



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

STATEMENT BY
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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

ON THE OCCASION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
“BIODIVERSITY IS LIFE”

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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,

Sachal Sarmast, the great Sufi poet and native son of Khaipur, said “the brave speak the truth.” During this 2010 International Year of Biodiversity, the truth that was spoken was that we must act immediately to save life on Earth.

In May 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 ecosystems are approaching tipping points beyond which irreversible degradation will take place, with dire consequences for human wellbeing.

I am glad to say this warning did not go unheeded. At the CBD’s tenth Conference of the Parties (COP 10) 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.

The meeting adopted the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, 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 announced. The Prime Minister of Japan, His Excellency Mr. Naoto Kan, announced USD 2 billion in financing, and His Excellency Mr. 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 COP 11 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 Aichi Target produces concrete action over the years to come. To this end, it 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.

I am sure we can count the Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation (CBC) at Shah Abdul Latif University for its continued support, as it has been an integral partner during this year's celebrations. The centre has spearheaded various types of events in all the universities of Pakistan, including an upgrade of Shah Latif University and Botanical Garden and Herbarium; a celebration of the Neem tree as the tree of Sindh on the International Day for Biological Diversity; and the establishment of the Neem Network of Pakistan.

I would specifically like to thank the Director of CBC, Dr. Raza Bhatti, for his excellent and tireless work as the focal person for IYB. It is only thanks to the commitment of individuals like Dr. Bhatti and institutions like the CBC that we ultimately stand a chance to stop the destruction of biodiversity and save life on Earth.

Thank you kindly.
