



**Statement by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity  
on behalf of the Executive Secretary  
Dr. Cristiana Paşca Palmer**

**Capacity building workshop for Caribbean Small Island developing States towards achieving  
Aichi Biodiversity Target 9  
18 - 22 September 2017  
Kingston, Jamaica**

*Distinguished Delegates,  
National and Regional Experts,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Dr. Cristiana Paşca Palmer, I would like to welcome you to the “Capacity building workshop for Caribbean Small Island Developing States towards achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 9”.

It is a great pleasure to be here together with experts and authorities on invasive alien species from both the biodiversity conservation and agricultural sectors.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest sympathy to all participants, your families and friends, who have had to endure the severe impacts of Hurricane Irma. I sincerely appreciate the efforts you made to come here and participate in this workshop. The fact that you made an effort to join this workshop to combat invasive alien species, demonstrates the strength and resilience of the people from the Caribbean island States. Thank you for being here.

Moreover, this workshop could not take place without the efforts of everyone in this room. I would like to take a moment to thank to Government of Jamaica for hosting this workshop. I would also like to thank the Secretariat of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the Great Britain Non-native Species Secretariat and the Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI), for supporting this workshop by providing technical input, organizing the pre-workshop webinar and also by being here with us. I would also like to acknowledge, with great appreciation, the Government of Japan for its financial support provided through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, and UN Environment, through its Caribbean Sub-Regional Office in Kingston.

As a result of millions of years of unique species evolution, the Caribbean is home to a significant portion of the global island biodiversity essential for sustaining the livelihoods for generations to come. Unfortunately, islands are also known for being the most vulnerable places to the introduction, establishment and negative impacts of invasive alien species. As noted during the pre-workshop webinar, over 1500 invasive alien species have been recorded globally, and 80% of the tropical and sub-tropical



small island developing States are recipients of invasive alien species. As such, these islands can be considered hotspots of biological invasions.

Biological invasions, both in terrestrial and aquatic environments, are likely to increase due to the intensification of human activities – including international trade, tourism and introductions of agricultural and aquaculture species. Within the Caribbean Community, US\$4.75 billion of food is imported annually. And regional fishing and agriculture initiatives are increasing. Beyond the pressure of international trade and food production, the probability of the establishment and spread of invasive alien species in the Caribbean may also increase due to climate change, as its associated risk of extreme weather can add increased risk of biological invasions.

In 2010, the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Specifically, Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 states that “by 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment.”

To prioritize species and pathways, the Global Invasive Alien Species Partnership has been fundamental in filling some of the existing knowledge gaps, for example, by developing the country dossiers on invasive alien species that were shared with you at the pre-workshop webinar and filled with data reviewed and validated by experts in partnership from a range of countries.

In order to put measures in place, cross-sectorial collaboration is essential. The national conservation authority and national plant protection organization can take complementary roles to prevent the introduction, and to control or eradicate invasive alien species including pests and pathogenic agents. Globally, these sectors have addressed these issues through distinct instruments, notably the Convention on Biological Diversity and the International Plant Protection Convention consistent with the World Trade Organization Agreement on Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. However, these instruments only work effectively if national measures meet international guidance and are effectively implemented throughout the region.

To that end, we are gathered here this week to forge a better understanding of the global instruments relevant to invasive alien species, and on how to mobilize technical expertise and funding opportunities to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9. I strongly encourage all of you to come together this week and beyond to build a vision and take the necessary actions to support safe international trade and sustainable development in the Caribbean island States.

I wish you all a fruitful workshop and hope that you will achieve tangible outputs that help protect biodiversity and sustainable development in the Caribbean.

Thank you.