



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

STATEMENT BY
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ON THE OCCASION OF

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

Biodiversity for Development

It is a pleasure and an honour to be addressing you today at the Millennium Campus Conference. This 2010 year is undoubtedly a pivotal year for the progress of biodiversity conservation. The United Nations General Assembly declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity, which also coincides with the finish line of the target adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to “achieve, by 2010, a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biodiversity”.

This 2010 Biodiversity Target, adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, has also been integrated as a contribution to the Millennium Development Goals established by the United Nations to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, gender inequality and environmental degradation.

In 1992 the Convention on Biological Diversity, or CBD, was opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. The CBD was the first legally-binding international treaty to comprehensively cover all aspects of biodiversity – genes, species and ecosystems – and was created in response to the increasing pressures that humans were placing on life on Earth. It has three main objectives: the conservation of biodiversity, its sustainable use, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

Despite the progress we have made in gathering political momentum, it has not yet made a difference on the ground. The recent scientific data on global biodiversity trends and status demonstrate that the 2010 Biodiversity Target has not been met. The third edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook recently published by the Convention on Biological Diversity and based on a global analysis of biodiversity indicators and national reports submitted by governments, shows continuing and often accelerating species extinctions and loss of natural habitat. The Outlook warns that “There is a high risk of dramatic biodiversity loss and accompanying degradation of a broad range of ecosystem services if ecosystems are pushed beyond certain thresholds or tipping points”, from which it may be difficult or impossible to recover.

Considering this, reversing the loss of biodiversity can no longer be considered as an issue separate from the core concerns of society. And the stakes are even higher, as biodiversity loss is a matter of global social responsibility with strong equity implications.

There is a deep urgency to promote reflection on the role of biodiversity conservation for human development. This conference is therefore timely and important and I invite you to consider the implications of biodiversity for human well-being in its various dimensions with a special attention on its contribution to vulnerable populations.

Biodiversity is not only a natural heritage to preserve for its intrinsic value, but the network of life that supports human populations and ensures the equilibrium of our planet. More than being the sum of species, genes and ecosystems, biodiversity also means the interactions between them. These interactions between living organisms provide us with a number of essential natural services that are the foundation of our existence. The erosion of biodiversity entails both a degradation of these services and the economic impoverishment of all human societies. It is estimated that 70% of the world’s poorest live in rural areas and depend directly on biodiversity for their day to day survival and well-being. Considering that most of them have few choices for substitute livelihoods, the consequences of the degradation of biodiversity and ecosystem services are severe.

Also, poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation share a reciprocal influence, either mutually reinforcing each other or leading downward into increased destitution and loss. Many governments of developing countries identified poverty in their national biodiversity reports as a major obstacle to ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources.

This relationship between poverty, bio-physical environment and human development was highlighted as early as in UNDP's Human Development Report of 1992: "One of the greatest threats to sustainable human and economic development comes from the downward spiral of poverty and environmental degradation that threaten current and future generations...the poor are disproportionately threatened by the environmental hazards and health risks posed by pollution, inadequate housing, poor sanitation, polluted water and lack of other basic services. Many of these already deprived people also live in the most ecologically vulnerable areas". Therefore, sustainable development cannot be achieved if biodiversity is compromised by development efforts.

Though human existence relies on the continued provisioning of ecosystems services, biodiversity is very rarely included in our economic outlook because it is mainly a public good, and has no impact on formal economic markets. A recent study on *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity* reported that there are an estimated 480 million people in India that derive their livelihood from small-scale farming, animal husbandry, informal forestry, fisheries and other such activities. Collectively, we refer to these small-scale or informal sectors as the "GDP of the poor", being the basement sectors from which most of the developing world's poor draw their livelihood and employment. If tabulated against conventional GDP the contribution of ecosystem services comes to about 7%. However, if only the "GDP of the poor" is considered, the contribution of ecosystem services jumps to 57%.

LIVELIHOODS AND EMPLOYEMENT

- Nearly a sixth of the world's population depend on protected areas for significant percent of their livelihoods.
- Over a billion people in developing countries rely on fish as a major source of food and 80% of the world fisheries are fully or overexploited.
- Number of people in the worlds who rely on timber and non-timber forest products: 1.6 billion
- Around 30 million people in the poorest and most vulnerable coastal and inland communities entirely depend on coral reefs for their livelihoods. And yet 60 per cent of coral reefs could be lost by 2030 through fishing damage, pollution, disease, invasive alien species and coral bleaching.

Biodiversity and its services can shape the development of a country or region by providing resources for economic sectors like agriculture, timber production, fishing, tourism and others. Many developing countries rely on these highly productive economic sectors. Biodiversity-based assets can yield significant economic benefits, ensuring not only that "the rich do not turn poor" but also helping to pave the way out of poverty. With this in mind, *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity* (TEEB), to be launched in Nagoya, will help bring attention to the importance of biodiversity for sustainable development and ultimately contribute to the successful implementation of our post-2010 strategic plan. As the Zen Buddhist, D.T. Suzuki once said, "The problem of Nature is the problem of human life."

