



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

STATEMENT BY
MR AHMED DJOGHLAF
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

ON THE OCCASION OF

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON BIODIVERSITY AND
CLIMATE CHANGE

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Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800, Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9, Canada
Tel : +1 514 288 2220, Fax : +1 514 288 6588
secretariat@cbd.int www.cbd.int



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

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to address you today. Please accept my sincere thanks for including me in this important event as a part of the International Year of Biodiversity celebrations. I would also like to thank the Centre for Oceans, Rivers, Atmosphere and Land Sciences for organizing and hosting this unique event.

For the last 11 months, the world has been celebrating the International Year of Biodiversity and, on 22 May of this year, the International Day for Biological Diversity was observed under theme “Biodiversity, Development and Poverty Alleviation”. Both global occasions provide a unique opportunity to raise public awareness on the importance of biodiversity to sustainable development and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. These three aspects are inextricably linked to each other, and more importantly in this case, to climate change.

Despite various efforts made at the national, regional and global level toward meeting the 2010 biodiversity target to achieve a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss, recent global marine environmental assessments have observed serious declines in marine living resources, losses of coastal habitats, elevated pollution levels, and poor water quality in many areas. More significantly, overall deterioration of the marine environment is being exacerbated by the effects of climate change, and coastal communities and local economies are adversely impacted by such trends as poverty, land use changes, overfishing, nutrient loading, sewage, and coastal developments, which put the capacity of the marine environment beyond its sustainable limit.

The oceans cover 70 percent of the planet’s surface area, and marine and coastal environments contain diverse habitats that support an abundance of marine life. Life in our seas produces a third of the oxygen that we breathe, offers a valuable source of protein and moderates global climatic change. Some examples of marine and coastal habitats include mangrove forests; coral reefs; sea grass beds; estuaries in coastal areas; hydrothermal vents; and seamounts and soft sediments on the ocean floor a few kilometres below the surface.

The third edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-3), launched world-wide last May, alarmed the world community with gloomy news on our biodiversity status. The GBO-3 showed serious declines in marine living resources, losses of coastal habitats, elevated pollution levels, and poor water quality in many areas. Nevertheless, this year’s efforts have been tremendous, as recognized by its awarding of the Green Award for the best global environmental campaign last week in London. Most importantly, the year contributed to the historic success of the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit.

In Nagoya, a new biodiversity strategy for 2011-2020 with ambitious targets was adopted as the overarching biodiversity framework of the whole biodiversity family. The Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing was also adopted, as well as the Kuala Lumpur-Nagoya Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress. In addition, a pavilion on ecosystem-based management to climate change was organized by the three secretariats of the Rio Conventions and 19 partners. As a result, the Nagoya summit adopted a comprehensive decision on biodiversity and climate change emphasizing more clearly than ever the need for joint activities

at the national level between the three Rio Conventions. We are now hoping to keep this momentum going into 2011, the International Year of Forests, and through to the Rio+20 Earth Summit, during which both of our Conventions will celebrate their 20th anniversary.

The challenge we now face is to make sure that the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan becomes a living, breathing document that will produce concrete action over the years to come. To this end, the “Aichi Target” will be the overarching framework on biodiversity not only for the biodiversity-related conventions, but for the entire United Nations system. Parties agreed to translate this overarching international framework into national biodiversity strategy and action plans within two years. From now on, all sectors of society and government need to be actively involved in the struggle to preserve biodiversity.

The United Nations General Assembly has decided to declare 2011-2020 the United Nations Decade of Biodiversity. This decision offers an opportunity to continue raising public awareness on the interlinkages between climate change, biodiversity, soil and forests. In our common journey toward Rio +20 and beyond you can always count on the secretariat of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity as, indeed, *biodiversity is life... biodiversity is our life*.

I therefore commend you for organizing and participating in this international workshop on biodiversity and climate change. With the International Year of Biodiversity winding down, we need to make sure that the focus stays on biodiversity into the 2011 International Year of Forests and well beyond it.

Thank you for your kind attention.
