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January 13, 2010

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaf
Executive Secretary
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
413 St-Jacques Street, Suite 800
Montreal, QC., H2Y 1N9
Canada

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Dear Mr. Djoghlaf,

Re: Comments on the Revision and updating of the Strategic Plan of the Convention for the post 2010 Period: Possible Outline and Elements of the New Strategic Plan

Your Notification (*SCBD/ITS/DC/LC/69800*) dated December 04, 2009 on the subject at caption refers.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has reviewed the following documents posted by the CBD on the above-mentioned subject:

- **UNEP/CBD/SP/PREP/1:** Revision and Updating of the Strategic Plan: Synthesis/Analysis of Views
- **UNEP/CBD/SP/PREP/2:** Revision and Updating of the Strategic Plan: Possible Outline and Elements of the New Strategic Plan.

In this respect the attached comments on the above subject matter are submitted on behalf of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Sincerely,

Esmé Rawlins-Charles
Esmé Rawlins-Charles
Permanent Secretary

**Comments on the Revision of the Strategic Plan of the Convention for the Post 2010
Period: Possible Outline and Elements of the New Strategic Plan**

The documents are wide-ranging and logically presented, laying out a comprehensive rationale for updating the Strategic Plan for the Convention. In incorporating diverse views and reviews, the Secretariat has elaborated on the issues and challenges of implementing the Convention by the Parties and the urgency of the current situation given existing and future trends of the drivers of biodiversity change.

Trinidad and Tobago recognises the wide ranging discussion presented in the documents and the synthesis of the views that have informed this new draft strategic plan, and compliments the Secretariat for its thorough presentation of such information.

1.0 In a developing country and SIDS like Trinidad and Tobago, the issue of capacity and resources is always a consideration in the implementation of the MEAs. Therefore the support and guidance provided by the Secretariat is important in assisting the country in developing its national programmes and reporting obligations.

While it is suggested that the final plan be a short and focused document, we would suggest that detailed guidance, linking the other programmes of work, SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) targets and indicators be subsequently developed to assist countries, especially those with limited capacity and information and data constraints.

1.1. The Secretariat has recognised capacity constraints of implementing the Convention. Trinidad and Tobago supports the measures in the draft documents that recognise these challenges, including:

- Rationalising the reporting procedures that may be duplicative of the other related MEAs and onerous of developing countries and SIDS;
- Coordination of the overlapping work programmes of other related conventions;
- The need to provide additional support, workshops and training and explicit guidance in the development of targets and indicators;

1.2. The setting of ambitious targets may be necessary in the light of the latest scientific information and national reports indicating trends of biodiversity loss globally. Targets

also give an indication of the magnitude of work to be accomplished and they assist developing countries like Trinidad and Tobago in developing national programmes. More specifically, targets can/have been helpful in the following scenarios:

- In the case of the Programme of Work (POW) on Protected Areas and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), the setting of targets has assisted Trinidad and Tobago at the local level as specific national targets have not been established. This may be of great assistance to developing countries and SIDS who may not have the studies and scientific evidence on which to develop national targets.
- The setting of milestones towards the 2020 target and beyond should be scheduled and coordinated with national and other reporting so as not to be onerous on developing country parties. Reporting on specific targets and POWs at agreed intervals during the coming decade, with national reporting in 2015 and 2020, may be scheduled so that there is periodic information being generated.
- The targets may be broken down into milestone and indicators to achieve them. The provision of guidance documents, sharing of case studies and exchange of experiences in workshops (online and otherwise) would assist in organising nationally to achieve targets. Milestones may include:
 - ◆ By 2012 countries develop a plan for meeting the targets;
 - ◆ By 2015 countries have a national sustainable development plan that takes into account the value of biodiversity integrated into all sectors;
 - ◆ By 2015 countries have legislation related to ABS and genetic resources;
 - ◆ By 2020 all countries have all relevant national documents in Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and green accounting;
 - ◆ Sustained communications, education and public awareness programmes developed and synchronised with the milestones and targets (CBD and/or national).
- **II Vision:** The statements within this section speak only to the benefits of preservation of biodiversity for human benefit only. However, some statement must be made for the preservation of biodiversity for its intrinsic value in and of itself. This is important as, once no economic, social or cultural value is placed on flora and fauna then preservation of that genetic information is given low priority. This may have implications for the future availability of those resources, where advancements in technology may open up avenues that are not present.

- **III. The 2020 Mission of the Strategic Plan:** This option is preferred for the Mission statement with some modification to address the intrinsic value of biodiversity conservation : “To have taken by 2020 the necessary urgent and concerted actions to reduce the threats facing biodiversity so as to stop biodiversity loss, and have started to restore ecosystems, thus ensuring the continued provision of ecosystem services, while equitably sharing the benefits, avoiding change that is irreversible or has dangerous consequences for human well-being, and contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. To ensure that all countries have the means to achieve this.”

- Strategic Goal B, Target 6: In situations where fish stock is shared by a region (e.g. Caribbean where the dispute occurred over flying fish, where persons of other nationalities fishing in other countries’ territorial waters) CBD needs to set timelines for these areas to develop mechanisms to manage fish stock and to prevent or address issues of overexploitation by any one country within the region.

- The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is heartened by the inclusion of the timelines stated in **VI. Elements for the multi-year programme of work of the Conference of the Parties (MYPOW): Section A.**

- Annex Framework of targets, activities and indicators for implementation and monitoring: Strategic Goal B number 5: Under section Means and Examples of Activity, the statement should be revisited. Suggestion, Include in this section, “Rewrite/modify existing laws and regulations to adequately reflect current issues surrounding biodiversity and climate change.