



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

## **STATEMENT**

**BY MR AHMED DJOGLAF**

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF**

**THE OCEANS DAY AT CANCUN**  
*Oceans: Essential to Life, Essential to Climate*

*at the*

**SIXTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE  
PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK  
CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

*Cancún, Mexico, 4 December 2010*

*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

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands, and the other collaborating organizations for once again convening an Oceans Day, building on the success of the Oceans Day convened at the margins of the recent meeting of our Conference of the Parties in Nagoya, Japan, to highlight the important links between climate change and our planet's seas and oceans.

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity recently released the third edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, which shows that marine biodiversity continues to decline at an unprecedented rate. This is, in part, attributable to the emergence, in past 15 years, of new drivers of biodiversity loss, in particular those emerging threats caused by climate change and ocean acidification.

In the Pacific region, for example, critical sea turtle nesting beaches will come under threat within the next 50 years from sea-level rise. In the Arctic, by 2032 the under-saturation of key carbonate minerals as a result of ocean acidification will disrupt the marine food web. Globally, one third of reef-building corals face elevated risk of extinction due to climate change.

At its tenth meeting, held this past October in Nagoya, Japan, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity noted with concern the adverse impact of climate change on marine and coastal biodiversity and called upon all 193 Parties to the Convention to highlight the role of marine and coastal ecosystems within climate-change mitigation and adaptation; to promote sustainable management, conservation and enhancement of natural carbon sequestration services of marine and coastal biodiversity; and to enhance the resilience of coastal and marine ecosystems.

The Parties also adopted the new Strategic Plan of the Convention for the period 2011-2020, which includes three important targets for oceans, namely:

1. By 2015, the multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized;
2. By 2020, all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem-based approaches;
3. Also by 2020, at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas are conserved through protected areas.

The activities under the Convention on Biological Diversity with regard to the links between climate change and oceans have not been developed in isolation, nor should they be implemented so. As we move towards Rio+20, the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, we have a responsibility and an opportunity to enhance cooperation for the achievement of our two inter-related yet distinct mandates.

This is especially true when considering planning processes. Thanks to a generous contribution from the Government of Japan, all national biodiversity strategies and action plans developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity are to be revised and updated in a manner that, among other things, mainstreams climate-change issues and enhances consistency with national

adaptation plans. We will also be strengthening outreach and awareness-raising through the Rio Convention's Ecosystems and Climate Change Pavilion, which was held for the first time in Nagoya and is here in Cancun as a virtual Pavilion bringing together a number of events linking biodiversity, climate change and sustainable land management.

This cooperation reflects a responsibility to maintain global processes as well as a responsibility to individual communities and species. The Dugong, or sea cow, for example, already suffers from the impacts of climate change, including increased intensity and frequency of storms resulting in reduced light penetration and a consequent decline in the availability of seagrasses, its primary source of food. Looking at a whole community, indigenous peoples from the native village of Gambell, Alaska, have observed many impacts of climate on their lives and livelihoods, including the reduction in tom and blue cod harvests in winter and the decreased "toughness" of walrus hides traditionally used for boat-making.

For our part, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity will be working to identify how potential and emerging threats to marine and coastal biodiversity from ocean acidification, ocean-based geo-engineering and other related climate change response measures may hamper efforts to achieve the revised Strategic Plan of the Convention.

To this end, the Secretariat will convene a series of joint expert review processes to monitor and assess the impacts of ocean acidification and an expert workshop on the role of marine and coastal biodiversity in climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Secretariat will also support, as requested, the development of joint activities between the three Rio conventions.

As I said on the occasion of the Convention's first-ever Oceans Day, held at the margins of the tenth meeting of our Conference of the Parties in Nagoya, achieving our goals and improving the health of the oceans will require the engagement of all relevant sectors and civil society groups. Our success depends on collaborative efforts, with the inherent understanding that our own well-being depends on the health of the oceans.

Thank you for your attention.

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