



**STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY  
BRAULIO FERREIRA DE SOUZA DIAS  
on the occasion of the  
UNITED NATIONS DAY FOR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION  
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Over the years, South-South cooperation has emerged as a powerful tool for enhancing international cooperation for achieving sustainable development. In fact, since 2008, developing countries have exported more to one another than to developed countries, with their total trade in 2015 estimated at over US\$ 4 trillion. And, according to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, trade between Africa and the BRIC<sup>1</sup> group of Parties has grown more than 7 per cent annually over the last 10 years. Furthermore, the MINT-BRICS<sup>2</sup> group of emerging economies provide more than a third of global investment, and a recent BRICS Summit established a US\$ 100 billion development bank to mobilize resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging market economies and developing countries to complement existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global growth and development.

International cooperation has changed significantly over the last decade due to the growing experience, capacity and know-how of developing Parties and their centres of expertise. This has led to a rise in innovative scientific and technical solutions, and to new forms of cooperation, where efforts at increased cooperation between countries of the South are complemented by more innovative approaches. This includes triangular cooperation, which also involves developing countries, yet brings resources from the North to facilitate the exchange of cost-effective and culturally and socially appealing solutions. For example, the Japan International Cooperation Agency has a diversified portfolio of assistance programmes in all regions of the South, ranging from support for the ASEAN University Network, to the development of earthquake-resistant housing in El Salvador and Mexico, to the strengthening of mathematics and science education in West, Central, East and Southern Africa.

South-South and triangular cooperation are especially important as the overwhelming majority of the Earth's biodiversity is found in developing countries. Biodiversity – and the many ecosystem services

<sup>1</sup> BRIC is the acronym for an association of four major emerging national economies: Brazil, the Russian Federation, India and China.

<sup>2</sup> MINT-BRICS comprises Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria, Turkey as well as the four BRIC economies and South Africa.



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**

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associated with it – form the foundation of the Earth’s life support systems and underpin human lives and well-being. Anchored in the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals is a clear objective to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem services in key national priorities and help countries achieve the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Within the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), South-South cooperation has been identified as a key mechanism for scientific and technical cooperation in support of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Scientists and agencies based in the South are playing a major role in the implementation of the Convention. Working with the Secretariat of the CBD, for instance, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has scaled up its support to South-South Cooperation and launched a South-South Cooperation Exchange Mechanism, linked to the Consortium of Scientific Partners on Biodiversity, and supporting the implementation of the Multi-Year Plan of Action for South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development, adopted in parallel to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and recognized by the Parties. An innovative agreement of collaboration signed in 2013 between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa) and the Brazilian Technical Cooperation Agency has enabled experts from Embrapa to provide technical expertise to developing countries. Among the 22 members of the Convention’s Consortium of Scientific Partners on Biodiversity are several global players from the South, such as the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), the Mexican National Commission for Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO), the Costa Rican National Biodiversity Institute (InBio) and the Colombian Humboldt Institute. The Secretariat also works with UNEP to support its network of universities, mostly from the South, through the Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability.

An important recent development of relevance for developing countries is the Convention’s 2015-2020 Bio-Bridge Initiative (BBI). Launched by the Republic of Korea in 2014 at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, BBI supports developing countries in their efforts to achieve the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. In order to enable more systematic and sustainable technical and scientific cooperation, with a focus on using Southern hubs and partners, the initiative will facilitate the communication of the technical and scientific needs and priorities of countries, enhance the availability and accessibility of information with respect to best practices and expertise, and match the needs of countries with offers of support by relevant global, regional and national organizations and initiatives. South-South cooperation for biodiversity is an example of effective international cooperation that can point the way to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

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