



OPENING STATEMENT BY

BRAULIO FERREIRA DE SOUZA DIAS

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

to the

FIFTH GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY SUMMIT OF CITIES

**Cancun, Mexico
10 December 2016**



**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



Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen

I am honoured to address this fifth Global Biodiversity Summit of Cities, as we also celebrate 10 years of very productive cooperation with ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability as a valued partner. We are proud to announce over 700 registrations, including mayors, governors and top executives, as a sign of the growing importance of this issue.

It has become clear over that period that cities, subnational governments and other local authorities are at the forefront of the implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Their full engagement and participation is necessary to achieve them, just as is the case of the Sustainable Development Goals, and most notably the New Urban Agenda as the outcome of the Habitat III Conference, which for the first time recognized the crucial importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and invited a collective effort to protect, conserve, restore and promote urban ecosystems, water, natural habitats and biodiversity, and promote sustainable changes to consumption and production patterns.

City executives hold mandates very close to communities and residents. Cities are engines of innovation, and the recent and hybrid concept of an “urban metabolism” in which nature is an integral part of development, infrastructure and investments can help direct future strategies. Subnational governments, on the other hand, are in charge of effective land-use planning, incentives, and management of productive landscapes and natural resources for sustainability.

I would like to recognize and appreciate ICLEI’s leadership and investment in this cooperation with the Convention, from assigning staff to support the Secretariat for many years to encouraging ground-breaking publications such as the Cities and Biodiversity Outlook, and through projects, such as the capacity building for NBSAP implementation at all levels which ran a consultative workshop yesterday. We need to continue leveraging this unique example of cooperation, and I commit the Secretariat of the Convention towards that goal.

I also want to recognize the Mexican Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity, CONABIO, for its critical support to this event, as well as the Mexican Association of Environmental State Authorities, ANAAE, the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD) and its members, Aichi Prefecture in Japan, which remained engaged since the historical COP 10, the scientific network URBIO, and leaders such as the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and the cities of Paris and Montreal, among so many others.

It is our duty to continue to help ICLEI, its partners and the organizations I mentioned in mainstreaming nature-based solutions into urban planning and development frameworks. As we look ahead, it is critical to expand these approaches towards an organized community of practice, involving cities, subnational governments, agencies and experts. We need new and improved assessments of the effectiveness of coordination of levels of government for the implementation of the Strategic Plan and its Targets, at the global and regional levels as well as the subnational and local levels, and new initiatives to apply their findings. In this sense, I also want to highlight role of the GEF, with its exciting Sustainable and Resilient Cities’ programme, and the initiative of other donors, such as Germany’s International Climate Initiative IKI, in furthering progress in this area. Finally, I want to commend this Summit for the initiative of the Quintana Roo Communiqué on Local and Subnational Governments, to be adopted at this venue, and I look forward to its content.

Thank you for your attention.