



STATEMENT BY
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at the opening of
SUSTAINABLE OCEAN INITIATIVE (SOI) CAPACITY-BUILDING
WORKSHOP FOR SOUTH AMERICA

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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Distinguished participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Government of Peru for hosting this workshop in Lima. I would especially like to thank the Ministry of Environment for their great support and warm hospitality. My heartfelt thanks also go to the Secretariats of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific and the Caribbean Environment Programme and many other collaborators for providing valuable technical inputs and expertise in the preparation of the workshop. I would also like to acknowledge, with great appreciation, the financial contribution of the Japan Biodiversity Fund, which supported the organization of this workshop.

In 2010, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity committed to achieving a new vision of the world's biodiversity. Through the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, Parties agreed to work together to ensure that "by 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people." The vision for the Strategic Plan and its twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets lay out an ambitious agenda for reversing global trends in biodiversity loss and achieving a future for biodiversity where ecosystems are able to provide critical services that underpin planetary well-being, and where the global community can sustainably and equitably benefit from biodiversity without impacting the ability of future generations to do so.

While recognizing the need for accelerated action to address biodiversity loss, Parties to the Convention also acknowledged the major challenges faced in achieving these targets, including lack of institutional, technical, managerial, and scientific capacity as well as governance challenges and a limited information base in many areas. These challenges outline the urgent need for expanded efforts to develop the capacity of Parties and facilitate partnerships among relevant stakeholders to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

The Sustainable Ocean Initiative, or "SOI", was created to respond to this urgent need. SOI was established in 2010 at the same time as the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. As such, Sustainable Ocean Initiative aligns its vision with that of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Among 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, SOI programme has been developed with a focus on three important targets for marine and coastal biodiversity, namely:

- Target 6: By 2020, all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem-based approaches;
- Target 10: By 2015, the multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized;
- Target 11: By 2020, at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas are conserved through protected areas.

Around the world, efforts are under way to address various capacity needs related to sustainable management of marine and coastal biodiversity. However, there has yet to be an effort to take a holistic and comprehensive approach to capacity development for marine biodiversity. The Sustainable Ocean Initiative builds on these efforts, resources and experiences by providing a holistic and strategic framework through which to catalyse partnerships and leverage resources to facilitate the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets on marine and coastal biodiversity. It aims to package and deliver, in an integrated and holistic manner, the wide range of resources, knowledge and initiatives present in different forms and at different levels around the world in order to meet regional and national priorities for capacity-building.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Conference of the Parties at its twelfth meeting, held in the Republic of Korea in October 2014, conducted a mid-term review of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and outlined future steps needed to achieve the Targets. The fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, launched at that meeting, found significant progress towards meeting some components of the majority of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. However, despite the dramatic increase in responses by Parties, indicators suggest that the status of biodiversity will continue to decline without urgent action.

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets articulate a shared vision of a better future for oceans and coastal areas. However, this vision will not be achieved without concerted cooperative action among diverse stakeholders, different sectors, and various governmental agencies and civil society groups, as well as a strategic focus on capacity development to create enabling conditions to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. As such, SOI builds on multi-stakeholders partnership among different sectors, in particular engaging the cooperation between conservation-oriented sector and fisheries sector.

Since 2010, the Conference of the Parties has reiterated calls for enhanced training and capacity development for marine and coastal biodiversity. In order to address these calls and to accelerate progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, SOI partners developed the SOI Action Plan 2015-2020, which lays out a strategic multi-level capacity development approach building on the commitments of CBD Parties, the CBD's work on marine biodiversity, and the many relevant experiences and activities of partners around the world.

The SOI Action Plan includes a component on regional workshops and learning exchange, which is where this workshop comes into play. Focusing on capacity issues at the regional level yields a number of key benefits. Here, in South America, you all have a diverse range of experiences, but you also face many of the same challenges. As well, the different regional organizations present here possess a wealth of knowledge and experience with regard to multilateral cooperation and facilitating implementation. This week, we will engage you all in focused technical discussions on various tools and approaches to address these challenges in an integrated manner, in particular through the application of marine spatial planning, and capitalize on opportunities to make progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets on marine biodiversity.

I also want to emphasize that your role in working to achieve the vision of SOI extends well beyond this week. We fully expect that you will take the tools and knowledge gained at this workshop, and integrate them into your respective activities at the regional, subregional and national levels. Furthermore, we will continue to communicate with you in the years to come so that stakeholders and participants in SOI activities in other parts of the world can learn from your experiences.

Achieving the vision of SOI and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 will require concerted and coordinated actions by all sectors and stakeholders. It will require us to abandon business-as-usual approaches and mainstream biodiversity into our development planning, governance and decision-making. And it will require that we mobilize the resources needed to address key capacity gaps that prevent many from taking the steps needed to achieve these goals.

In this regard, I hope that this workshop will provide all the countries in this region with a key opportunity for capacity development by strengthening all of you as faithful guardians of marine and coastal biodiversity. I encourage all of you to share the vision and mission of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative and contribute to a sustainable future for our oceans for generations to come.

Thank you for your attention.