



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

on the occasion of

***The fifth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study
issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological
diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction
(7 to 11 May 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, emphasized the cooperation with the United Nations General Assembly, in particular this working group, as guidance for enhanced implementation of the Convention's programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity.

COP 10 recognized that the Convention on Biological Diversity has a key role in supporting the work of the General Assembly with regard to marine protected areas beyond national jurisdiction, by focusing on provision of scientific and, as appropriate, technical information and advice relating to marine biological diversity, the application of the ecosystem approach and the precautionary approach.

COP 10 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 areas meeting the scientific criteria for ecologically or

biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs), as adopted by COP 9 in its decision IX/20.

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 on 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 were considered by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) at its 16th meeting, which was convened in Montreal last week.

Upon the request by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols, at their 17th Ordinary Meeting held in Paris, from 8 to 10 February 2012, the Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention presented to the SBSTTA 16 the work carried out regarding the identification of areas that meet the criteria for EBSAs.

SBSTTA 16 has prepared summary reports on the description of areas meeting the scientific criteria for EBSAs, based on scientific and technical evaluation of information from the workshops, setting out details of the areas that meet the criteria for EBSAs. The summary reports prepared by SBSTTA 16 will be submitted to the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, being convened in Hyderabad, India, from 8 to 19 October 2012, for their consideration.

The Secretariat is also planning to organize regional workshops in other regions, such as Southern 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 the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS). Consultations are underway to organize regional workshops as well as training workshops on describing areas meeting EBSA criteria in other regions.

SBSTTA 16 requested the Executive Secretary to accord high priority to the organization of additional workshops, with a view to covering all regions where Parties wish workshops to be held, and invited Parties, other Governments and donors to support these workshops.

In relation to this agenda item, I would like to inform the meeting that SBSTTA 16 also considered the voluntary guidelines for the consideration of biodiversity in environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments in marine and coastal areas. Upon the request by SBSTTA 16, the voluntary guidelines will be further refined in light of views submitted by Parties, other Governments and competent organizations by 30 June 2012, before it is submitted to COP 11 for its consideration.

For further details on CBD's EBSA process, I am happy to invite distinguished delegates to a lunch time Side Event on Wednesday being organized by CBD Secretariat together with IUCN and other partners.

Finally, I would like to update you on the status of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resource and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising from Their Utilization. Ninety-two countries have signed the Protocol and four have now ratified. The Second Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee will take place in New Delhi 2-6 July 2012.

Thank you for your attention.