

Thank you Madam Chair,

One of the key scientific and technical needs related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 identified under item 12, Annex II, is the need for more accessible, affordable and comprehensive data through remote sensing and collection of in-situ observations. The Group on Earth Observations, through its Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON), is developing efforts towards addressing this need. The need for more comprehensive data, as well as monitoring guidelines and data standards, was also confirmed in a recent expert workshop organized by the Secretariat of the CBD and GEO BON during SBSTTA 17, on enhancing biodiversity data and observing systems. As part of the outcomes of this workshop, there was a strong call from represented parties, especially from developing countries, for GEO BON to continue supporting the work of CBD on defining priorities needs related to biodiversity observing systems and monitoring.

In addition, GEO BON, based on our fruitful collaboration over the past years, stands ready to support the work of the ad-hoc technical expert group on indicators for the strategic plan for biodiversity 2011-2020 and address the invitation stated in paragraph 13 in engaging Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, in developing and expanding biodiversity observation networks. GEO BON is developing BON-in-a-Box, a tool to support countries in this mission. BON in a Box will give governments a common and scientifically sound set of Essential Biodiversity Variables, associated monitoring methods and guidelines, data management standards, and tools for data analysis and reporting. Following on the Decision X/7 of COP10, GEO BON has continued to develop the Essential Biodiversity Variables framework, consisting of a small set of variables that countries need to monitor to assess biodiversity change and the actions implemented by parties towards the achievement of the goals on NBSAPs and the Aichi Targets.

Finally we would like to announce that GEO BON is developing an analysis and an indicator of global progress towards Target 15 on Ecosystem Restoration based on these Essential Biodiversity Variables, which is very relevant to the work of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators.

We invite you to visit our booth at the Interactive Fair, and the side event on Thursday evening on the Asia-Pacific regional BON, to learn more about the GEO BON activities.