

**Statement of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity,
Mr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, on the occasion of the
7th Plenary Session of the 3rd UN SIDS Conference in Apia, Samoa, on Thursday September 4, 2014**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'd like to start by thanking our hosts, Samoa and the UN Secretariat, for organizing such a productive conference in a particularly welcoming island environment. It is invigorating to witness that when protecting nature as a precious development asset, SIDS truly walk the talk and do not wait to take leadership in innovative ways.

Given the direct links between the natural environment and the quality of life of their residents, all SIDS are signatories to the CBD. Aside from being the International Year of SIDS, the CBD selected Island Biodiversity to commemorate this year's International Day on Biological Diversity and next October, in Pyeongchang, Gangwon province, in the Republic of Korea, the 12th Conference of the Parties of this Convention, under the theme of Biodiversity for Sustainable Development. The COP will thus conduct the mid-term review of progress in implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the links with the UN's overarching strategy for the Post 2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Global Biodiversity Outlook report in its 4th edition, to be launched at COP 12, is the Convention's flagship publication and its main monitoring tool. It will highlight two main trends:

- Since 2010, national governments, and very especially the SIDS, have invested more and better in addressing the unacceptable rate of loss of global biodiversity. The regional island challenges, mainstreaming ecosystem services into the larger development agenda, the innovative practices of SIDS in community-based fisheries, integrated coastal and marine ecosystem management, and public-private partnerships for instance with tourism have shown that initiatives to curb these losses are possible and expanding.
- Nevertheless, the actual loss of biodiversity, underpinning food, health, water and livelihood security and disaster risk reduction, has not been stopped and is indeed still accelerating, compounded by climate change, pollution, alien invasive species and the loss of critical ecosystem services.

At COP 12, issues related to oceans, such as acidification, debris and marine noise pollution, as well as the identification of ecologically and biologically significant marine areas both within and beyond national jurisdiction (known as EBSAs), will be of critical importance to SIDS and other islands and coastal states. As mentioned, the outcomes of CBD COP 12 will also feed into the UN's post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs, and leadership by SIDS will be key to ensure that biodiversity is considered both in stand-alone goals on oceans and land ecosystems, as well as integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services on other goals as urbanization, sustainable agriculture and food security, and water. For this reason, I would like to invite SIDS and partner countries to contribute on these links especially during the Ministerial Segment of the COP on October 15 and 16.

Another topic of relevance to SIDS will relate to resource mobilization to achieve the Aichi Targets. Parties at COP 11 in Hyderabad, India, agreed to a preliminary target to double international flows to developing countries by 2015 on the basis of averages between 2006 and 2010, and to maintain such levels until 2020, COP12 will adopt its final decision on resource mobilization, including domestic resource mobilization and including safeguards for the implementation of financial mechanisms to protect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.

To achieve this, I cannot overemphasize the importance of SIDS submitting, to the Convention, their updated National Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plans, and their 5th National Reports, on the basis of which it will be possible to identify the technical and scientific cooperation needs, to be supported within the Pyeongchang Roadmap for 2020 resulting from the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan. We will also witness, in Korea, the first meeting of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS, as an effective tool to protect the rights of provider countries and communities and I would like to take this opportunity to call on all SIDS to ratify their membership to the Nagoya Protocol to benefit from the sustainable use of their genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge in international cooperation and development.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Pacific SIDS for having adopted a Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region for 2014-2020, which is totally aligned with the global Aichi Biodiversity Targets framework, and would like to encourage SIDS from other oceans to take a similar step.

Among the tools I'd like to invite SIDS to take full advantage of in the Convention are:

- the Global Islands Partnership (GLISPA) as a broad multi-stakeholder cooperation platform since 2006, having received significant support in this conference;
- the Sustainable Ocean Initiative, announced here in the Partnerships Dialogue and bringing together governments and major groups to exchange lessons and build capacity in the sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems,
- the initiative mentioned above to collectively identify, on the basis of consistent and cooperative scientific criteria, areas of special ecological and biological significance in the seas and specially in the high seas (known as EBSAs);
- and options to match-make needs related to area-based Aichi targets 5, 11, 12 and 15, and donor offers, through the Island Resilience campaign in the Convention's LifeWeb initiative, already having facilitated up to 80 million USD in projects.

There are also plans to launch, at COP 12, approaches to support particularly innovative and transformative pledges to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as part of our Biodiversity Champions campaign, some of which are already listed such as the Caribbean Challenge Initiative.

Ladies and gentlemen, SIDS represent approximately 1/5 of all CBD Parties. As we have seen here in Samoa, SIDS have learned, often the hard way, that their long-term quality of life will depend on keeping healthy nature as the most cost effective provider of critical ecosystem services and protection against climate change and disaster vulnerability. Thankfully, and in spite of the challenging situation of biodiversity at global level, we've seen much progress and enthusiasm in this conference in integrated

approaches to development and environmental stewardship. I look forward to seeing the outcomes of the 3rd UN SIDS conference in Samoa reflected in Korea, and to assisting SIDS and their partners to protect, for the sake of their inhabitants, the basic mechanisms of life on Earth. Thank you for your attention.