



STATEMENT BY
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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

ON THE OCCASION OF THE
THIRD INTERNATIONAL MARINE PROTECTED AREAS CONGRESS (IMPAC 3)

MAIN AUDITORIUM, PHARO PALACE
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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Excellency,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to this third International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC3). First of all, I wish to express my sincere thanks and congratulations to the Government of France for successfully organizing this important event. In particular, I highly appreciate the hard work and the leadership role demonstrated by the French marine protected areas agency, together with IUCN, in putting together different initiatives, ideas, and experiences into a comprehensive and coherent congress programme. My heartfelt thanks also go to the mayor of Marseille as well as all the citizens of Marseille, for hosting this congress in this beautiful and culturally unique port city of Marseille and for extending their warmest hospitality to all of us.

It is heartwarming to see participants here from all around the world, including representatives from various governments, UN agencies and international organizations, academia, NGOs, indigenous and local communities, and other civil society groups. Your presence signifies the importance that you accord to marine protected areas (MPAs), and consequently to achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, adopted by 193 Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in October 2010.

Noting with concern the slow pace with which marine protected areas were being established, at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in 2010, 193 Parties expressed their commitment to Target 11 as part of 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. This target reads: *"By 2020, at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes"*. The adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets were guided by a common vision toward a world "living in harmony with nature" where "by 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people".

According to the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA), the global number and extent of protected areas has increased dramatically over the past century, and in particular since 1970s and, more recently, since the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. The coverage of protected terrestrial and inland water areas has increased from 12.6% in 2010 to 14.6% in 2012. Marine and coastal protected areas within 12 nautical miles from the coast have increased from 4% in 2010 to 9.7% in 2012, although global ocean coverage remains low at only 2.2 %.

Although this progress is good news, I wish to emphasize that we cannot rely upon simply expanding the spatial coverage of protected areas. We need to find ways and means to address important qualitative elements of Target 11, including ecosystem services, ecological representativeness, effective and equitable management, well-connected systems, and integration into the wider landscape and seascape.

For example, with regard to the need for effective management of protected areas, which is an important element of Target 11, the assessment shows that less than 30 percent of the world's protected areas have a management plan, and only 24 percent of protected areas, assessed through a global study in 2010, are soundly managed. Likewise, with regard to the ecological representativeness of marine protected areas, I wish to point out a significant gap: only 13% of the world's 232 marine eco-regions met the 10% target, and 137 marine ecoregions still had less than 1% protection.

In order to address these gaps, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity assisted Parties to identify national targets responding to Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, as part of updating the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), by organizing a series of capacity-building workshops for the programme of work on protected areas (PoWPA) under the Convention in 2011 and

2012. These workshops assisted 107 countries to develop PoWPA action plans, 70 of which incorporated the national target for marine and coastal protected areas within their territorial waters. Forty-four countries identified targets for MPAs ranging from 3 to 15 percent, 41 of which set goals at or above the 10% called for by Target 11. Several small island developing States have set ambitious MPA targets of 25 percent or more, although collectively they currently only have 2.8 percent marine protected areas coverage.

Through the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and in response to the requests made by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in decisions X/29 and XI/17, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has been organizing a series of regional workshops to describe marine areas meeting the CBD scientific criteria for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs), adopted by COP 9 in decision IX/20, by compiling the best available scientific information at global, national and regional scales, and facilitating scientific collaboration among experts from countries and relevant international and regional organizations. Since COP 10, the regional workshops organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity as well as relevant regional organizations have covered about 75% of world oceans, including marine areas beyond national jurisdiction. I believe that the scientific information compiled on the ecological and biological significance of marine areas will greatly contribute to the implementation of the programmes of work on both protected areas and marine and coastal biodiversity, thereby contributing to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achieving not only target 11, but about half of the other 20 targets as well (5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15 and 19). For example, recent studies showed that the implementation of MPAs for fisheries management has increased recently due to the role of marine protected areas in conserving biodiversity, increasing fish stocks and enhancing the food security of coastal communities.

The establishment of comprehensive, ecologically representative, effectively managed and financially secure protected area networks is a critical strategy not only for biodiversity conservation, but for securing ecosystem goods and services, enabling climate change mitigation and adaptation, helping countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals and an investment in environmental sustainability. Our experience has demonstrated that marine protected areas have contributed to the increase of household incomes and creation of new jobs, especially in tourism.

An ecologically representative network of protected areas is the cornerstone of a national biodiversity strategy and action plan, and it cannot be achieved without engaging various stakeholders in marine and coastal areas through cross-sectoral and inter-agency partnerships. In order to engage multi-stakeholder partnerships and promote our concerted efforts to support countries in their implementation, the Secretariat has facilitated the development of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative and currently coordinates its implementation in collaboration with various partners around the world. I take this opportunity to express our great thanks to the French MPA Agency, who together with the Japan Biodiversity Fund has graciously provided financial support for the implementation of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative since its inception at COP 10 in 2010.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the LifeWeb Initiative. LifeWeb is a sustainable financing initiative that facilitates funding for the area-based Aichi Biodiversity Targets, both terrestrial and marine, through the development of partnerships. LifeWeb recognizes that achievement of marine protection lags far behind terrestrial. As such, LifeWeb is actively seeking initiatives with commitments from developing countries and countries with economies in transition that will help them advance their current efforts for marine biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. LifeWeb is working hand-in-hand with the Sustainable Ocean Initiative and donors toward our common vision.

Throughout this week, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity will have various opportunities to introduce the details of the Convention's work on Aichi Targets, and I look forward to hearing your feedback, insights and innovative ideas, and learning from your experiences and expertise in different regions. The Secretariat is ready to work with all of you in the spirit of collaboration, so that the outcomes of this congress can provide important inputs to the forthcoming 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to be held in Pyongchang, Republic of Korea, in October 2014.

Excellency,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before concluding this talk, let me take this moment to extend again my wholehearted appreciation to the organizers of this important congress, which will contribute significantly to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2010 and our progress toward the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

I once again welcome you all and look forward to open discussions and concrete and practical outcomes.

Thank you for your attention.