



**STATEMENT BY**

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**CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**at the opening of**

**REGIONAL FORUM ON SOLUTIONS FOR OCEANS, COASTS AND HUMAN WELL-BEING  
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION**

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**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**

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Distinguished participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to address the Regional Forum on Solutions for Oceans, Coasts and Human Well-Being in Latin America and the Wider Caribbean Region. I would like to first extend my sincere appreciation to the GIZ for inviting the CBD Secretariat to share the experiences from the Convention's relevant work and bring insights to the workshop discussion, together with many other distinguished participants.

I would like to commend the Blue Solutions team of the GIZ for their vision and efforts to facilitate sharing knowledge and experiences on, and enhancing capacity for the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biodiversity. Blue Solutions and the CBD Secretariat have collaborated, in the framework of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative, to support more effectively national efforts towards achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in marine and coastal areas. Blue Solutions has been a valued partner of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative since 2013 and shares its vision and mission, which aims at ensuring sustainable ocean and coastal development.

In the following days, the workshop participants will be engaged in exchanging experiences and solutions for marine and coastal planning, management and governance within the context of sustainable development. The broad variety of “solution providers” gathered here today is a sign that there are tools and resources available to achieve a future in which the global community can sustainably and equitably benefit from the oceans without undermining their long-term health and integrity.

In 2010, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, at its tenth meeting, adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, with its 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets. It has become a widely agreed framework for action on biodiversity, supported by the other biodiversity-related conventions and the United Nations General Assembly. Through the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, Parties have committed to achieving a new vision of the world's biodiversity: *“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 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets lays 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 to achieving these targets, including a 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 on the margins of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, at the same time as the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. As such, SOI aligns its vision with that of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. The SOI programme has been developed to address various Aichi Targets related to marine and coastal biodiversity, with a particular focus on targets 6 (sustainable fisheries), 10 (addressing multiple stressors on coral reefs), and 11 (marine and coastal protected areas).

Last year, during the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, progress towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets was assessed. The fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, or GBO-4, which was launched at COP 12, provides a global snapshot of the status

of biodiversity and indicates that, while progress has been made in many areas, enhanced efforts are needed to get us on track to meet these Targets.

As countries chart their own courses towards implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, they will be looking for the most efficient and innovative solutions to meet both their social development needs and biodiversity conservation goals. But progress towards sustainable oceans can happen only through the building of a shared vision and by engaging strong commitments towards the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity.

The vision of SOI builds on multi-stakeholder partnerships among different sectors, and it provides a platform for highlighting positive previous and ongoing examples, or “solutions”, which combine innovative approaches for linking science with policy development and implementation. The solutions and approaches that you are developing and discussing here will be communicated to stakeholders and participants in SOI activities in other parts of the world, so that they can learn from your experiences and apply these in their own regions.

In February of this year, the CBD Secretariat convened a SOI capacity-building workshop for South America in Peru, Lima. The participants engaged in focused technical discussions on various tools and approaches to address the challenges in achieving integrated marine and coastal management, in particular through the application of marine spatial planning, and capitalize on opportunities to make progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets on marine biodiversity. The Secretariat is planning to organize a similar workshop for the wider Caribbean and the Central American region, in collaboration with the Government of Mexico, host of the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, in 2016.

As such, I see important contributions that can be made by the experts at this workshop representing a number of countries, different sectors of marine development and conservation, and various organizations. I trust that this mixture of experts will enable a fruitful exchange of experiences, lessons learned and potential support mechanisms to further enhance collaboration and information-sharing within and among countries and to carry on the vision and objectives of SOI within your respective countries.

I wish you stimulating and productive discussions in the coming days, and every success in identifying innovative and practical solutions for both your own region as well as other regions around the world. Again, 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 kind attention.