on biodiversity for development and poverty alleviation was established by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2006 with the support of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), Agence Française de Développement (AFD), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Additionally, the day after tomorrow, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the world will be celebrating the International Day for Biological Diversity under the theme "biodiversity for development and poverty alleviation". Finally, on 22 September 2010 a high-level event of the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly will be held with participation of Heads of State and governments to celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB), and will have the theme on "biodiversity, development and poverty alleviation" on its agenda. The summary of the chair will be sent to the high-level segment of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 10) on 27-29 October 2010 in Nagoya, which will have also before it a new strategic plan for 2011-2020. The new strategic plan has, as one of its core objectives, the integration of biodiversity into the development sector. To this end, a meeting of heads of bilateral and multilateral donor agencies will be held on 26 October.

Last week in Nairobi, the Secretariat of the CBD released the third edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-3) based on 120 national reports. The news is not good. We continue to lose biodiversity at unprecedented rate. The scenario for the future calls for the

integration of biodiversity agendas in all sectors of the economy. South Korea will host the G-20 in November, one month after COP 10, and will have a unique opportunity to play a leadership role in promoting the new strategic plan to be adopted by the expected 10000 participants representing 193 Parties to the Convention and their partners as part of the green economy. This will be South Korea's contribution to celebrating the International Year of Biodiversity.

In light of the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan of the CBD, the role of the NIBR and the biodiversity specialists congregated here today will be more important than ever to project the scientific evidence to the national biodiversity targets, and to monitor the effectiveness of your national strategies and actions.

In East Asia, biodiversity-monitoring capacity at each national level is diverse, and not adequate. The Conference of the Parties to the CBD has indicated that taxonomic capacity is a priority to implement the Convention. To guide and ensure that each country has the capacity to identify and monitor biodiversity, the programme of work for the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) was developed. The programme of work for the GTI was designed to build national taxonomic capacity through the networks of regional and global collaboration, and to maximize the use of limited taxonomic expertise and information resources to achieve the goals of the CBD.

Last year, at the ASEAN+3 Global Taxonomy Initiative Workshop held in Manila, Philippines, the Korean Ministry of the Environment indicated that Korea is among the 14 Asian countries participating in the regional taxonomic capacity-building project, East and Southeast Asia Biodiversity Inventory Initiative, and increasingly contributes to regional biodiversity research and information-sharing.

Recognizing the scale of species biodiversity in Asia, the task is daunting. However, as old Korean proverb says "Heonritgileun han geoleumbuteo" ---a journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. I am fully aware that the NIBS, the Ministry of the Environment and Korean scientists will provide the strong leadership required to build regional taxonomic capacity and national implementation of the CBD. The two million specimens securely preserved within the last year at the NIBS prove that the first steps have been firmly taken.

I wish you every success in your symposium today and look forward to receiving the report on Biodiversity and Development.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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