



STATEMENT BY

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

**TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON ECOSYSTEM-BASED APPROACHES TO CLIMATE
CHANGE ADAPTATION AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

**Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa
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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Excellency,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to the technical workshop on ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, organized thanks the generous support provided by the Government of South Africa, the European Commission, and the Government of Sweden.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Government of South Africa for hosting this workshop in the beautiful city of Johannesburg. South Africa has always demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing issues related to biodiversity and climate change.

Special thanks go to all the participants and resource persons, who are coming to this workshop from around the world, to share their experience and expertise and to learn from one another.

As you know, the links between biodiversity and climate change flow both ways. Biodiversity is affected by climate change, with negative consequences for human well-being, but biodiversity, through the ecosystem services it supports, also makes an important contribution to both climate-change mitigation and adaptation.

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020 and its associated Aichi Biodiversity Targets recognize that biodiversity underpins ecosystem functioning and the provision of ecosystem services that are essential for human well-being. The Strategic Plan puts forward an ambitious framework for the conservation, restoration and wise use of biodiversity and ecosystem services in order to secure and maintain the variety of life on the Earth, and for human well-being and poverty eradication.

For example, Aichi Biodiversity Target 15 aims to enhance, by 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks, through conservation and restoration thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Resilience has been defined as the ability of a system to anticipate, absorb, accommodate, or recover from the effects of a hazardous event in a timely and efficient manner, including through ensuring the preservation, restoration, or improvement of its essential basic structures and functions

Ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction use biodiversity and ecosystem services in an overall adaptation strategy and aim to maintain and increase the resilience and reduce the vulnerability of ecosystems and people in the face of the adverse effects of climate change.

The Conference of the Parties, at its twelfth meeting, adopted a decision on biodiversity and climate change and disaster risk reduction and requested the Executive Secretary to compile experiences with ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. Pursuant to this request, a synthesis report is being prepared. The workshop this week will be an opportunity to review and identify gaps in the information provided in the draft synthesis report, and to provide more information to strengthen the report. The key messages from the report and technical workshop will be made available to the twentieth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.

In addition, ecosystem-based approaches to disaster risk reduction have been supported in the international policy arena in various ways, including through the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

As we are faced with the great challenge of achieving the objectives of ending biodiversity loss, limiting climate change, combating desertification and land degradation, and meeting the sustainable development goals, it is particularly timely to look more closely at ecosystem-based approaches as they have the potential to deliver multiple benefits beyond climate change.

In an effort to enhance synergies, I issued a notification earlier this year, encouraging Parties to the CBD to make use of existing tools, guidance and information related to biodiversity and climate change, and inviting Focal Points to the CBD to liaise, collaborate and share relevant information with their counterparts in charge of the climate change agenda, in particular, for the development of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions.

I am confident that the workshop will contribute to strengthening national policies, regional strategies and other global agendas.

I wish you all very productive discussions and a successful workshop.

Thank you.