



STATEMENT BY

MR. BRAULIO FERREIRA DE SOUZA DIAS

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

ON THE OCCASION OF

**FOURTH MEETING OF THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON THE REVIEW OF
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

**MONTREAL, CANADA
7 MAY 2012**

Mr. President, distinguished delegates, friends and colleagues I thank you for a very warm welcome. It is a privilege to serve as the Executive Secretary of a Convention that I considered myself part of as a scientist, a negotiator and a policy-maker for two decades.

Following the historic decisions at Nagoya in 2010, the fourth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review for Implementation is our first opportunity to look at how we have done in the past one and a half years as an international community. The next five days all the 193 Parties to the Convention will consider 12 draft recommendations to review the progress made in moving towards the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and identify the gaps.

Reviewing the progress towards the Aichi targets is the first substantive item on today's agenda. Thanks to the generous funding provided by the Government of Japan and other donors, the secretariat together with other partners, organized a series of regional and sub-regional capacity-building workshops assisting 156 Parties in drawing-up national targets in the framework of the CBD Strategic Plan.

Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the Parties for their overwhelming response in not only nominating experts to these workshops but initiating the work on revising their NBSAPs. This is a very good sign for the convention.

These workshops together with the training material have helped in creating an enabling environment for Parties to elaborate national biodiversity strategies. The information emanating from this early exercise should help in reviewing the progress made in implementing the strategic plan.

We look forward to the conclusion of the procedures to start implementing the GEF enabling projects already approved by the GEF Secretariat which will benefit more than 95 developing countries to support the revision of their NBSAPs. Another 30 countries have their projects in the GEF pipeline for approval. The CBD Secretariat is working in close cooperation with UNEP, UNDP and the GEF Secretariat to seek ways to expedite this process.

As agreed at COP 10, all Parties committed to revise their NBSAPs, to fully engage all stakeholder groups, to promote the mainstreaming of biodiversity in all sectors, to establish national and regional targets, to integrate these into national development and poverty reduction strategies and policies, and to adopt the revised NBSAPs as policy instruments.

Based on your guidance and decision, and the continuing support of the Government of Japan and others, we plan to further sharpen the capacity building initiatives to enable Parties enforce the elements they identified within their revised NBSAPs. Hopefully, this would make the revised NBSAPs more practical and lead to significant results on the ground.

I want to assure you of my commitment and that of the CBD Secretariat to play a catalytic role to mobilize all available mechanisms and partners to enhance the support to developing countries implement their commitments on biodiversity.

The second item on today's agenda is resource mobilization and the financial mechanism. There is no doubt that financing is an essential element for achieving the Aichi targets and a subject that requires the involvement of all Parties to make progress. I am pleased to say that the meeting of the COP Bureau on 5th April 2012 brought some clarity on how this complex agenda item can be

considered by all Parties in a systematic manner. Under the guidance of the COP Bureau the CBD Secretariat prepared a road map for agenda item 6 and 7 to methodically discuss all the issues from WGRI4 to COP11. This indicative road map, distributed as an information document number 15, is of course only intended to facilitate your discussion and is not a text for negotiation.

In addition, earlier this year we also had the benefit of an informal dialogue held on these agenda items. The informal dialogue participated by several experts nominated by the Parties was kindly convened by Ecuador, Sweden, Norway, Japan and India in early March of this year in the beautiful city of Quito. A summary of the Quito discussions has been provided by the co-chairs Ms. Maria Schultz and Mr. M.F. Farooqui and is available as an information document number 9.

In addition to these critically important agenda items we also have another urgent item related to drafting and communicating a message for Rio+20 Conference. Considering that Rio+20 next month will bring together world leaders, along with thousands of participants from governments, the private sector, NGOs and other groups, it will be useful to highlight the contribution of biodiversity in reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development.

Other items on your agenda include the report of the Expert Group on Integration of Biodiversity into Poverty Eradication and Development, the Strategy for the UN Decade on Biodiversity, and Cooperation with other Conventions.

Your recommendations at this meeting can advance the work at national level on establishing national targets and identify ways to mobilize resources domestically and globally to achieve these targets. It is critical that in the next five days we especially learn from the unique experience of Parties, as this is our best tool to ensure that the strategic plan is based on ground realities.

