



STATEMENT BY

MR. AHMED DJOGHLAF

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

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE MEETING OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON BIODIVERSITY FOR POVERTY
ERADICATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**12 DECEMBER 2011
DEHRADUN, INDIA**



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



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COP 10 / MCP 5

Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Indian environmentalist Vandana Shiva has said: "In nature's economy the currency is not money, it is life."

This is just as true when it comes to the human economy. It is estimated that 1.6 billion people worldwide depend substantially on forest biodiversity, including non-wood forest products, for their survival and livelihood. 1 billion people are estimated to depend on fish as their sole or main source of animal protein, while fish provided more than 2.6 billion people with at least 20 percent of their average per capita animal protein intake. And around 30 million people in the poorest and most vulnerable coastal and inland communities entirely depend on coral reefs for their livelihoods.

The participants at last year's biodiversity summit in Nagoya had such figures in mind when they adopted the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, or the Aichi Targets. Target 14 relates directly to poverty reduction and local livelihoods: by 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.

Importantly, the development community was involved in formulating the Nagoya vision. Representatives of 34 bilateral and multilateral donor agencies agreed to translate the Aichi Targets into their respective development cooperation priorities. Moreover, a Multi-Year Plan of Action on South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development was adopted by the G77 and China.

At the same time, the private sector was also fully engaged at COP-10. In Nagoya the Parties decided to advance the mainstreaming of biodiversity and ecosystem services into business practices: among other things, they called for private sector engagement in establishing national and regional business and biodiversity initiatives, as well as in supporting national ecosystem services strategies. Underlying this engagement was the message that losing biodiversity and thus the services of nature brings substantial financial risks for the economy. For example, *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity* (TEEB) pegs the annual global cost of biodiversity loss at close to 3 trillion dollars.

As you know, to follow up on the outcomes of Nagoya decision X/6 called for the establishment of an Expert Group on Biodiversity for Poverty Eradication and Development. That has now been accomplished, and this first meeting of the Expert Group has two general tasks before it. The first is to elucidate the linkages between the three objectives of the Convention and poverty eradication and development processes, drawing upon expertise in both the biodiversity and development communities. The second is to identify the most effective approach towards a framework on capacity-development for mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services for sustainable development and poverty eradication, building on existing initiatives and in close cooperation with relevant organizations.

More specifically, this meeting is expected to:

(i) Review the analysis of the existing mechanisms, processes or initiatives for mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into poverty eradication and development by the Secretariat;

(ii) Identify the root causes of poverty that are possibly linked to biodiversity loss and suggest ways and means by which such causes may be removed or remediated by fulfilling the three objectives of the Convention;

(iii) Identify means for up-scaling good practices and lessons learned and sharing the linkages, between poverty eradication programmes and the three objectives of the Convention for sustainable development at the local, national, regional, subregional and global level;

(iv) Provide guidance and priorities for all relevant actors involved in development processes, including governments, sector ministries, implementation agencies and other target groups such as policy-makers, practitioners, scientist, media, education; and

(v) Ensure that the full range of biodiversity and ecosystem services considerations is taken into account to ensure that the guidance is consistent with the three objectives of the Convention and its Strategic Plan as well as to all the Millennium Development Goals and the Millennium Declaration.

The report you produce will then provide technical input to the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention at its fourth meeting in Montreal this May. There should be no doubt that this report is extremely important, for we are at a critical moment in the 2011-2020 UN Decade on Biodiversity. Parties are currently striving to turn the Aichi Targets into national biodiversity strategies and action plans before COP-11 in Hyderabad. Moreover, the Parties are working toward the early entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol, which will be a central tool for alleviating poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

There is no time for delay: we need to make continuous progress if we are to stay on track for achieving our goals by the end of the decade. As you know, for falling short of achieving the Aichi Targets will spell sure disaster for the billions of people worldwide who depend directly on biodiversity to meet their most basic needs.

With this in mind, I wish fruitful deliberations and look forward to reading the meeting report.

Thank you.