



CLOSING STATEMENT BY

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

to the

2016 UNITED NATIONS BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE

Thirteenth meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

*Eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the
Cartagena Protocol*

*Second meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the
Nagoya Protocol*

Cancun, Mexico

17 December 2016



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Excellency Minister Pacchiano,

Ladies and gentlemen, dear Colleagues and friends,

Introduction and Implementation of obligations of Parties

I would like to start by acknowledging and welcoming the good results of a successful 2016 United Nations Biodiversity Conference here in Cancun, Mexico, where, after arduous negotiations, the Parties have adopted a total of 78 decisions, including 41 decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meeting, 21 decisions adopted by the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol at their eighth meeting and 16 decisions adopted by the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol at their second meeting. Please allow me to put these outcomes into a broader perspective of progress achieved during my five-year tenure.

The major achievement of the Convention on Biological Diversity under my watch on legal framework membership was the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing, on 12 October 2014, in time to have a first meeting of the Parties concurrently with the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which was held in the Republic of Korea. I would like to recognize the efforts made by Sarat Gidda and Valerie Normand leading the small but effective unit on Access and Benefit Sharing as we have now reached a membership of 93 parties, the latest ones being Antigua and Barbuda and Argentina, with many additional countries in the final phase of consultations and updating of their legal framework which will allow them to join the protocol in the near future.

I am proud to highlight that we have received 183 fifth national reports and that we have reached the high submission rate of 93 per cent for the fourth and the fifth national reports, yet another good indication of the level of commitment of Parties to the Convention. However, I must confess my frustration with the slow and limited number of submissions of third national reports for the Cartagena Protocol (only 78 per cent so far) and submissions of revised or updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) – only 136 so far (69 per cent of parties), including 12 first NBSAPs! I would like to thank the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Japan Biodiversity Fund and the NBSAP Forum for all their support to this process and would like to urge those countries that have not yet done so to finalize their revised NBSAP and adopt it as a policy instrument as agreed at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in Nagoya, therefore fully implementing Aichi Target 17.

Role of Governments and stakeholders

I would like to express my deepest thanks to the Governments of Japan, India, the Republic of Korea and Mexico for having hosted our conferences in 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016 and presided over our work during this period and, most especially, for their leadership and legacy in promoting the enhanced implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. I invite all to read the reports of their presidencies which are available on the website of the Convention under the Presidencies of the Conference of the Parties (<https://www.cbd.int/cop/presidency/default.shtml>). I would like also to thank the commitments of the Governments of Egypt, China and Turkey to host the next three meetings of our Conference of the Parties and concurrent meetings of the Parties to the Protocols — we never had so many offers before!

I am also very happy to witness the progress made over these last years by the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN) in mobilizing youth leaders all over the world to better engage with the global biodiversity agenda and the Convention conferences. In particular, I would like to praise the excellent manual they produced and launched at this conference in Cancun – the “CBD in a Nutshell” manual, which I strongly recommend to everyone, even those who are not so young anymore! This mobilization of the youth will certainly go a long way to promote the implementation of Aichi Target 1 together with the new awareness campaign to be led by WWF on behalf of the Convention.

I am particularly encouraged by the launching, at this meeting of the Conference of the Parties, of the “Local Biodiversity Outlooks” report on the contribution of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and each of the 20

Aichi Biodiversity Targets. I wish to congratulate the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) and the Forest Peoples Programme and their networks for the elaboration of this timely report, which complements the fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* and recommend it to all governments and partners. Indigenous peoples and local communities need to be seen as partners for the implementation of all of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and its Aichi Targets as well as for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals.

One of the highlights of engaging with the business community under the Convention has been the Business and Biodiversity Pledge. The pledge is a real commitment by business leaders to take action on biodiversity. I am very pleased to announce that close to 130 businesses have so far signed on to the pledge. This incredible success builds on the progress that the Convention has achieved with regard to business engagement in recent years. Business has demonstrated that the delivery of positive action on biodiversity is possible and that biodiversity is an opportunity for innovation. Strengthening the business case for biodiversity and collaborating with other stakeholders (such as non-governmental organizations, academia, local communities, and so on) are key to ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Much has also changed with regard to the issue of scientific assessment and monitoring. IPBES entered into force shortly after I took up the position of Executive Secretary. Since this time, the relation between the Convention and IPBES has continued to develop and grow. Already, the work of IPBES, in particular on the issue of pollinators, is informing the work under the Convention. IPBES global and regional assessments will be a key element of the final review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 as well as the development of a follow-up plan. I believe that the important role of IPBES in the work of the Convention will only continue to grow in the future.

