



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

STATEMENT

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE FIRST INDIAN BIODIVERSITY CONGRESS

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THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, INDIA



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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,

Allow me to thank you for organizing and participating in this First Indian Biodiversity Congress. It is most welcome that the congress is taking place at the end of this 2010 International Year of Biodiversity, allowing us to start early in building momentum toward COP11 in India in 2012. It is also fitting that the congress is taking place in Thiruvananthapuram, which Mahatma Gandhi called the "Evergreen city of India"

Gandhi also famously said that "a small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history." That could very well have been the motto of this historic year. Over the course of these past 12 months, the Parties and partners of the Convention have been on a mission: to make sure that humans do not fatally despoil the rich diversity of life on Earth.

As you know, this year the third edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook confirmed that we humans continue to drive species extinct at up to 1,000 times the natural background rate. Based on 120 national reports from Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as well as the scientific literature, the report warns that massive further loss of biodiversity is projected to occur before the end of this century and that ecosystem are approaching tipping points beyond which irreversible degradation will take place, with dire consequences for human wellbeing.

That is why at the CBD's historic tenth Conference of the Parties (COP10) in October in Nagoya, Japan, some 18,000 participants representing our 193 Parties and their partners agreed on a package of measures that, if implemented, will ensure that the ecosystems of the planet will continue to sustain human well-being into the future.

COP10 adopted the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan of the CBD, or "Aichi Target", which includes 20 headline targets, organized under five strategic goals that address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, reduce the pressures on biodiversity, safeguard biodiversity at all levels, enhance the benefits provided by biodiversity, and provide for capacity-building. Among the targets, Parties agreed to at least halve and where feasible bring close to zero the rate of loss of natural habitats including forests; protect 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10 per cent of marine and coastal areas; restore at least 15 percent of degraded areas; and make special efforts to reduce the pressures faced by coral reefs.

Importantly, actions in support of the Aichi Target will take place at subnational and local levels. Parties endorsed a plan of action on cities and biodiversity adopted by the Nagoya Biodiversity City summit attended by more than 200 mayors. 122 legislators from around the world attending the GLOBE meeting on parliamentarians and biodiversity declared their support for the implementation of the new Strategic Plan. Representatives of 34 bilateral and multilateral donor agencies agreed to translate the plan into their respective development cooperation priorities. At the Ecosystems Pavilion, heads of agencies and international organizations discussed ways to better integrate actions to combat biodiversity loss, climate change and land degradation. And a Multi-Year Plan of Action on South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development was adopted by the G77 and China.

Finance in support of implementation of the Convention was also forthcoming. The Prime Minister of Japan, Naoto Kan, announced USD 2 billion in financing, and Ryu Matsumoto, the Minister of Environment of Japan, announced the establishment of a Japan Biodiversity Fund. Additional financial resources were announced by France, the European Union and Norway, with nearly USD 110 million being mobilized in support of projects under the CBD LifeWeb Initiative, which aims at enhancing the protected-area agenda. Parties will define mechanisms in time for COP11 in India 2012 through which additional financial resources can be identified and channelled.

The meeting also adopted the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization. This historic agreement creates a framework that balances access to genetic resources on the basis of prior informed consent and mutually agreed terms with the fair and equitable sharing of benefits while taking into account the important role of traditional knowledge. The Protocol also proposes the creation of a global multilateral mechanism that will operate in transboundary areas or situations where prior informed consent cannot be obtained. The Nagoya Protocol is expected to gain early entry into force by 2012, with support from the Global Environment Facility of USD 1 million.

The challenge we now face is to make sure that the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan produces 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. Moreover, 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.

As host of COP11, I hope that India will take the lead in this process. As one of the world's megadiverse countries, harbouring some 8 per cent of all plant and animal species worldwide, I hope that India will take this historic opportunity to exercise leadership in the fight to save life on Earth. With faith in our mission and India leading us, we will undoubtedly be able to alter the course of history.

Thank you for your kind attention.