



Statement by

**CRISTIANA PAŞCA PALMER
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

on the occasion of the

**CARICOM Workshop for the Development of a Regional Biodiversity Strategy
for the Caribbean Community**

**Georgetown, Guyana
14 June 2018**

Dr. Manorma Soeknandan, Assistant Secretary General of the CARICOM Secretariat,

Distinguished Head of the European Union in Guyana,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to provide a message to this Georgetown workshop, which will be discussing a Caribbean Biodiversity strategy. As the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity serves as a member of the Steering Committee of the initiative, I welcome the opportunity to share a few thoughts with you and I thank the Chair for his kind offer for me to do so.

I would like to commend CARICOM members and their Secretariat, working with UN Environment's Latin America and the Caribbean office and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, for their work on the biodiversity assessment on which the Strategy builds. I also recognize the excellent preparatory work done by CANARI as the project's technical partner.

Developing a biodiversity strategy for your region will help to strengthen collaboration, provide common views to important global processes including those under the Convention, and leverage support for achieving the goals of the Convention and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Caribbean provides many opportunities for sustainable development, such as the development of greener resorts, more sustainable yachting and boating, and sustainable procurement for food, materials and services for the tourism sector.

The Parties to the Convention recognize the importance of biodiversity for all Caribbean States, and adopted a specific Programme of Work to help manage this development asset. Many island Parties also launched the Global Islands Partnership, GLISPA, with which my Secretariat cooperates to support implementation, and in which many of your countries are active members.

The diversity of the Caribbean extends to its many cultures and languages. It is one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, and there are many landmark projects such as the Caribbean Challenge Initiative and its Biodiversity Trust Fund. It is therefore very important that the effort includes all countries of the Caribbean, and not only members of CARICOM.

I wish you the very best success in the workshop, and invite you to share the outcomes of your work at the upcoming meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Thank you for your attention.