

**Statement Delivered by H.E. Prof. Dr. Veysel Eroğlu
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**High Level Plenary Meeting on Biological Diversity
United Nations, 22 September 2010**

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great honor and pleasure to address this High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly devoted exclusively to biological diversity.

I find this meeting timely and extremely important. I would like to thank H.E. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations.

The ecosystems of the planet provide us with so many irreplaceable services.

However, the current loss of biodiversity, thus the related changes in the environment are now faster than ever before in the history of mankind.

Conservation of the biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources need long-term commitment and vision.

An immediate and substantial scope for greater protection should be implemented with concrete targets.

Turkey with its three bio-geographical regions is a rich country in terms of biodiversity and due to its location; it serves as a bridge between two continents.

In this context:

- Our country is located on two major bird migration routes.
- There are 11.000 plant species in Turkey, one third of which are endemic.
- We have 5 micro-gene centers in which more than 100 species display a wide variation of crops.
- In terms of animal genetic resources, many domestic animal races were originally bred in Anatolia.

National Biological Diversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) of Turkey was prepared in 2001, and it was revised in 2008.

In Turkey, in-situ protection efforts were started in the 1950s. Protected areas have been designated under various statuses; some are:

- 42 Nature Parks,
- 31 Nature Conservation Areas,
- 14 Special Environment Conservation Areas,

- 135 internationally important wetlands

The in-situ protected areas have reached about 4.6 million hectares in total, corresponding to some 6 % of the country's total surface area.

Turkey has carried out various projects on management and conservation of biodiversity.

One of these projects is the establishment of "Noah's Ark Biodiversity Database - Species, Habitats and Sites", which was put into use in 2007.

Another project that we have started is "Enhancing the Management Effectiveness of Forest Protected Areas".

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In our view, the New Strategic Plan for post-2010, which is being negotiated under the Convention of Biological Diversity, is insufficient to address benefit sharing.

Beyond 2010, the user countries of genetic resources within the context of benefit sharing should take strong measures, considering the rights of the countries of origin. Otherwise, we cannot expect any success from the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Therefore, concrete targets on benefit sharing should be included in the new strategic plan.

The organizations which are steering world markets and global economy should be informed about the close relationship between biodiversity and sectoral implementations.

As regards climate change, adaptation strategies must cover conservation of biological diversity and functioning of ecosystems.

With respect to the adverse effects of climate change, new management approaches should be taken in order to ensure the resilience of ecosystems and to conserve the biodiversity.

In this context, within our national efforts,

- We have focused on developing the renewable energy potential of Turkey. We took the essential measures to enhance energy efficiency including enacting the necessary legislation. Our aim is to make full use of the hydro, wind, solar and geothermal power potential of our Country.
- We are also committed to increase sink areas by afforestation actions and by deforestation control. In this respect, Turkey has started a rigorous afforestation campaign with a target of 2.3 million hectares of land in a five year period from 2008 to 2012.
- We improved our integrated river basin management plans for adaptation to climate change.
- Finally, very specific cooperation between United Nations and Turkey has been initiated which is called the Millennium Development Goals Anatolia Arboretum and Botanic Garden.

To conclude my words, I am calling you to hold hands together for our world, because we do not have another world.

Thank you very much.