



STATEMENT BY

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

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE SOUTHERN INDIAN OCEAN REGIONAL WORKSHOP
TO FACILITATE THE DESCRIPTION OF
ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS**

FLIC EN FLAC, MAURITIUS

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Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to extend my warmest welcome and utmost thanks to all the experts from countries and organizations for participating in this important workshop, the third regional workshop on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) convened by the CBD Secretariat.

My sincere thanks go to the Government of Mauritius for hosting, and to FAO and the Secretariat of the Nairobi Convention for collaborating on the organization of this workshop. I wish to highlight the importance of our close collaboration with FAO and regional initiatives in successfully implementing the Convention's work on marine and coastal biodiversity. In this regard, I highly appreciate the synergies being created by convening this workshop immediately following FAO's Indian Ocean Regional Workshop on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems, in the same location.

I wish to acknowledge, with great appreciation, the kind financial support from the Government of Japan, through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, which enabled the convening of this regional workshop and the participation of experts from the region.

My special thanks also go to the Government of Australia for providing, through the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), valuable scientific and technical support to the Secretariat in preparing for and undertaking the workshop.

Recently, world leaders at the Rio + 20 Conference recognized 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 of Rio+20, entitled "The Future We Want", the 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 decision X/29 on marine and coastal biodiversity, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity noted that the application of the scientific criteria for the identification of EBSAs presents a tool that Parties and competent intergovernmental organizations may choose to use to progress towards

the implementation of ecosystem approaches in marine areas both within and beyond national jurisdiction.

Parties also noted that the application of the EBSA criteria is a scientific and technical exercise, that areas found to meet the criteria may require enhanced conservation and management measures, and that this can be achieved through a variety of means, including marine protected areas and impact assessments.

Parties emphasized that the identification of EBSAs and the selection of conservation and management measures is a matter for States and competent intergovernmental organizations.

Upon the request of the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting in Nagoya, the CBD Secretariat is currently convening a series of regional workshops to facilitate the description of EBSAs.

The results of these workshops will be considered by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties, for their endorsement.

Distinguished Participants,

In order to effectively facilitate efforts at global, regional and national levels toward achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in marine areas, the CBD Secretariat chose marine and coastal biodiversity as the theme for this year's International Day for Biological Diversity.

The global celebration of International Day for Biological Diversity on the theme of marine biodiversity has brought unprecedented opportunities to engage political leadership, senior policy makers, industries, and civil society groups in addressing the complex challenges to marine biodiversity, further compounded by the threats of climate change and ocean acidification.

Finally, I trust you will actively participate in the workshop deliberations in the coming days and make this important global EBSA process beneficial to this region's valuable efforts toward the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity.

Thank you for your attention!