



Statement by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

on the occasion of

Expert Meeting on Improving Progress Reporting and Working Towards Implementation of Aichi Biodiversity Target 6

9 to 11 February 2016, FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy

*Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN for hosting, and jointly convening with the CBD Secretariat, and the IUCN-Fisheries Expert Group and the European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD) for collaborating and providing necessary technical and logistic support to this important expert meeting. I would like to also thank the experts gathered here from around the world for taking the time to discuss this important topic at hand.

You've gathered this week to discuss an issue that is truly an integral aspect of sustainable development. The issue of sustainable fisheries lies at the critical nexus between biodiversity conservation, ecosystem health, prosperity, poverty reduction, livelihoods, nutrition and food security. We cannot hope to achieve global goals for sustainable development unless we achieve sustainable fisheries.

Fisheries provide a key means to make progress towards sustainable development goals but, at the same time, can also present potential obstacles to sustainable development if not managed well. This delicate balance has been encapsulated by the various goals and targets agreed to by Governments in recent years.

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets lay out an ambitious agenda for achieving a future 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. Among 20 Targets, Target 6 articulated CBD Parties' commitments on sustainable fisheries in harmony with their commitments to biodiversity conservation.

The importance of marine biodiversity to sustainable development was further recognized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September of last year. In particular, Sustainable Development Goal 14 emphasizes the strong linkages between marine biodiversity and broader sustainable development objectives, and reflects the key elements of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800, Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9, Canada
Tel : +1 514 288 2220 Fax : +1 514 288 6588
secretariat@cbd.int www.cbd.int



The fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, published in 2014, suggests that significant progress has been made towards meeting some components of most of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. However, indicators suggest that the status of biodiversity will continue to decline without urgent action. If we are to address these negative trends and achieve the goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, we will have to focus on better mainstreaming biodiversity into our development planning, governance and decision-making at various levels.

A key focus of the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in December 2016, will be mainstreaming biodiversity into different sectors, including fisheries. COP 13 will aim to build political will for biodiversity mainstreaming, in order to enhance progress towards the Aichi Targets, and will also seek to outline strategic actions needed to improve national implementation, supported by effective monitoring and reporting. The convening of this expert meeting is therefore very timely, and it will provide an important technical input to COP 13 by outlining a framework to better assess progress towards achieving Aichi Target 6 for sustainable fisheries, which will support the development and implementation of effective, robust and ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management and biodiversity conservation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We must recognize that the two sets of objectives, sustainable fisheries production and biodiversity conservation are convergent and interdependent. Biodiversity objectives can only be met if pressure from fishing is sustainable, and objectives for productive fisheries can only be met if the ecosystems that support the fish stocks are healthy and resilient.

I would like to therefore encourage all of you to make your best efforts, based on your long-term experiences and expertise in this field, to produce concrete and practical results and suggestions that can readily serve the needs of countries facing a challenging journey to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

With this, I wish you a successful and fruitful workshop.

Thank you for your attention.
