



MESSAGE FROM MR. BRAULIO F. DE SOUZA DIAS

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

On the occasion of

WORLD WETLANDS DAY: “WETLANDS AND WATER MANAGEMENT”

2 FEBRUARY 2013

Everybody has an interest in ensuring that water is managed effectively. Water underpins all human and ecosystem needs. In the 21st century though, frequently we do have not enough water where and when it is needed, or alternatively we have too much when there is flooding. Moreover problems with water quality are widespread. The impacts of climate change are affected or are moderated by the presence of water. It is obvious that water security is becoming increasingly urgent for human security and well-being.

Fortunately, there is increasing recognition of the role of natural solutions for achieving this security. Today we celebrate how wetlands are natural infrastructure to help us manage water problems and in doing so provide multiple benefits beyond water itself.

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 10) recognised the importance of water as a cross-cutting subject for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011 – 2020) and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, particularly noting its paramount importance in achieving target 14. At the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11), governments reinforced this recognition and called for a cooperative partnership to promote ecosystem-based solutions for water management by the broadest range of stakeholders. This was seen as a contribution to sustainable development and to the United Nations International Year of Water Cooperation (2013). This year’s celebration of International Biodiversity Day on 22 May is devoted to the issue of water and biodiversity.

Managing water is also an important motivation for ecosystem restoration, one of the important Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Sustaining hydrology is a prerequisite for successful restoration. The opportunity for restoring wetlands to manage water is a good illustration of translating into tangible outcomes the call for concerted action on restoration that was launched in Hyderabad at COP 11.

We are pleased to have contributed to “*The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Water and Wetlands*”, launched by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat today, which positions wetlands as our most valuable ecosystem type, and primarily because of the benefits they deliver regarding water. The work of the expert group on the role of biodiversity in sustaining the water cycle is another example of demonstrable outcomes of our joint work plan with the Ramsar Convention as the lead implementation partner for wetlands for the CBD.



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800, Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9, Canada
Tel : +1 514 288 2220 Fax : +1 514 288 6588
secretariat@cbd.int www.cbd.int



Water and its management builds bridges between stakeholders and is among the most obvious reasons why all the biodiversity-related conventions committed jointly to implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020. I congratulate, and draw your attention to, the excellent World Water Day materials prepared by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and invite all to celebrate wetlands and water management today, but more importantly to put the topic permanently at the heart of our collective efforts towards sustainable development.
