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## ADDRESS BY

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High-level meeting of the General Assembly as a contribution  
to the International Year of Biodiversity

Thematic panel on "The way forward in achieving the three objectives of the CBD, and the  
internationally agreed biodiversity goals and targets."

United Nations, New York

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Mr President,  
Mr Secretary General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me begin by expressing Finland's full support to the statement made by President Barroso on behalf of the European Union in the opening plenary this morning.

The Global Biodiversity Outlook 3 report confirms what many have long feared: we are in fact losing species, ecosystems and genetic resources at an ever increasing rate. Biodiversity loss has grim consequences for humanity.

However, rays of hope pierce this gloom. For instance, conservation work has been done for centuries, and it makes a difference. The key challenge in Nagoya will be to establish a new strategic plan for scaling up and mainstreaming biodiversity concerns in all sectors of society.

First, the targets. A new CBD Strategic Plan will be approved in COP 10 and will guide the implementation of the Conventions 2011-2020. Finland strongly emphasizes that the targets of the Strategic Plan have to be ambitious but realistic.

We need to demonstrate the strong economic rationale for biodiversity. According to The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) –study, half of the welfare of the world's 1.1 billion poorest people flow directly from nature.

Also, we need to address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss especially in the context of land use change, over exploitation of natural resources and pollution.

Second, I would like to emphasize the importance of enhancing synergy among biodiversity-related conventions and international environmental governance. Many of the implementation problems we experience at the national and regional level originate from a complex international environmental governance system.

The synergies process among the chemicals and waste conventions has been successful. It is a valuable starting point for strengthened international environmental governance. Many lessons learned can be applied also in the biodiversity cluster.

As you know, a ministerial working group on the reform of international environmental governance has started its work recently co-chaired by Finland's Minister of Environment Paula Lehtomäki.

Third, the CBD and the UN Climate Change Convention are highly interlinked. Finland has hosted several international meetings aiming at finding ways to simultaneously implement these two conventions. The two conventions, together with the desertification convention, are also to be dealt with in the preparatory process of the Rio+20 conference on sustainable development.

Finland is keen to see sustainable forest management applied globally as it can make a contribution towards both emission reductions as well as adaptation. These objectives can best be achieved when combined with enhancing forest dependant peoples' livelihoods, preventing loss of forest biological diversity, improving sustainable land management for carbon storage and preventing land degradation and desertification.

Biodiversity underlies the provision of ecosystem services that are crucial for human well-being. Greater recognition must be given to the role of women in biodiversity use, management and conservation. In the context of climate change, women's biodiversity knowledge becomes even more vital as it may hold keys to survival.

Finally,

Without greater understanding of the content of biodiversity and its life supporting systems, we will not reach the audience outside this room. Therefore concerted actions are needed to step up our efforts for the coming decade and decisions in Nagoya.

Thank you.