



STATEMENT BY

MR. BRAULIO F. DE SOUZA DIAS

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

to the

BIODIVERSITY INDICATORS PARTNERSHIP MEETING

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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800, Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9, Canada
Tel : +1 514 288 2220 Fax : +1 514 288 6588
secretariat@cbd.int www.cbd.int



Dear colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity in Nagoya, Japan, in 2010 was a tremendous success. The Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, through its contribution to the third edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook, has made a significant contribution towards this achievement. The logic of the Strategic Plan - to consider pressures on biodiversity as well as their underlying root causes; to examine trends in the components of biodiversity alongside the benefits which biodiversity provides for human well-being; and to include the elements needed to support implementation - is rooted in your work on the indicators for the 2010 Biodiversity Target. Some of you were in the meeting in Reading which considered the 2010 framework of sub-targets and indicators and made recommendations for a more logical framework. Some of you contributed to the 2009 paper in Science on the status of indicator development. Some of you are co-authors of the paper also published in Science just before the release of GBO-3 in May 2010, which demonstrated that the pre-2010 indicators enable statements about trends in pressures, status, responses and benefits to be made and which showed that the 2010 target had not been achieved. And some of you have been part of the series of consultations and negotiations that led to agreement on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity in Nagoya.

The work of the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership has visibly influenced the thinking that led to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and as a result there is an expectation that the Partnership will play a similar role in the future. This is manifested by several references to the BIP across different decisions of the recent meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Hyderabad. I see this as a sign of the confidence that Parties have in your ability, and the willingness of your institutions, to contribute to the review of progress made in implementing the Strategic Plan.

The challenge is significant: not only will the BIP have to explore which indicators might be available or could be developed in areas that are new and difficult because they go beyond pure natural sciences problems, but also because the BIP is expected to provide technical support to countries in developing monitoring systems and indicators to enable them to track progress in achieving their national biodiversity targets. Moreover, we are just about two years away from the halfway point of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and there is clearly a lot of work to be done in order to ensure that we are able to effectively monitor progress in its implementation. In noting the indicative list of indicators for assessing progress towards the Strategic Plan in decision X/3, the COP recognized the need to further develop the global indicators with a view to ensuring that each Aichi Biodiversity Target can be monitored by at least one global indicator by 2014.

Put plainly half of the Aichi Targets do not yet have indicators which are ready for use at the global level and this will hamper our ability to track progress. Filling these gaps is particularly challenging because the range of issues covered by the Strategic Plan necessitates that we monitor achievements in areas that have long been considered beyond the core concerns of the biodiversity community: awareness, economic and development planning, our trade system, sustainable production and consumption. This means that the BIP needs to identify partners who have the tools and expertise to develop indicators for these issues. In the meantime we have to make the best use of process-oriented targets.

I was recently in New York participating in the international seminar “Towards linking ecosystems and ecosystem services to economic and human activity”, organized by the UN Statistics Division, and was encouraged by progress made in the development of the UN System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) and the willingness of many experts to work with the CBD community to start using it, thus helping the implementation of Aichi Target 2.

It also means that we need to think creatively about how current indicators are used to see if they can be disaggregated or looked at through different lenses in order to help us monitor those targets for which global indicators are not yet in place. I am convinced that we need to have sufficient confidence in our ability to monitor progress in the Aichi Biodiversity Targets - or else we are unlikely to achieve them. I therefore attach the utmost importance to the work of the BIP and I am confident that you will do what you can to develop the indicators and analyses needed to support the review and implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity.

At the same time I am acutely aware that there is only very limited funding available to facilitate the work of the BIP. I have held discussions with the Global Environment Facility and other donors and, while I do not see an immediate solution, I assure you of my commitment to search for additional resources for this critical work. This is a question that will be addressed in the Steering Committee for the BIP, which I have gratefully accepted to chair.

On behalf of the Steering Committee and in speaking for the Parties to the CBD and those of other biodiversity-related conventions and processes, I would like to take this opportunity to thank UNEP-WCMC for serving as the Secretariat of the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership and for ensuring a continuation of the BIP beyond the GEF project that ended in early 2011. I want to thank in particular Jon Hutton for his commitment and leadership in supporting the transition of the BIP from the pre-2010 era into the current UN Decade for Biodiversity.

But mostly I have to thank you and the organizations and institutions in which you work for contributing your time and expertise to this common cause of monitoring and understanding biodiversity change for which the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership stands. I count on your passion, dedication and skills as well as your creativity to justify the trust placed in you by the Parties to the CBD and I assure you of my full support in this endeavour.

With this I wish you all a very productive and successful meeting.

Thank you.