



STATEMENT BY

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

ON THE OCCASION OF

**FAO REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON VULNERABLE MARINE ECOSYSTEMS (VMES)
IN THE INDIAN OCEAN**

FLIC EN FLAC, MAURITIUS

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Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to FAO and to the SmartFish Project of the Indian Ocean Commission for organizing this Regional Workshop on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) in the Indian Ocean.

My warmest welcome goes to all the distinguished experts from countries and organizations. It is indeed my great pleasure to inform all of you of the close collaboration between FAO and CBD Secretariat, in particular regarding FAO's work on VMEs and CBD's work on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs). I would like to express my appreciation to FAO for this close collaboration in identifying experts and for extending an invitation to the CBD Secretariat to attend this important workshop.

Our partnership has produced its first fruit for the Indian Ocean by organizing two regional workshops on VMEs and EBSAs as back to back meetings in this beautiful area of Flic en Flac -- the CBD Secretariat is convening the third regional workshop on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) for the Southern Indian Ocean as well as a one-day training session, from 30 July to 3 August. Organizing these workshops back to back enables us to share scientific information and expertise. In fact, we are very happy to note that many of you will also attend the CBD regional workshop on EBSAs, and facilitate the scientific linkage between the two processes.

Ladies and gentlemen,

At the recent Rio + 20 Conference world leaders reaffirmed the crucial role of biodiversity in ensuring sustainable development and called for greater efforts to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity.

In the outcome document entitled "The Future We Want", world leaders reaffirmed the importance of area-based conservation measures, including marine protected areas, as a tool for the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components. They noted Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, which states that by 2020, 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are to be conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures.

In the recommendations of the 16th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, which was concluded in May 2012, the need for constructive collaboration between biodiversity and fisheries bodies was highlighted and fisheries management bodies at national and regional levels were invited to ensure that biodiversity considerations are a part of their work.

The CBD Secretariat is ready to work closely with FAO and other relevant fishery management bodies at national and regional levels to support their works on addressing biodiversity considerations in fisheries management.

I wish all of you a successful and fruitful workshop.

Thank you for your attention!