



STATEMENT
on behalf of
BRAULIO FERREIRA DE SOUZA DIAS
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
of the
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

at the Tenth Plenary Session of the

GROUP ON EARTH OBSERVATIONS (GEO-X)

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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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Madame Co-Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is one of the Participating Organizations in GEO. Interactions and engagement are particularly intensive with GEO BON, the network that implements tasks in the biodiversity Societal Benefit Area. Most recently, we organized a workshop at the margins of the seventeenth meeting of the Convention's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 17) that enabled an exchange of views between experts from Parties to the CBD and members of the GEO BON network. We also had a GEO BON representative organize a session on biodiversity observations and networks in a recent regional workshop on national reporting.

These exchanges contribute to a better understanding of the GEO/GEOSS process within the biodiversity community and enable the GEO BON network to respond more effectively to the questions asked by countries in regards to biodiversity issues. The Special Event on Biodiversity, organized by the Federal Office for the Environment of Switzerland on Tuesday (14 January 2014) was another important contribution towards articulating the expectations from the work undertaken within GEO in support of the challenges faced by biodiversity and the opportunities offered by biodiversity in contributing to solutions to societal issues.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Conference of the Parties to the CBD has recognized the contributions previously made by GEO BON on assessing observation needs relevant to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and more recently invited GEO BON to undertake a number of tasks, including to pursue and complete the work on Essential Biodiversity Variables. The potential of a toolkit supporting the establishment of biodiversity observation networks and their integration into the wider observations landscape, dubbed 'BON in a Box', was recognized in the conclusions from SBSTTA-17. All of these products, however, will depend on continued engagement with user countries and I am pleased to see the strong will within GEO BON to pursue and strengthen the dialogue with users at many levels. I trust that these activities will help countries to invest in the establishment or strengthening of national and regional biodiversity observation networks which collectively enable a better understanding of changes to the biosphere.

We hope that the GEO process, as it moves into a new phase of implementing a Global Earth Observation System of Systems, could facilitate and promote enhanced interaction between ongoing efforts under different SBAs where practical and useful. We also hope that future efforts of GEO in the area of biodiversity could be aligned to support the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Finally, we trust that GEO BON continues to remain a strong supporter of the efforts on monitoring and enabling assessments of the entire biodiversity community and wish to thank everyone who has contributed to these activities.

Thank you.
