



Convention on  
Biological Diversity

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**STATEMENT BY**

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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE**

**SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP**

**14 MARCH, KASANE, BOTSWANA**



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Life in harmony, into the future  
いのちの共生を、未来へ  
COP 10 / MOP 5

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The President of Botswana Ian Khama has stated, “In protecting our biodiversity, we protect the very essence of Botswana and its people.” This statement is not only valid for Botswana, it is valid for the entire Southern African region, whose history and peoples have been indelibly shaped by its varied landscapes and iconic flora and fauna. Indeed one need not look beyond the neighborhood of this workshop in Kasane to be overwhelmed by the natural splendors of the region: Chobe National Park, the Okavango Delta, the Zambezi and Chobe Rivers, Victoria Falls. But of course looking further gives us a long list of natural areas familiar not only to Africans but to people all over the world for their beauty and richness.

Indeed, protecting biodiversity means protecting the essence of peoples and cultures the world over. Biodiversity is life and biodiversity is our life. This was the slogan of last year’s 2010 International Year of Biodiversity which culminated with the historic Nagoya Biodiversity Summit.

Last October, thanks to the leadership of Japan, 18500 participants representing 193 Parties and their partners adopted the Nagoya Biodiversity Compact comprising a global and comprehensive biodiversity strategy for 2011-2020, known as the Aichi Targets; the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising out of their Utilization; the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; and the Strategy for Resource Mobilization in support of the three objectives of the Convention. In order to engage the people of the world, the Nagoya meeting recommended to the 65<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly to declare 2011-2020 the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. The Decade will be launched officially on 22 May in Tokyo with regional launches to follow, including here in Africa on 4 July in Addis Ababa together with the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification.

Building on the great success of Nagoya, the International Decade on Biodiversity is beginning with a new wave of national biodiversity planning. This workshop is a critical part of that process. Many countries in this region have already gained substantial experience in developing and implementing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). We now need to draw on this communal expertise, for time is of the essence.

To provide effective guidance on national implementation, new NBSAPs must be formulated as soon as possible. Any delay in developing these NBSAPs will augur poorly for the achievement of the Aichi Targets. To assist eligible countries in translating the Aichi Targets into NBSAPs before COP11, Japan has established a Japan Biodiversity Fund, which is now fully operational. Moreover, additional funds for national biodiversity planning have been made available through GEF-5.

In addition to revising NBSAPs, the signing and ratification of the Nagoya Protocol is an urgent topic. The Secretariat and the Global Environment Facility are working to ensure that the first meeting of the governing body of this historic instrument will take place in India in October 2012 back-to-back with COP11. To this end 50 ratifications are required before 19 July 2012. The Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol is also open for signature, and will enter into force 90 days after the deposit of the fortieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession. Finally, to reach consensus on funding targets at COP11, progress must be made on such foundational issues as what constitutes biodiversity-related funding and the levels needed, particularly in relation to the Aichi Targets and the implementation of NBSAPs.

The task we set ourselves in Nagoya was ambitious. It will require leadership and creative thinking from the Parties, national focal points, the GEF and the Secretariat to ensure the timely delivery of the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan at national and regional levels. This workshop is therefore of the utmost importance, and I would like to sincerely thank the government of Botswana for hosting and supporting it.

Today's workshop is the first of a series of regional and subregional workshops to be organized under the Japan Biodiversity Fund in 2011-2012. It is fitting that the SADEC region is the first to translate the Nagoya outcomes into reality. Your deliberations this week can serve as a model for other regions in Africa and beyond. I have no doubt that countries of Southern Africa will live up to this challenge and set a path for a sustainable future for both this region and the rest of the world. I urge all participants to remember what is at stake in this process: nothing less than the future of life on Earth.

Thank you for your kind attention.