



Video Statement
of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity,
United Nations Assistant Secretary-General, Dr. Cristiana Paşca Palmer
on the occasion of the International Day for Biodiversity, 22 May 2018

Dear colleagues,

25 years ago, in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity entered into force. It was the realisation of a project for sustainable development that had taken the world decades to achieve.

Since 1993, Parties to the Convention have undertaken actions to conserve biological diversity, use it sustainably, and equitably share the benefits from the use of genetic resources. They have developed partnerships with civil society, business, indigenous peoples and local communities and other actors.

This has made a difference. Biodiversity and its ecosystem services are at the heart of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The Paris Climate Agreement includes biodiversity. The World Economic Forum recognises biodiversity loss as a critical risk. The Food and Agriculture Organization has organised focal work on Biodiversity. Paris has declared itself the capital of biodiversity, and all the way around the world, countries, local governments and civil society are stepping up their actions to safeguard biodiversity.

But on the other hand biodiversity continues to decline in every region of the world at alarming rates. This loss of nature compounds other global challenges such as climate change, water security, food security, and public health and can potentially lead to catastrophic outcomes for human existence on this planet.

It is therefore, imperative to do everything in our power to halt the destruction of nature.

We have two more years to go to redouble our efforts to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to make progress in achieving the global Biodiversity Targets, also known as Aichi Biodiversity Targets. We have two years to design a new deal for nature that will

take us from 2020 to the middle of this century and help achieve the collective vision of living in harmony with nature by 2050.

We don't have much time. But we have a lot of power if we work together, in a collaborative manner to change the way we use nature and biodiversity.

Indeed, we need a transformative approach and a systemic one that will allow governments, businesses, indigenous peoples and local communities and individuals to foster a paradigm change in the way we interact with nature and biodiversity.

Let innovation and creativity inspire our solutions and practical ideas to safeguard life on earth.

Let us harness the energy of idea to create the conditions for humans to thrive and develop in harmony with nature by 2050.

Let us boldly take the first steps of the next 25 years of history to realize this dream.

Happy International Day for Biodiversity.
