



# Statement by the members of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions

7 May 2019



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To the

Closing of the Seventh session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES-7)

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UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France 4 May 2019

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Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention)

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

This statement is delivered on behalf of those Biodiversity-related Conventions that have been attending the 7th IPBES Plenary, namely the CBD, CITES, CMS, the Ramsar Convention and the World Heritage Convention.

This 7th Plenary session has addressed several items of importance to these conventions. We would like to express our appreciation for the rich discussions, which were held throughout the week, and the opportunity to engage in them and in the formulation of their important outcomes.

Most notably, we wish to welcome the adoption of the global assessment on biodiversity and ecosystem services which has been finalized at this meeting. The assessment report provides the latest information regarding the status, trends and threats to biodiversity and nature's contributions to people and will support our respective Conventions and their governing bodies to reinforce their policies and implementation at all levels.

It is however with great concern that we note the findings of the assessment which confirm the accelerating biodiversity loss, undermining humanity's societal and environmental objectives.

For instance, the report notes that the increase in global trade and economy over the past 30 years has doubled the demand for living materials from nature. It concludes that the proportion of species currently threatened with extinction averages 25 per cent across groups that have been sufficiently studied and the rate of extinction is set to accelerate.

Furthermore, it warns us that the fragmentation of species ranges is linked to the decreasing of populations size, genetic characteristics as well as migration capabilities of species.

The report confirms the outcomes of the Global Wetlands Outlook which highlights the rapid loss of wetlands thus making them a highly threatened ecosystem.

The same alarming trend is reflected in the reported limited progress to meet the biodiversity goals across the global agreements relating to nature and the protection of the environment worldwide. We hope the assessment will send a clear signal to policy makers across the planet that there is extreme urgency to address the global biodiversity crisis.

At the same time, the assessment report offers solutions to foster the transformative change needed to arrest the biodiversity crisis, including through effective implementation of multilateral environmental agreements. Across the range of our respective mandates, the work of the biodiversity-related conventions is more relevant than ever. The implementation of these Conventions provides for concrete actions to protect species and ecosystems and have been at the basis for some of the existing success stories of biodiversity conservation.

In light of this milestone global assessment report, we therefore look forward to ever-stronger collaboration and alignment between IPBES and each of our Conventions to realize our individual and collective potential and strengthen the impact of our work. We will report back to the Parties of our different Conventions and invite them to discuss how to best ensure synergies towards our common goal of biodiversity conservation as a tool for sustainable development.

We welcome the work programme of the Platform up to 2030, which addresses some of the key messages emerging from the global assessment.

For the short-term, it considers the urgent need to understand and promote the interlinkages between nature and sustainable development as well as the transformative change necessary to tackle the underlying causes of biodiversity loss.

The work programme also responds to the call for enhancing the synergistic implementation of our intergovernmental processes by giving prominence to the requests put forward by several convention to focus on the issue of the role of connectivity in ensuring the integrity and resilience of socio-ecological systems. We are particularly pleased that the importance of connectivity has been recognized and is reflected both as a cross-cutting issue in the nexus assessment and as standalone assessment to be considered at a later stage.

We look forward to continuing engaging in the IPBES process in the context of the implementation of the work programme up to 2030 and beyond.

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