I would like to reiterate that the Secretariat revised many of the working documents last month, following the review by the COP Bureau at its 5 April meeting. The revised documents were posted after removing the title ADVANCE COPY on the cover sheet of earlier documents. In case any delegate is using a version titled ADVANCE COPY on it please discard it and access the revised version posted on the WGRI4 website. I apologize for any inconvenience caused, and hope that the guidance provided by the COP Bureau in finalizing the documentation will help facilitate the discussions.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me now to take few moments to draw your attention to some long-term ideas for the Convention as we celebrate its 20th anniversary in Rio next month. I would like to share with you some views regarding the challenges faced by the Convention in implementing the Nagoya outcomes. Last month I had shared the same with members of the COP Bureau and based on their positive response feel encouraged proposing them to all the Parties today.

I believe the Convention has reached a mature stage with the outcomes achieved at COP 10 in Nagoya. The Convention receives praise for setting an ambitious global biodiversity agenda, with a balanced set of targets, as well as general agreed rules of the game for the implementation of its three objectives.

However, as we move forward to meet the challenges of implementing the Strategic Plan, the trend of biodiversity loss continues unabated. This does highlight a mismatch between commitments made and the actual implementation achieved.

I accepted to take the responsibility of the CBD Secretariat with the conviction and expectation that we can collectively do a better job in implementing the CBD and achieving the Aichi Targets for 2020 than we have done in the recent past in relation to the 2010 Global Biodiversity Target.

If Parties agree to focus more on implementation then new ways will need to be identified on several fronts. In this context I would like to draw the attention of Parties on some ideas that they may consider.

A first one is on how to organize the work of the COPs and its preparatory work for reducing the burden on all Parties by limiting negotiations of more and more decisions and redirecting the saved resources to facilitate implementation of existing decisions. I would hope you will agree with me that we don't need to prepare, negotiate and adopt 40 new decisions at every COP. I believe it is possible to focus the negotiations into a much streamlined number of decisions on critical and new issues. In doing so we could free time and resources to discuss issues of implementation, sharing experiences on lessons learned, discussing bottlenecks, opportunities and mechanisms.

A second approach would be to promote better integration of our work programs and cross-cutting initiatives so we fully explore the synergies, both within the CBD and with other conventions, thus reducing the complexity of the CBD portfolio and facilitating implementation and reducing the burden to Parties.

A third front is the promotion of mainstreaming of biodiversity into the development agenda, promoting biodiversity not as a problem to be solved but rather as an opportunity to help achieve broader goals within the social and economic spheres. The revised NBSAPs should be key instruments to promote this.

A fourth front is on resource mobilization where I think we have to be more strategic going beyond needs identification to prioritize approaches and mechanisms, emphasizing the leveraging of resources from existing sources through mainstreaming, incorporation of sustainability criteria in government procurements, review of economic instruments, further engagement of the business sector, etc.

A fifth approach is to put in place early on a continuous monitoring system for the Aichi Targets so that we don't discover too late that we are not on track. This monitoring would need enhanced commitment and participation of all Parties to collect and provide reliable and standardized information to an online system. I hope Parties would consider a more streamlined and more frequent reporting system than what we currently have.

A sixth front is to enhance the support to Parties, in particular to the least developed and the small island developing states, to increase their capacity to implement the CBD goals, programs and targets. My feeling is that this could best be achieved through more structured and continuous processes at regional and sub-regional level – just having occasional workshops with little follow-up is not sufficient.

A seventh front is to promote more effective scientific, technical and technological cooperation among Parties, as committed by Parties in Article 18 and in the work program on technology transfer, but which has seen little results so far. We could better utilize mechanisms such as the CHM and others to promote more effective exchange of experiences among Parties and more effective cooperation, both North-South and South-South.

An eighth approach is to promote much stronger recognition and support to community-based approaches for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, thus increasing on one side the protected areas effort and on the other side promoting human well-being, food security and poverty alleviation.

A ninth front is to expand the engagement of the business sector by enhancing the enabling environment through government policies and procurement rules and by outreach and guidance to small and medium sized enterprises.

A tenth and final approach, to limit my proposals to a manageable number, is to push for an early ratification of the Nagoya Protocol and establishment or revision of national legislations and governance systems for ABS, as well as supporting the ratification of the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, as a strategy to promote better use of genetic resources with equity, i.e. with benefit sharing, and with biosafety.

Considering some of these approaches in my view can enhance the national capacities to implement the decisions taken in the past 20 years while reducing the burden on countries for negotiating an ever increasing number of international decisions which at times saps the capacity for implementation, especially in smaller and least developed nations.

I hope that you will be able to give some thought to the long-term challenges facing the Convention while discussing the agenda on the table as I will appreciate your feedback and responses as we move towards Rio+20, COP11 and beyond.

With that I welcome you again to the beautiful city of Montreal where your secretariat is located and look forward to providing all necessary support to ensure a smooth functioning of the meeting in the next five days.

Thank you.