



**STATEMENT BY  
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**ON THE OCCASION OF**

**THE CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR SOUTH, CENTRAL AND WEST ASIA  
ON ACHIEVING AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS 11 AND 12**

**NEW DELHI, INDIA  
7 DECEMBER 2015**



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**

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**Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It gives me immense pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you all to this Capacity-building Workshop for South, Central and West Asia on achieving Aichi Biodiversity Targets 11 and 12. This workshop is the third in a series being organized by the CBD Secretariat in collaboration with partners.

It is heartwarming to see participants from all over three sub-regions as well as representatives from IUCN, other PoWPA Friends, BirdLife International, WWF, UNDP, and agencies GIZ and ICIMOD. This gathering validates the importance, which your countries and the organizations you represent accord to protected areas and to Aichi Biodiversity Targets 11 and 12. I thank the Government of Japan for funding this workshop, under Japan Biodiversity Fund, as well as the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of the Government of India for both hosting and providing the considerable support needed in making this workshop a reality.

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Nagoya in 2010 adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 in which twenty headline Aichi Biodiversity Targets are organized under five strategic goals. Targets 11 and 12 related to Strategic Goal C aims to improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity.

In 2012, at its eleventh meeting, in decision XI/24, the CBD COP invited Parties to undertake major efforts to achieve all elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11. The fourth *Global Biodiversity Outlook* has reported varying levels of progress for elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, the quantitative elements (to protect 17 per cent of terrestrial and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas) of the target are on track to be achieved at the global level by 2020, for both terrestrial and marine areas within national jurisdiction, with only an additional area of 1.6 per cent needed in each case. However, the other elements relating to ecological representation, coverage of areas important for biodiversity, management effectiveness, governance, and integration of protected areas into wider land- and seascapes, still need more attention in order to be achieved. The situation of target 12 presents a grim picture, as indications for the element prevention of extinction of known threatened species show no significant progress and the element conservation status of those species most in decline are moving away from the target.

This series of workshops are being organized against the above background to obtain status of elements of Targets 11 and 12 and priority actions which the countries would undertake in next five years for implementation towards realizing the Targets at national, regional and global levels. Your commitment and hard work will made the workshop a success through the delivery of country matrixes on the status, gaps and opportunities, as well as actions for the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 and the advancement of Target 12.

These matrixes and actions you will submit can be presented as roadmaps for accelerating the implementation of these two targets, which would also contribute to associated Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as well as related targets of Sustainable Development Goals, such as goal 6 on water, goal 14 on oceans and goal 15 on terrestrial ecosystems. With your support, these roadmaps will be presented at CBD COP 13 as cross-cutting instruments for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Furthermore, these proposed roadmaps could provide the basis for collective pledges that our countries could present at the High-level Segment during COP 13 in Cancun in December 2016.

The beautiful city of New Delhi presents a wonderful setting and I am confident it will provide the necessary impetus for our deliberations. Central, South and West Asia, with spectacular ecosystem diversity ranging from rainforests to marine systems, harbors a number of important biodiversity hotspots.

However, as in many other regions, ecosystems are subjected to strong and increasing pressures, including deforestation and encroachment.

According to the World Database on Protected Areas, for 2014, about nine countries in these three Asian sub-regions have surpassed the 17% global terrestrial target. However, in terms of marine areas most countries of these sub-regions recorded low values of less than 4% under conservation. So, more work needs to be done to protect biodiversity. In addition, we cannot rely upon simply declaring protected areas, as we remember the critically important qualitative aspects of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 – ecological representativeness, effective and equitable management, including areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Protected areas are a key investment in environmental sustainability, securing ecosystem goods and services, enabling climate change adaptation and mitigation, helping countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, which were adopted at the United Nations in September.

Recognizing these critical roles of protected areas, the Parties to the CBD in February 2004 committed to a comprehensive and specific set of actions known as the Programme of Work on Protected Areas or PoWPA. By emphasizing the equitable sharing of costs and benefits, recognizing various governance types, and by giving prominence to ecological representation, management effectiveness, integration into wider land and seascapes and multiple benefits, PoWPA is the most comprehensive global plan of action for effective implementation of protected areas. CBD Parties hailed PoWPA as the most implemented of CBD programmes and a successful initiative. In its decade of existence PoWPA not only contributed to about 3% global increase in both terrestrial and marine protected areas, but catalyzed multiple actions including development of 108 National Protected Area Action Plans; launching of bold regional initiatives such as the Micronesia Challenge, the Caribbean Challenge, etc., leveraging funding to the tune of US \$288 million through the LifeWeb Initiative and over US \$1.5 billion through the Global Environment Facility, and the development of an array of relevant tools and documents and e-learning modules. Furthermore, the key tenets of the PoWPA are incorporated into Aichi Biodiversity Target 11.

This workshop aims to provide the necessary capacity to help countries develop realistic actions and chart roadmaps for realizing Aichi Targets 11 and 12 as well as related other Aichi Targets. The workshop brings together government, NGO and intergovernmental experts to share information, tools and wisdom to develop a shared vision for the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets 11 and 12 in these sub-regions of Asia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is one thing to commit, but quite different to achieve. When we commit we have to achieve and deliver. It is time to take real actions towards achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Here I recall Mahatma Gandhi's words

*“The earth, the air, the land and the water are not an inheritance from our fore fathers but a loan from our children. So we have to handover to them at least as it was handed over to us.”*

I am quite confident that with our collective, coherent, focused and sincere attempts, Aichi Target 11 will be a reality and will improve the quality of life on our planet through amelioration of ecosystem services through effective and equitable management of protected areas.

When I assumed my stewardship of the CBD Secretariat, I announced that my mantra would be **“implementation, implementation, implementation.”** Over the past years my colleagues in the Secretariat and our partners are striving to translate this mantra into supporting reality on the ground. You have already witness this interaction, with the constant communications initiated in preparation for this

workshop. As such, the CBD Secretariat stands ready to extend whatever support we can for implementation.

Let me take this moment, once again, to thank the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India, and the National Biodiversity Authority for hosting this workshop. The warm Indian hospitality and COP 11 are still very fresh in our minds. I also want to extend my wholehearted appreciation to regional and global organizations, who reiterate their support by being with us here today, and who are key partners significantly contributing to achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Thank you for participating and sharing your expertise with us. For gains to be made toward achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets it will require strategic partnerships between Parties, the Convention and our regional and global partners. We will work together in this spirit of collaboration and collectively strive with focused dedication to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Targets 11, 12 and all related targets. I am sure the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi inspires and guides us to achieve our goals.

I once again welcome you all and look forward to open discussions and concrete and practical outcomes.

Thank you.