



Solomon
Islands

STATEMENT BY

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BEFORE THE

**HIGH-LEVEL MEETING
AS A CONTRIBUTION TO
THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY
(THEMATIC PANEL)
65th UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. President,

Let me begin by associating this statement with the statement issued by Yemen on behalf of G 77 and China. Biodiversity in my part of the world is celebrated every day of the year. 80 per cent of my country's people lives are connected and linked to their natural surrounding for their daily livelihood. 80 per cent of our land is customary owned, undocumented and provide us with food, shelter and our medicinal needs. The loss of biodiversity through the negative impact of climate change is threatening our survival.

Mr. President,

The varying geographical features that make up my country of about a thousand islands is a huge biodiversity laboratory with unique features, atolls with huge fresh water lakes, vast lagoon areas with unique marine life and diverse flora and fauna. We are also part of the coral triangle initiative made up of six Pacific/Asian states.

Matters for negotiations in the forthcoming CBD 10th COP in Nagoya next month, on Conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of biodiversity and the fair share of benefits arising from genetic resources is an important one. The three issues must be looked at from a sustainable development perspective. Firstly, an effective framework must be put in place to ensure sustainable use of biological diversity is focused on our collective effort to reduce poverty. Secondly, it must be people centered; otherwise knowledge based societies will continue to benefit from such genetic resources, while developing countries with no science institutions are left out as spectators.

Mr. President,

There must be an urgent economic solution to logging. An enhanced support to Eco Tourism and investment in small holder farming for Solomon Islands is a priority, to replace logging and traditional slash and burn agriculture. Solomon Islands in Copenhagen last year announced its intentions to preserve one of the largest uninhabited islands in the Pacific for conservation, the island of Tetepare. These initiatives need resources and we do hope a host of mechanisms from climate change to biodiversity are established to address these concerns. The dilemma is we have so many good intentions but if there is no real international political will and resources to implement our Convention then we are stuck between a rock and a hard place and are merely paying lip service to biodiversity global issues.

Mr. President,

Climate change impact on our marine biodiversity is already having unprecedented damage to our marine ecosystem habitats that support our fisheries especially the future of our tuna industry. Ocean acidification is already contributing to coral bleaching and wider spread damage to our coastal marine ecosystem.

Loss of biodiversity through climate change must be addressed through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. A second commitment period to reduce harmful green house gas must

be done to prevent us from reaching a tipping point where loss of biodiversity becomes unpredictable and out of control there by threatening humanity its survival.

Let me close by assuring you that Solomon Islands will play its part in ensuring our goal to maintain ecological balance and sustain global life.

Thank you