For the first time in history, the world's urban population now exceeds that of rural areas. A new era has been born—the era of "*Homo Urbanus*", the city dweller. This development is expected to have far-reaching implications for humanity and for biodiversity.

The growing urban world represents one of the most dramatic changes experienced by humanity in recent history. In 1820, London became the first modern city with a population of more than one million. Sixteenth other cities had joined the list by 1900. Today, the list includes 411 cities.

In 1950, only two cities—New York and Tokyo—had a population of more than 10 million. Today, there are more than 20 megacities on the planet, and, with the exception of New York and Tokyo, they are all located in developing countries. By 2030, four out of five urban residents in the world will live in developing countries and most of them in slums. Already about 1 billion urban dwellers live in slums. As stated by Dr. Jacques Diouf, the Director-General of FAO, 150 growing cities will soon reach the size of

New York.

If not managed adequately, the growth of the urban population may accelerate the unprecedented loss of biodiversity on our planet. Cities occupy 2 per cent of the planet's surface but their residents use 75 per cent of the Earth's natural resources. Large populations living in megacities consume massive amounts of energy, thus contributing to climate change, which has been identified as one of the main drivers of the unprecedented loss of biodiversity. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) up to 30 per cent of all known species may disappear before the end of this century as a result of climate change.

As a result of this growing issue, the 2020 biodiversity target will be integrated in the plan of action on cities and biodiversity that will be adopted at the Nagoya City Biodiversity Summit. An Urban Biodiversity Index developed under the leadership of Singapore will be also adopted at COP10, while the 2020 biodiversity target will be integrated into the multi-year plan of action on South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development, which was developed through a partnership between the Group of 77 and China and the Secretariat of the CBD.

The cities and biodiversity plan of action will mirror the new strategic plan of the Convention for 2011-2020 which will contain a biodiversity vision for 2050 and biodiversity target for 2020 as well as means of implementation and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The city and biodiversity initiative has been integrated as a major component of the post-2010 biodiversity vision. This vision will benefit from the leadership of the world's 192 heads of state and government. Indeed on 22 September 2010 in New York a high-level event on biodiversity will be held on the occasion of the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly. The vision of the leaders of the world will be submitted to the high-level segment of COP10 which will be held with the participation of city mayors as full partners of government officials.

The eight Millennium Development Goals: How biodiversity contributes

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were established when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration in September 2000. World leaders adopted a set of 8 measurable, time-bound goals and targets to reduce poverty, hunger and disease. Although Goal 7 of the MDGs is that of ensuring environmental sustainability *per se*, most MDGs touch upon biodiversity in an indirect manner as preserving it is important to the achievement of other MDG targets for the year 2015. This September in New York, for the first time ever a high-level segment of the UN General Assembly will discuss biodiversity and its links to poverty alleviation, sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Building on these events, the Convention's tenth Conference of the Parties (COP10) in Aichi/Nagoya marks a new dawn in the relationship between humans and nature, a new beginning in our attempt to live in peace and harmony with our fellow species on planet Earth.

The contribution of biodiversity to Goal 1 to **eradicate extreme hunger and poverty** is rather obvious if we consider that for the 1.1 billion people living in extreme poverty, maintaining ecosystem goods and services is critical for daily survival. Loss or change in local biodiversity could compromise the income and livelihood of poor people and can result in a reduction of crop and livestock genetic diversity, decreased availability of wild biological resources or destruction of crops due to diseases, invasive species or natural disasters, all threatening food security for the poor.

How much can biodiversity help to **achieve universal primary education**, Goal 2 of the MDGs? Many families in the developing world depend on biological resources and a shortage of these resources increases the workload of families, including children, which makes it harder for them to attend school.

Goal 3 is about **promoting gender equality and empowering women**. To conserve biodiversity, we need

to understand and develop gender-differentiated biodiversity practices, and gendered knowledge acquisition and usage. Gender considerations are not solely a women's issue; instead, they can yield advantages for whole communities and benefit both sexes. Such insights are being included in the CBD's outlook and approach to reverse biodiversity loss.

Goals 4, 5 and 6 are health-related issues, specifically **reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases**. The World Health Organization has documented that human health is highly dependent on a healthy, well-functioning environment, which cannot exist without biodiversity. Thus, the contribution of biodiversity to health is much more important than we might think.

In Africa, it is estimated that 80% of the people rely on traditional medicines. In addition, the availability of safe drinking water, to which ecosystems make an irreplaceable contribution, is directly related to health, while declines in biodiversity are also associated with a rise in vector-based and other diseases.