Mainstreaming of biodiversity

The promotion of mainstreaming of biodiversity in the economic sectors received a big push at this Conference, starting with the successful high-level segment, whereby the Government of Mexico invited Ministers of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Tourism in addition to Ministers of Environment which allowed an interactive dialogue among ministers. The main outcome of the high-level segment is the Cancun Declaration, which provides good political direction to promote the mainstreaming of biodiversity. Additionally, I am very happy and thankful that several countries accepted my invitation to announce at the high-level segment their leadership to push for further implementation of several Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Importantly, you have adopted a very comprehensive decision to guide the promotion of mainstreaming of biodiversity in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism. I would like to acknowledge with gratitude the essential support provided by the Government of Mexico, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and to all delegations that have made this important decision possible.

Resource mobilization

The adoption of the Resource Mobilization Strategy at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in Bonn, where I was an active negotiator, including its provision to establish resource mobilization targets and indicators, which were successfully negotiated and adopted at the tenth, eleventh and twelfth meetings of the Conference of the Parties, including a commitment by Parties to regularly report on financial needs and on progress with resource mobilization. This has been a unique achievement in an intergovernmental forum, which was also recognized within the negotiations in financing for development in New York that led to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The decision of the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth meeting on resource mobilization targets has been forward looking and is now an important part of the architecture being developed on financing for development in the United Nations, considered a major agenda item for the coming year at the United Nations. Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity can be very proud to have made a contribution to this global agenda item even beyond the biodiversity agenda in a positive and concrete manner.

In accordance with Article 20 of the Convention and further specified in Aichi Biodiversity Target 20, we agreed on a number of ambitious targets for the mobilization of resources from all sources. Most of you will recall that the negotiations were difficult — moving from preliminary targets agreed in Hyderabad in 2012 to the targets being adopted in the Republic of Korea in 2014. Importantly, we managed to complement the target to double international flows with a target for increasing the mobilization of domestic resources, thus recognizing that domestic resources play an increasingly significant role also in developing countries, while also recognizing that official development assistance continues to play a critical role.

The targets also seek to set a process in place in countries that enables the more systematic and effective mobilization of resources: by assessing existing expenditures, funding needs, and identifying the resulting funding gap, and the development of a national finance plan to close or reduce this funding gap. With the continuous expansion of the BIOFIN initiative of the United Nations Development Programme, which now supports 30 countries, we have a strong implementation support partner, including for developing countries that are not among the 30 core BIOFIN countries.

The critical catalytic role of GEF, as the financial mechanism of the Convention, remains strong. During GEF 5, \$1.057 billion was programmed to the biodiversity focal area. In the first two years of GEF 6, the total amount of GEF biodiversity resources programmed was \$619 million.

As a personal commitment, I attended more meetings of the GEF Council during my tenure than did my predecessors. I have had a firm conviction on the integrated approach to GEF financing and mainstreaming, and advocated together with GEF Secretariat for the integrated pilots. I am pleased with the early results of these pilots, with billions of dollars in cofinancing generated from the international financial and development system.

Thanks to the extraordinary generous support from the Government of Japan through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, the Secretariat has been able to support developing countries to develop their capacity to implement the Strategic Plan.

Besides supporting the Parties in revising/updating and implementing their NBSAPS in close collaboration with many partners, we have implemented various thematic capacity building programs — 27 thematic programmes in 2012, 21 thematic programmes 2013-2014, and 22 thematic programmes in 2015-2016 thanks to the Japan Biodiversity Fund.

The financing environment of the Convention and its Protocols has evolved rapidly in the past few years and will continue to do so in the years to come. My message to you is that Parties must remain creative, innovative and cooperative in developing financing solutions to our common biodiversity challenges.

Final remarks

I am confident that, collectively and with strong partnerships, we can do much better to deliver on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. We just have to scale up our actions based on the lessons learned so far. I hope we will be able to commemorate our achievements at the fifteenth meeting of the Parties, in Beijing, and not having to give excuses for failing to implement the commitments made at the tenth meeting, in Nagoya in 2010.

Finally, I would like to thank all my staff and managers in the Secretariat of the Convention for all their hard work for preparing and convening the 2016 United Nations Biodiversity Conference here in Cancun, and all the translators and interpreters for the support that they have provided. I would also like to acknowledge with gratitude the support from the Mexican logistics team, the support provided by all the chairs of working groups and contact groups, the support provided by the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi and, most especially, my thanks to my deputy, David Cooper, for successfully delivering on his key role as the Secretary of the Conference.

My last words of thanks go to all Party delegates and observers and to our host, the Government of Mexico, in the figure of Rafael Pacchiano, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, and his efficient team led by ambassador Juan Antonio Mateos and Enrique Lendo.

I wish my successor, Cristiana Pasça Palmer, a successful tenure as head of the CBD Secretariat in the year to come.

As many of you already know, I will return next February to my beloved and warm home country, Brazil, where I will continue to engage and support the biodiversity agenda in Brazil and globally.

I wish all a safe return home, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thank you.
