

CBD COP 11 High-Level Segment
Naoko Ishii, CEO & Chairperson, Global Environment Facility
Wednesday, Oct. 17, 2012
10:00 a.m. HICC [4-6 minutes]

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

I am honored to join you today representing the GEF, financial mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity. I would like to thank the Government of India for hosting us warmly, and to the new Executive Secretary of the CBD, Braulio Dias, for supporting this Conference of the Parties so effectively.

I consider that Hyderabad has the potential for being the most consequential Conference of the Parties since the meeting that established the CBD 21 years ago. For the first time, we have a set of ambitious targets for biodiversity that has been fully agreed to, and we have a decision by the parties to start mobilizing the needed resources at all levels. This COP must bring these two key decisions closer together.

I am cognizant that we are all facing difficult challenges. Resources are very limited, while the estimated needs are immense. This COP is considering making financial commitments that can, over time, be made commensurate with the identified challenges. In any and all scenarios under consideration, resources will not meet all of our needs, at least for now. And so we need to be catalytic in

building on our respective strengths and prioritizing the precious resources at our disposal. That is why it is so important that we at the GEF make use of our strategic position in helping all of you in the quest to mobilize the necessary resources.

To fulfill our role in meeting these bold commitments, I am pleased to announce today that I am launching a process to formulate a new long-term strategy for the GEF – GEF 2020 Strategy. It will be in concert with the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and aligned with the guidance we received from the COP.

The Strategy will further emphasize GEF's role as a risk-taking innovator, a partner of choice of those sharing the same goals, and a champion of the benefits provided by a healthy environment at the local, regional and global levels. We will promote the valuation of natural capital to be integrated in decision making at all levels, as a unifying theme. Biodiversity is certainly a major objective for this endeavor.

As you know, we are a financial mechanism of multiple environmental conventions. We will continue to act as a catalyst of the many links that exist between the global public goods, thereby augmenting the overall pool of

resources. We need to prioritize those Aichi targets that enable cross-sectoral action, the valuation of natural capital, and the mainstreaming of biodiversity.

We are ramping up our efforts in support of the third objective of the convention to realize the full potential of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing. ABS can become a cross-cutting tool for mainstreaming biodiversity. And we must start investing in the targets that expand options for resource mobilization by developing countries.

All in all, I consider that additional resources are essential. Ultimately, the CBD will **only** succeed if parties commit to that objective. But money is not everything.

Over the past 21 years, we at the GEF have learned many lessons about what works and what doesn't. Precious resources must be directed to expanding and scaling up the many successful models you have produced around the world. This experience also exposed a stark reality. Incremental gains will not suffice if we are to reach the year 2020 able to count on natural capital as the foundation of sustainable development. I firmly believe that the Aichi Targets provide us with the framework to help us achieve that.

I would like to conclude by commending the Government of India for hosting this convention. Here, people and nature have been intertwined economically,

culturally, and spiritually for centuries. It has been said many times during these past few days in Hyderabad that biodiversity is definitely the unifying theme of sustainable development, opening a wonderful opportunity. With the Aichi Targets, you provided the global community with a clear road map that is setting the pathway for a financially strengthened 6th replenishment of the GEF.

I wish you all a very productive and inspired completion of your deliberations.

Thank you for your attention.