



22 MAY 2014
INTERNATIONAL DAY
FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
ISLAND BIODIVERSITY

ISLAND BRIGHT SPOTS IN CONSERVATION & SUSTAINABILITY

Investing, Scaling and Replicating in order
to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets



Convention on
Biological Diversity



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The United Nations proclaimed **22 May the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB)** to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. The theme for 2014 is **Island Biodiversity** to coincide with the designation by the UN General Assembly proclaiming 2014 as the International Year of Small Island Developing States. The theme was chosen to correspond with the timing of COP decision XI/15 paragraph 1(a), in which the Conference of the Parties "urges Parties, and invites other Governments, financial institutions and other relevant organizations to strengthen the implementation of the Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity".

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FOREWORD



DR. BRAULIO FERREIRA DE SOUZA DIAS

Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Today we celebrate the International Day for Biological Diversity, an opportunity to recognize the central role of biodiversity and healthy ecosystems to life on earth and to human well-being. This year, to mark the International Year of Small Island Developing States, our focus is on island biodiversity. Almost one-third of the world's countries are islands. Over two-thirds of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity have island ecosystems.

Islands constitute less than 5% of the Earth's landmass yet provide habitat for 20% of all bird, reptile and plant species. Islands harbour more than 50% of the world's known marine biodiversity, 7 of the world's 10 coral reef hotspots and 10 of its 34 conservation hotspots. The conservation and sustainable use of the natural resources of islands is critical to achieving the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Yet the biodiversity of islands is at risk. Due to the vulnerability of their endemic biota and their intense human use, islands have higher extinction rates. For example, 64% of all recorded extinctions in recent human history (over the last centuries) happened on islands. Extinction rates for mammals are 177 times higher in island ecosystems than the average for all ecosystems. Once thriving coral reefs are now suffering the effects of bleaching, ocean acidification, pollution and other threats.

Residents of islands understand the linkage between healthy ecosystems and biodiversity and human well-being. Biodiversity-based industries such as tourism and fisheries account for over half the GDP of the economies of Small Island Developing States. Coral reefs alone provide an estimated US\$375 billion every year in goods and services.

From the preservation of marine and coastal resources to climate change mitigation and adaption, from the production of renewable energy to the development of sustainable tourism, islands offer many lessons in resilience and sustainability. As discussions in the United Nations are progressing to frame new sustainable development goals, the experience and knowledge of islands can contribute significantly to the conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity and natural resources of our planet.

Pledges from Island governments such as the Micronesia Challenge, the Caribbean Challenge Initiative and the upcoming Western Indian Ocean Coastal Challenge, together with cooperation platforms such as the Global Islands Partnership, are showing the way for successful multi-Party commitments in support of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The Convention's Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity, adopted in 2006 by the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, provides a strategic framework to significantly reduce island biodiversity loss, thereby contributing to poverty alleviation and the sustainable development of islands. The programme contributes to meeting at least 14 of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as well as the Barbados Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals.

Such innovative projects have come to be known as "Bright Spots." These projects are making a difference in advancing conservation and sustainable livelihoods.

To achieve the goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, we need to build on these "Bright Spots." We need to identify those that have the potential to be scaled and replicated as solutions to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity throughout the world.

As we celebrate the 2014 International Day for Biological Diversity, let us celebrate the spirit of islands and work together for a sustainable future – a future of life in harmony with nature, the future we want.



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H.E. DR. JOHN W. ASHE

President of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

The world's islands are regarded as amongst the planet's most fascinating and beautiful places. They are special gems and home to some of the most globally biodiverse ecosystems, with large numbers of endemic flora and fauna. They host 30% of the world's biodiversity hotspots, 50% of marine tropical diversity, and some of the world's most unusual and rare species, many of which are still unknown or remain to be discovered. This data, together with the fact that UNEP reports that an estimated 150 to 200 species of plants, insects and animals become extinct annually, highlights the importance of this publication and justifies the focus on island biodiversity, which has contributed significantly to global cuisine, cosmetics, medicine and the sheer diversity of the globe's flora and fauna. The effort to attain sustainable development in the post-2015 development agenda must be inclusive of the recognition of the value of the world's biodiversity and the need for its protection.

Nature-based industries such as tourism and fisheries account for more than half of the GDP of the economies of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and provide income opportunities for vulnerable groups such as women and the young. Moreover, many ecosystem species and processes hold clues for potentially even greater achievements in the production of medicine, food crops, biofuels, and low-energy materials, among others. It is therefore most fitting that this year's theme for the International Day

for Biological Diversity highlights and celebrates island biodiversity. The initiatives featured in this publication illustrate the successes of SIDS in the sustainable utilization and protection of their biodiversity resources. From the preservation of marine and coastal resources to climate change mitigation and adaption, from the production of renewable energy to the development of sustainable tourism, islands offer many lessons in resilience and sustainability.

These initiatives also demonstrate how governments, the private sector and civil society can work together in genuine and durable multi-stakeholder partnerships towards achieving national and regional development objectives. Such partnerships can complement traditional official development aid and leverage additional resources in the form of private financing, technology and knowledge transfer, and human resources to respond to the development challenges of SIDS.

The 2014 International Year of Small Island Developing States and Third International Conference on SIDS (UNSIDS) in Samoa in September and the Convention on Biological Diversity Conference of the Parties (CBD COP 12), will all provide channels to explore the options for showcasing and safeguarding island biodiversity and island solutions.

As the multilateral system grapples with the challenges of framing a new development agenda, the experience and knowledge of the people of SIDS can contribute significantly to the preservation of the biodiversity and natural resources of our planet. I welcome this publication, which celebrates the beauty and many contributions of biodiversity to our quality of life.



Using nature to build resilience in Mauritius.



H.E. RONALD JUMEAU

Ambassador for Climate Change and SIDS Issues
Representative of the President of Seychelles to the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA)
Chair of the GLISPA Steering Committee
Republic of Seychelles

Healthy and thriving biodiversity and ecosystems are central to the sustainability of island economies. At the same time, it is increasingly evident in the current global economic climate that traditional donor-recipient financing mechanisms no longer suffice to meet the requirements of the 21st Century drive towards sustainability.

It is consequently increasingly recognized that one of the most effective ways to protect and sustainably manage and use biodiversity for sustainable livelihoods is through genuine and durable partnerships for action.

This is what the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA) is all about: promoting public-private-civil society partnerships for biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods domestically, regionally and internationally where islands help islands develop solutions to island challenges.

This year, the International Year of Small Island Developing States, provides ideal opportunities to further advance meaningful partnerships that actually deliver through the Conference on UNSIDS in the Independent State of Samoa in September and CBD COP 12 in the Republic of Korea in October.

The CBD is to be lauded for dedicating the 2014 International Day for Biological Diversity to islands biodiversity. GLISPA believes this Day provides a unique opportunity to showcase the bright spots where islands have shown leadership in a manner that can be scaled up and replicated to achieve global conservation and sustainable development targets.

2014 is also an appropriate year for GLISPA to recognize our own successes as a global partnership that has catalyzed more than \$130 million for island conservation and sustainable livelihoods. Let us continue to work together towards the Samoa conference to inspire new leadership from island countries and countries with islands, and to catalyze significant new commitments to implement island solutions.

The time for action is now, in this special year for islands. I invite you to get involved and support our Global Island Partnership to build resilient and sustainable island communities through innovative partnership.



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