



STATEMENT BY MS. ELIZABETH MARUMA MREMA

**OFFICER-IN-CHARGE, SECRETARIAT OF THE CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

at the closing of the

**TWENTY-THIRD MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL
AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE**

**29 November 2019
Montreal, Canada**

Mr. Chairman,
Delegates,
Colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

We have reached the close of the twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice. Your collaboration, flexibility and perseverance, along with tenacious work over some late evenings, including tonight, have led us to a successful conclusion.

Your work here has contributed not only to advancing progress on various streams of ongoing work under the Convention on Biological Diversity, but also to strengthening the scientific base for the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

This week has illustrated the critical role the Subsidiary Body plays in ensuring that all work under the CBD is underpinned by sound science. As we work to develop the framework for the future of the world's biodiversity, this role is as important now as it perhaps has ever been.

The fluctuating temperatures outside have also reflected the pace of our discussions throughout this week. There must be no doubt in anybody's mind that we will face challenging but necessary discussions if we truly wish to put the world on a path to a sustainable future for nature and people.

And, for me personally, it was especially impressive this week to witness the "nuts and bolts" workings of the Subsidiary Body from behind the scenes.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The advice you have provided to the Co-Chairs of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, in particular on the evidence base, the mission, topics for targets and a process for developing indicators, provides essential guidance in the development of the zero draft. This will, no doubt, give us a strong foundation for the second meeting of the Working Group, scheduled for February in Kunming.



Furthermore, the findings of key scientific reports from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the International Plant Protection Convention provided a robust basis for discussions on biodiversity and climate change, during which you stressed the urgency of taking actions to address the inseparable challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change, including by scaling up the implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk reduction.

You have acknowledged the important work of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) on the links between nature and culture by further considering increased inter-agency cooperation bringing together the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, indigenous peoples and local communities, and other partners, to ensure the enhanced integration of biological and cultural diversity – nature and culture – in the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

You have also highlighted the importance of the sustainable use of biodiversity in wildlife management, including the contribution of indigenous peoples and local communities, particularly in the context of the post-2020 framework, and the need to strengthen collaboration among multilateral environment agreements and international organizations in order to tackle illegal and unsustainable use of and trade in wildlife. Parties noted that additional work is still required to implement decision 14/7 on sustainable wildlife management, and the voluntary guidance for a sustainable wild meat sector, requesting that the Secretariat continue its work on these issues.

It was also crystal clear, based on the interventions, that we all recognize the critical importance of technical and scientific cooperation in ensuring the successful implementation of the post-2020 framework. Indeed, if we are to scale up the level of ambition and effect transformative change, we must take the responsibility to increase the resources required to make it a reality.

We also achieved an important, and long awaited, milestone in the process to describe ecologically or biologically significant marine areas, or EBSAs. In considering the proposed EBSAs described in the North-East Atlantic Ocean and adjacent areas, we are now one step closer to filling in a missing piece of the EBSA puzzle. I encourage the Subsidiary Body to carry this focus on scientific collaboration forward to the discussions on EBSAs at its twenty-fourth meeting next year.

Ladies and gentlemen,

You should be very proud of your work this week. But, let us not forget that much of the work on the post-2020 framework still lies ahead.

The good news is that we are not alone. There are significant resources, ongoing work, sources of support and good will among our sister conventions, other multilateral environmental agreements and frameworks, together with United Nations system-wide efforts. These include the forthcoming United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. We should try to strengthen these synergies and mutually beneficial relationships.

Similarly, each of us must remember that, despite our different perspectives, priorities and concerns, we all have a common goal in mind. And, while we often talk about the interconnections among the various components of nature and biodiversity, it is incumbent upon us to also practice what we preach by supporting and enriching the interconnections among our various perspectives. Focusing on our differences rather than on our commonalities will be no more useful than sitting together in a canoe and paddling in opposite directions. Let's ensure that we work together to paddle in the same direction.

In closing, I offer my sincere thanks to the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body for guiding us through this meeting. I would also like to give my special thanks to you, Hesiquio, for chairing the deliberations this week, and those members of the Bureau who chaired the various agenda items.

I also thank the outgoing Bureau members for their valued collaboration, which I look forward to continuing in work under the Convention and its Protocols. And, I would like to send a warm welcome to the incoming bureau members, who are taking up this role during this critical time for the Convention.

Of course, I cannot forget to sincerely thank the CBD secretariat team, both those whom you may have been seeing and meeting this week, but also those who work behind the scenes to get things done, for their commitment and hard work that has made us reach where we are today – thank you very much colleagues. Your contributions are treasured and valued.

For all the facilities at ICAO made available this week, our sincere thanks, too. To the interpreters who have made it possible for us to communicate, equally, sincere thanks. To all those I have not named, thank you to them all.

Finally, my special thanks to all of you for your passion and constructive and creative inputs throughout this week. While there is still much work to be done on the road to the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, your work has helped illuminate the path ahead and taken us that many steps closer to our destination: Kunming, China, in 2020.

May you have safe and pleasant travels, and my warmest wishes to you all for the forthcoming holiday season!

Thank you.
