



STATEMENT
by
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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
of the
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

at the opening session of the

**FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON
SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE**

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Madame Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the fifteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice. This is your first meeting in Montreal since 2005 and the first meeting since last year's Nagoya Biodiversity Summit.

It is therefore fitting, as we have just heard from our distinguished Chair, that the focus of your meeting this week is on the scientific and technical aspects of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. It is about the provision of guidance to Parties on the scientific and technical aspects of the implementation of the Strategic Plan. It is about enabling Parties to set targets on the basis of scientific evidence. It is about supporting Parties in their efforts to monitor progress towards the achievement of the Strategic Plan.

The thematic programmes of work you have developed over the years are means to achieve the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. The guidance on cross-cutting issues you have elaborated are means to achieve the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. Our partnerships with scientific and technical organizations are vehicles to achieve the Strategic Plan. And your deliberations this week are a manifestation of our joint desire to resolve the scientific and technical questions that may block the way towards the achievement of the Strategic Plan.

Now, the challenge that we are faced with is to translate the strategic plan into national and local reality. To this end, under agenda item 3.1, you are invited to discuss the technical rationales and indicators for the Strategic Plan. In that connection, revising national biodiversity strategies and action plans is matter of urgency that should be given high priority.

This is why the Japan Biodiversity Fund has been established. Indeed with the unique generous support from the Government of Japan twelve regional or subregional workshops have been organized since Nagoya and another three will take place before the end of this year. These workshops are designed to assist Parties and their partners in initiating the revision of their national strategy to integrate the Aichi Biodiversity targets while identifying and agreeing on national biodiversity targets tailored to their specific needs and circumstances. The eight Parties that have either developed or revised their national biodiversity strategies and action plans since the Nagoya meetings need to be commended.

Under agenda item 3.2, you will for the first time discuss ecosystem restoration. Your guidance on the scientific and technical aspects of ecosystem restoration is vital to enable countries, governments at all levels and other stakeholders, including the private sector, to make informed decisions so as to produce food and energy for a growing population without further accelerating biodiversity loss, thus achieving Aichi Targets 14 and 15 of the Strategic Plan. An encouraging example of progress towards these targets is the 'Bonn Challenge' launched in early September, which aims to restore 150 million hectares of degraded forest landscapes by 2020.

The clock is ticking. One year has already gone by since the Strategic Plan was agreed upon. Only nine years—some three thousand, three hundred and forty-two days—are left to achieve the Aichi targets. Today the Secretariat is launching the Aichi Target 2020 countdown. The ever-improving CBD home page, which had more than 20,000 unique visitors and 40,000 page views last month, will display a counter highlighting each day the number of days left to achieve the Aichi Targets by 31 December 2020. I therefore urge you to keep in mind in your deliberations that it is critical for us to move forward, to use the abundant guidance that exists now to establish your strategies, to plan and implement your actions, to monitor progress and report on it at the Hyderabad Biodiversity Summit next year as a means of living up to the historic commitments made in Nagoya.

In your endeavours to live up to those commitments, you can always count on the full support of your small but dedicated secretariat.

Since the last meeting of this body, the Secretariat has convened 26 scientific meetings, including the meetings of two ad hoc technical expert groups established by the Conference of the Parties. In addition, Jo and his colleagues in STTM have participated in numerous scientific gatherings with the aim of mobilizing the scientific community in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the utilization of genetic resources. Since the Nagoya meeting of the Conference of the Parties, you have received over 60 notifications on scientific and technical matters, and eight issues of the CBD Technical Series have been published. The SBSTTA Bureau has held six meetings, either face-to-face or by teleconference. .

This will not have been possible without the leadership of Mr. Jo Mulongoy, who has serviced with zeal, commitment and dedication 12 meetings of this body. As you may know, This will be the last meeting of SBSTTA to be serviced by Jo, who will retire by the end of the month. I wish to thank him here for his outstanding contribution to the scientific work of the Convention and ask you to join me in giving him a round of applause

I wish you constructive deliberations and a successful outcome at the end of this week.

I thank you for your attention.
