



**Statement by the Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity**

*on the occasion of*

***Third meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socio-economic Aspects  
(23 to 27 April 2012, UNHQ, New York)***

Distinguished Delegates,

I am pleased to have this opportunity, on behalf of the Executive Secretary, to update the meeting regarding activities carried out under the Convention on Biological Diversity relevant to the agenda item under consideration. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention, at its tenth meeting, recognized and supported the establishment, under the United Nations and accountable to the General Assembly, of the Regular Process.

COP 10 also requested the Executive Secretary to work with Parties and other Governments as well as competent organizations and regional initiatives, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), regional seas conventions and action plans, and regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs), to organize a series of regional workshops with a primary objective to facilitate the description of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs).

Pursuant to this request, regional workshops to describe EBSAs have been convened by the Secretariat for the Western South Pacific region, in Fiji, November 2011, as well as Wider Caribbean and Western Mid-Atlantic region, in Brazil, February 2012. In collaboration with the Secretariat, the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR) and the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) convened a scientific workshop to describe EBSAs in the North East Atlantic region.

These workshops described areas that meet scientific criteria for EBSAs and other relevant criteria, and also identified future needs for scientific collaboration and capacity-building to further elaborate the description of EBSAs in each region. The results of these workshops will be considered by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) at its 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, being convened in Montreal next week.

The Secretariat is also planning to organize regional workshops in other regions, such as Indian Ocean region, from 30 July to 3 August 2012, in collaboration with FAO, and Eastern Tropical and Temperate Pacific region, from 27 to 31 August 2012, in collaboration with CPPS.

The Secretariat is ready to work closely with the Group of Experts of the Regular Process to ensure that the best available scientific information on marine biodiversity is available for the preparation of the assessment, including the scientific information collected for these regional workshops to describe areas meeting EBSAs criteria.

Thank you for your attention.