



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

STATEMENT

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**THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

ON THE OCCASION OF

***SECOND MEETING OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON
PROTECTED AREAS AND ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS***

**15 SEPTEMBER 2010
Strasbourg, FRANCE**

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Ladies and Gentlemen,



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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 Gentleman

It gives me immense pleasure to address you all on the occasion of the second meeting of the group of experts on protected areas and ecological networks under the aegis of the Bern Convention. I congratulate the Council of Europe for organizing this important meeting in this beautiful city of Strasbourg, with rich natural heritage, an ideal setting. One of main objectives of this expert meeting is to discuss the progress towards setting up of the emerald network – an ecological network of protected areas. It is befitting to call it as an “emerald network” as well managed protected areas harbouring participatory and equitable governance mechanisms yield significant benefits far beyond their boundaries, which can be translated into cumulative advantages across a national economy and contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development including achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Moreover as the detrimental impact of climate change is threatening our existence, protected areas provide a convenient solution to an inconvenient truth. With the recent launch of the landmark report “TEEB for Policymakers” – which comprehensively draws the links between biodiversity, poverty and development – there should be no doubt that protected areas must continue to be a focal point of biodiversity preservation efforts in the years to come

In February 2004, the CBD Parties made the most comprehensive and specific protected area commitments ever made by the international community by adopting the Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA). The PoWPA enshrines development of participatory, ecologically representative and effectively managed national and regional systems of protected areas, where necessary stretching across national boundaries, integrating with other land uses, and contributing the human wellbeing. . From designation to management, the PoWPA can be considered as a defining framework or “blueprint” for protected areas for the coming decades. It is a framework for cooperation between Governments, donors, NGOs and local communities,

Goal 1.2 of the PoWPA specifically calls for integrating protected areas into broader land and seascapes and sectors to maintain the structural and functional viability of ecosystems. The target for goal 1.2 of the PoWPA states that “By 2015, all protected areas and protected area systems are integrated into the wider land- and seascape, and relevant sectors, by applying the ecosystem approach and taking into account ecological connectivity and the concept, where appropriate, of ecological networks”.

The unprecedented increase in the human use of natural resources over the last century has adversely affected ecosystems, leading to their fragmentation and loss of biological diversity. Protected areas that remain as isolated units, surrounded by a radically altered habitat, almost always face serious viability problems over the long term. In addition to fragmentation of physical landscape, policies and programmes of economic sectors particularly those directly related to natural resource use and management such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, wildlife utilization, mining and tourism will also impinge protected areas and biodiversity conservation, resulting in loss of ecosystem services. Protected areas established in isolation may not fully yield the expected benefits in the long run. If protected areas are solely the concern of the environment sector, then their benefits are not as great as when other sectors such as mining, tourism and energy participate in protected area planning and management within a balance that benefit all.

Creating or restoring functional linkages between protected areas and their surrounding regions is essential if we are to strengthen ecological coherence and resilience for both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. The need to integrate protected areas into the wider landscape and sectors is all the more imperative, in order to address the adverse impacts of climate change. Fragmentation impairs the ability of a species to adapt to rapidly shifting habitat patterns and ecological processes that result from climate change, further weakening their resilience, and increasing the likelihood of local and widespread extinctions. Because the severity and distribution of the impacts of climate change are so uncertain, the

maintenance of landscape connectivity across biophysical gradients is essential to safeguarding biodiversity.

By integrating protected areas into wider landscape and seascape, and by incorporating protected areas into sectoral plans and strategies, governments can be certain that their investments in protected areas will pay biodiversity and social dividends well into future. A recent report that summarized over 1,000 studies world wide, for example, estimated that investments in creating and managing protected area networks would yield a return on societal benefits on the order of between 25:1 and 100:1.

The 14th meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention while reviewing the progress in the implementation of PoWPA adopted a land mark recommendation on ways and means to further improve its implementation for consideration by the Conference of Parties at its tenth meeting next month in Nagoya. The SBSTTA recommended that Parties to achieve target 1.2 of the PoWPA by 2015, through concerted efforts to integrate protected areas into wider landscapes and seascapes and sectors, including through the use of connectivity measures such as the development of ecological networks and biological corridors the restoration of degraded habitats and landscapes in order to address climate-change impacts and increase resilience to climate change. In addition. Noting the progress in regional initiatives, such as the Natura 2000, Emerald Networks, and regional Conventions, it recommended that Parties to foster the formation of such initiatives and formulate regional action plans. In addition the Executive Secretary is invited to support coordination and communication to strengthen synergies with regional conventions and global conventions as well as national policies and strategies in the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas.

Set in front of this impressive background, the organization of this expert meeting intends to recognize best practices and lessons learned, to identify current shortcomings or omissions, and suggest ways and means to strengthen implementation of the Pan –European Ecological Network which ultimately contribute to the implementation of CBD PoWPA.

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties next month in Nagoya will chart a new vista for biodiversity as the 194 Parties to the CBD are going to adopt a strategic plan for biodiversity per se not a strategic plan for CBD alone, whose effective implementation contributes the well being of our planet and our own survival and survival of life on our planet. The COP 10 also will also adopt a landmark decision on PoWPA , through which ecologically representative and effectively managed national and regional protected areas are established to achieve the strategic plan for 2011-2020, ecological and livelihood security of our planet.

I urge you all to continue with the good work you have done to date.

Thank you for your kind attention.