



STATEMENT BY

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

at the opening of the

EXPERT WORKSHOP TO PROVIDE CONSOLIDATED PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

AND A TOOLKIT FOR MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING

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**Convention on
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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 the CBD Expert Workshop to Provide Consolidated Practical Guidance and a Toolkit for Marine Spatial Planning.

I acknowledge with great appreciation the kind financial support of the European Commission, which allowed the convening of this workshop.

I would also like to thank the United Nations Environment Programme, the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility, and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre for their collaboration in supporting the implementation of decision XI/18 of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD with regards to marine spatial planning.

Oceans provide critical ecosystem services that underpin planetary well-being, present a wealth of opportunities for sustainable economic growth and support social well-being in coastal and island communities. Roughly 40% of the world's population lives within 100 kilometres of the coast and hundreds of millions of people rely directly on marine biodiversity for their livelihoods. Fisheries employ approximately 200 million people, provide about 16% of the protein consumed worldwide and have an annual value estimated at US\$ 80 billion. Coastal ecosystems provide services, including tourism and protection from storms, valued at nearly US\$ 26 billion annually.

Our understanding of the value of the oceans continues to grow and evolve, leading to new approaches to utilizing marine resources. However, the expansion of new activities, such as renewable energy exploitation and deep sea mining, and continued dependence on activities such as fishing, oil and gas exploitation and shipping puts additional pressure on marine ecosystems and presents potential spatial conflicts among stakeholders in an increasingly crowded marine environment.

It is essential that human uses of marine and coastal areas are managed in a way that minimizes adverse impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity, while avoiding conflicts among various stakeholders and ensuring that ocean resources are used in a sustainable and equitable way.

In this respect, marine spatial planning has emerged as a valuable tool to manage activities in the oceans in the context of applying the ecosystem approach and efficiently allocating marine space among various activities while respecting the need for conservation. Marine spatial planning is a decision-making framework that builds on experience in integrated, ecosystem-based ocean and coastal management, and utilizes biogeographic approaches and spatial mapping tools.

At its tenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD urged Parties and other Governments to achieve long-term conservation, management and sustainable use of marine resources and coastal habitats, and to effectively manage marine protected areas, through the appropriate application of the precautionary and ecosystem approaches, as well as the use of available tools such as marine spatial planning.

Marine spatial planning is a flexible approach that is implemented differently depending on various environmental, socio-economic and political contexts. Guidance on implementing marine spatial planning has emerged from various sources, expanding our understanding of how best to utilize this useful tool. In this respect, there is a clear need within the Convention to examine experiences thus far in implementing marine spatial planning and to review existing toolkits in order to provide Parties with clear and adaptable guidance on utilizing this approach to improve sustainable development of marine resources in close linkage to Parties' current efforts toward achieving Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

In decision XI/18, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention requested the Executive Secretary to undertake a number of activities related to marine spatial planning, including collaborating

with Parties, other Governments, United Nations specialized agencies, regional organizations, including Large Marine Ecosystem programmes, other relevant organizations, and indigenous and local communities to convene an expert workshop to provide consolidated practical guidance and a toolkit for marine spatial planning. The Conference of the Parties highlighted that this workshop should build upon existing guidance in order to complement and further enhance the existing cross-sectoral efforts of Parties and other Governments on the application of the ecosystem approach to the implementation of integrated marine and coastal management, the identification of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and the design and establishment of conservation and management measures, as appropriate.

As such, this workshop will provide for an important opportunity to develop clear, coherent and adaptable guidance to support the application of marine spatial planning as an important tool to improve the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity and to support the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in marine and coastal areas.

The outputs of this workshop and the ongoing collaborative efforts among various partners involved in the implementation of decision XI/18 will be compiled, synthesized and disseminated through an online information-sharing mechanism. This will not only inform the efforts of Parties, other Governments and competent organizations, but will also complement future activities undertaken by the CBD Secretariat, including those related to the scientific information gathered through the application of the scientific criteria for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs).

With this, I wish you a successful and productive workshop.

Thank you for your attention.