The last MDG Goal, number 8, is to establish a Global partnership for development. A stronger partnership between all stakeholders is necessary to achieve poverty alleviation and development, and the protection of biodiversity upon which both depend. The Convention on Biological Diversity therefore aims to bring together the national, sub-national levels of government, international organisations and NGOs with local and indigenous communities to work together to reverse the loss of biodiversity and related ecosystem services. Local action, action that reflects the perspectives and commitment of local actors, is critical; local and indigenous actors make the vast majority of daily environmental decisions. Working on the front lines of environment and poverty is necessary to reach successful development solutions centered on biodiversity and natural resources.

Another major challenge is enlarging people's choices when it comes to biodiversity and development, which means selecting and developing better policies and investments, including institutional capacity development. Sharing the benefits that arise from ecosystem management with local people is also essential. As a response to this need, the CBD Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing will be a unique tool for achieving sustainable development and alleviating poverty. It will promote a new economic order by establishing a new relationship between humans and nature and a renewed North-South relationship through a genuine partnership between the owners and users of genetic resources.

The Road Ahead

Fortunately there is also cause for optimism. Recognizing the link between biodiversity loss, climate change, hunger, poverty and hunger, the Convention on Biological Diversity and its partners are committed to tackling these problems synergistically. At the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2008 in Bonn, Germany, 20 out of the 37 decisions taken called on Parties and the Secretariat to address development and poverty issues through biodiversity initiatives. In particular, decision IX/25 on South-South cooperation highlights this as a powerful tool to enhance international cooperation for achieving sustainable development and in this era of rapid globalization. Indeed, the importance of cooperation between countries of the South in sharing their expertise and experiences cannot be overemphasized.

Also during COP9, a high-level panel was convened on Biodiversity for Development and Poverty Alleviation, which saw the official launching of the new Biodiversity for Development Initiative, established by the Secretariat with the support of the French and German Governments. Moreover, the German Government launched a major initiative to enhance the scope and management of protected areas. Entitled the *LifeWeb Initiative*, its aim is to match voluntary commitments for the designation of new protected areas and improved management of existing areas with commitments for dedicated financing.

More specifically, the *LifeWeb Initiative* strives to provide funds to the Governments who are willing to protect more areas but do not have the financial means to do so.

Indeed the value of protected areas is multifaceted. In cooperation with the Friends of Protected Area Work Programme, at COP9 the Secretariat launched the report on “The Value of Nature: ecological, economic, cultural and social benefits of protected areas”. It provides concrete examples of how a robust biodiversity has helped to alleviate poverty to date and highlights how global efforts are making a difference.

Next month in Japan, the Convention on Biological Diversity and hundreds of world leaders will meet to discuss these issues and to adopt the Aichi/Nagoya 2011-2020 strategic plan of the CBD. The new strategic plan will incorporate a 2050 biodiversity vision, a 2020 biodiversity target and sub-targets, and contain a means of implementation as well as a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. Moreover, it will comprehensively address biodiversity loss so as to ensure that the poor will not become poorer and that humanity as a whole will not suffer in the future from the extensive loss of biological goods and ecosystem services. To do this, the new strategic plan will emphasize that biodiversity loss is interlinked with a range of issues, from poverty to climate change, water scarcity, growth in demand, development and international conflict, and therefore can no longer be treated as a stand-alone issue.

The proceedings in Nagoya will also include the adoption of a multi-year plan of action on South-South Cooperation following discussions at the First Forum of the G77 and China on “Biodiversity for Development”. All of this will be done with the participation and input of a broad range of stakeholders, including youth, local and indigenous authorities, parliamentarians, cooperative agencies and the private sector.

The ministerial segment of the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit will also be held with the participation of heads of state and their partners. Indeed the expected 120 ministers will establish a dialogue with their partners, in particular with mayors, parliamentarians, youth, indigenous peoples and non-governmental organizations, but also with CEO of companies. Finally, a Business and Biodiversity Initiative will be adopted at COP10. Overall, in Nagoya a Global Alliance to protect life on Earth will be established. Indeed, when governments and heads of state meet this fall, first in New York at the United Nations General Assembly in September, and then later in Nagoya Japan for the tenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, they will have in mind the long-term wellbeing and prosperity of humanity as they formulate a global strategy for addressing biodiversity over the next decade, and a biodiversity vision for the next 50 years.

Conclusion

It is my hope that this conference will help lift the veil on the enormous potential of biodiversity in the long march towards of the worldwide alleviation of poverty. I invite you to participate with a spirit of receptivity to the different biodiversity and development perspectives presented here. Learning from the different case studies, local success stories, debates and obstacles presented is an excellent way to take the pulse of local realities when it comes to biodiversity.

Finally, I wish to express my deep gratitude to all those who have contributed to this conference and shared their knowledge to enrich us all; common thinking, efforts and actions are urgently needed to reverse the dramatic loss of biodiversity and to ensure fair and sustainable development for all human populations and their children. Congratulations on this great effort you have all made and please keep in mind the Biodiversity is life...biodiversity is OUR life.

Thank you very much for your time.