



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



STATEMENT

by

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE NATIONAL SEMINAR ON BIODIVERSITY 2010
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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,
Salamat Pagi,

Two years after the adoption at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development of the target of reducing substantially the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010, the President of the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Dato' Seri Law Hieng Ding, called upon the 2,000 participants attending the Kuala Lumpur meeting to translate the decisions of the Parties into concrete actions. Six years after, this call for action remains an urgent priority.

Last month, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity released the third *Global Biodiversity Outlook*—a wide-ranging synthesis of the state of biodiversity today. The report of the status of biodiversity in 2010 was prepared on the basis of the 120 national reports from Parties to the Convention, including the one submitted by Malaysia on 30 April 2009. The report shows that the nations of the world have individually and collectively failed to meet the 2010 biodiversity target. Reviewing all available evidence, GBO3 concludes that we continue to drive species extinct at up to 1,000 times the natural background rate.

The report shows that the five main global drivers of biodiversity loss have not only remained more or less constant over the last decade, but are in some cases intensifying. These drivers include habitat loss, the unsustainable use and overexploitation of resources, climate change, invasive alien species, and pollution. The report further warns that irreparable degradation may take place if ecosystems are pushed beyond their tipping points, leading to the widespread and irreversible loss of ecosystem services that we depend on greatly.

The poor will suffer the most if we do not change our ways. Three hundred million people worldwide, the majority poor, are estimated to depend substantially on forest biodiversity, including non-wood forest products, for their survival and livelihood. And yet about 13 million hectares of the world's forests are lost due to deforestation each year.

One billion people depend on fish as their only or main source of animal protein, while fish provided more than 2.6 billion people with at least 20 per cent of their average per capita animal protein intake. And yet about half of marine stocks worldwide were fully exploited in 2005, while another one quarter were over-exploited, depleted or recovering from depletion.

Coral reefs provide food and livelihood for most of the estimated 30 million small-scale fishers in the developing world. And yet 60 per cent of coral reefs could be lost by 2030 through damage caused by fishing, pollution, disease, invasive alien species and coral bleaching.

Needless to say, Malaysians depend on biodiversity for their prosperity just as much as the inhabitants of other countries—and perhaps more so, given the tremendous biological wealth of this country. For example, it has been estimated that each square kilometre of mangrove in Matang is worth about US\$ 250,000 per year in fishery value alone.

That is why in the first edition of the CBD newsletter *Gincana*, former Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi wrote: “In the endeavour to achieve economic growth and a better quality of life for the population, we become increasingly aware of the need to balance competing requirements in order to safeguard the future.”

The *Global Biodiversity Outlook* contains also scenario for the future and demonstrates that business as usual is no more an option for mankind. It is for this reason that in Nagoya, in October this year the expected 10,000 participants will adopt a new Strategic Plan of the Convention for the period 2011-2020 with the full engagement and active participation of all stakeholders, including Heads of State and Government, ministers, youth, local and indigenous

authorities, parliamentarians, cooperative agencies and the private sector. The new Strategic Plan will contain “SMART” targets—goals that are at once strategic, measurable, ambitious, yet realistic and time-bound.

The post-2010 Strategic Plan is expected to have several other key components. These include:

- Drawing strong links between biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being;
- Addressing the economic value of biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- Making explicit the importance of biodiversity preservation for poverty eradication and the achievement of the millennium development goals;
- Addressing both the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss, the latter including, *inter alia*, excessive consumption, for example of fossil fuels and meat, population growth, environmentally harmful subsidies, and a lack of public awareness about the harmful consequences of biodiversity loss;
- Promoting concerted action by all by all sectors of government and society in addressing biodiversity loss; and
- Linking such action with efforts to combat and adapt to climate change.

In sum, the new Strategic Plan is being devised with the realization that in order to achieve sustainable development, the preservation of our biological resources must be mainstreamed into society at large, including our economic systems and markets.

As Gro Harlem Brundtland stated, “You cannot tackle hunger, disease, and poverty unless you can also provide people with a healthy ecosystem in which their economies can grow.”

This message is at the heart of the biodiversity agenda in 2010. I would like to pay tribute to Prof. Zakri, for translating this message in the core findings of the GBO 3 in his capacity as the co-chair of the scientific review committee of the GBO 3. Indeed the contribution of the son of Malaysia and a former Chair of the Scientific Body of the Convention has been outstanding as was the contribution of Ambassador Ting, known as “the Malaysian Tigress” during the negotiations of the Convention.

As a megabiodiverse country, Malaysia has made a significant contribution in promoting at both national and international level the biodiversity agenda. With an estimated 15,000 species of vascular plants, 229 species of mammals, 742 species of birds, 242 species of amphibians, 567 species of reptiles, over 290 species of freshwater fish, and over 500 species of marine fish, Malaysia has so much to win in protecting its natural assets. Malaysia has been leading by example. The country’s fourth national report to the Convention shows that in 2007, 43.4 per cent of Malaysia’s 19.6 million hectares of forested areas were gazetted as permanent reserved forest and 5.9 per cent were gazetted as national parks, wildlife and bird sanctuaries.

Further, the Department of Marine Parks Malaysia (DMPM) has gazetted 42 islands in Peninsular Malaysia and federal territories as marine parks, with another 32 islands falling within the area of marine park waters. In all, 20 per cent of the islands in Peninsular Malaysia and federal territories are located within the area managed by the DMPM.

For delivering this message, the international community owes Malaysia a debt of gratitude. This message has been reinforced during this year celebration by Malaysia of the International Year on Biodiversity. The recently launched “One Malaysian, One Tree” initiative is a case in point as well as today convening of the National Seminar on Biodiversity. Last week’s

biosafety meeting that I had the honour to attend was another contribution of Malaysia to furthering the biodiversity agenda.

In a recent meeting, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak stated, “There is little value in pursuing a future based entirely on wealth creation. Pursuing growth that depletes resources and displace communities will have dire consequences for future generations. This is a false and futile choice. We can have a powerful and dynamic economic approach, but one that protects the nation we love for future generations. High and sustained growth and environmental stewardship can and must go hand-in-hand.”

The overall goal of the International Year of Biodiversity and the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit in October this year is to give us better choices than the ones we have had—new choices that allow us to live in harmony with nature while at the same time increasing our quality of life. For we cannot do one without doing the other.

As the slogan of the International Year reminds us: Biodiversity is life...biodiversity is OUR life.

Thank you for your kind attention
