Statement by the ASEAN Environment Ministers for the Twelfth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

We, the Ministers responsible for the environment of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) comprised of Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, on the occasion of the Twelfth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);

RECOGNISING the important role of ASEAN's rich biological diversity in enhancing the region's economic, political and socio-cultural well-being;

RECALLING that Parties have committed to the implementation of the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets and notes the essential role of biodiversity for sustainable development in the development of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

REAFFIRMING the significant role of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity in facilitating cooperation and coordination among the members of ASEAN, and with relevant national governments, regional and international organizations, to implement the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the ASEAN region;

FURTHER REAFFIRMING the importance of adequate and timely sustainable financial resources including the ASEAN Biodiversity Fund to implement biodiversity conservation programmes of ASEAN Member States;

NOTING the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity will provide greater legal certainty and transparency for both providers and users of genetic resources; and the importance of capacity building and participation of indigenous and local communities (ILCs) in the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol;

RECOGNISING that one of the key challenges in halting biodiversity loss is the greater involvement of a broader stakeholder base beyond environment and conservation practitioners; and that Communication, Education, and Public Awareness (CEPA) campaigns must target key groups such as business, media, women, local governments and youth;

REITERATING that climate change is one of the most pressing challenges of the present generation that affects biodiversity and economy at the global, regional and national levels; and that the ASEAN region is vulnerable to changes in climate and the aggravation of natural disasters;

COGNIZANT that inclusive green growth strategies would promote sustainable management practices of industries and reduce the threats to biodiversity;

NOTING the significant progress of ASEAN Member States in establishing protected areas including ASEAN Heritage Parks as a contribution to the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas and Aichi Target 11;

HIGHLIGHTING the negative impacts of invasive alien species (IAS) introduced as pets, aquarium and terrarium species, and as live bait and live food, on biodiversity, and the risk of escape and release;

RECOGNISING that biodiversity thrives in cities and urban areas, and enhances the quality of life of urban dwellers and that city and urban dwellers have a significant role in biodiversity conservation, and acknowledge the Singapore Index on Cities' Biodiversity as an important tool to evaluate such efforts;

WELCOMING the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) which provides a mechanism to synthesize, review, assess and critically evaluate relevant information and knowledge on biodiversity, ecosystems and essential services for use by all member countries of the United Nations; and its complementary role to the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) in undertaking scientific assessments and in promoting the effective use of science in decision making processes;

EMPHASISING the need to sustain the momentum gained through major regional programmes including the ASEAN Heritage Parks, the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network, the Coral Triangle Initiative, the Greater Mekong Sub-region, the Heart of Borneo, and Sulu Sulawesi Seascape and other key initiatives;

NOTING the development of the Pyeongchang Roadmap which covers relevant COP decisions to ensure that Parties will achieve the Aichi Targets by 2020;

DO HEREBY ENDEAVOUR TO:

> ***INTENSIFY*** efforts aimed at conserving and sustainably managing the rich biodiversity of the ASEAN region towards ensuring the economic, political and socio-cultural well-being of the region's populace;
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> ***URGE*** all Parties to continue effective implementation of the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets; and document lessons learned from such efforts;
>
> ***ENCOURAGE*** donors and partners to support the implementation of ASEAN Member States', including region-wide programmes and initiatives that contribute to the achievement of the Aichi Targets;
>
> ***URGE*** Parties, donors and partners to continue supporting capacity building activities and the participation of ILCs in the effective implementation of the Nagoya Protocol;

ENHANCE national CEPA strategies in support of the Aichi Targets, in particular Target 1, which calls for people to be aware of biodiversity and the steps that they can take to conserve it sustainably; and focus the efforts on key groups such as business, media, women, local governments and youth;

ENCOURAGE all Parties to adopt a low carbon development framework so as to assist in reducing pressures on the environment;

STRENGTHEN international cooperation towards adoption of ecosystem-approach that has been advocated under the Convention on Biological Diversity;

PROMOTE the integration of policies on biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation to improve ecosystem resilience;

SUPPORT the valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services to underscore potential economic gains from conserving biodiversity through sustainable and environment-friendly investments and the implementation of incentive schemes such as payments for ecosystem services;

PROMOTE programmes on protected areas in the ASEAN region and ASEAN Heritage Parks as exemplary networks for effective protected area management;

ENCOURAGE Parties to incorporate IAS management and control measures into the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans; and develop and support the implementation of National Invasive Species Strategies and Action Plans;

ENCOURAGE subnational governments, cities and other local authorities to scale up their contribution to biodiversity conservation, review local policies and laws to support biodiversity conservation, and apply the Singapore Index on Cities' Biodiversity;

SUPPORT the work of the IPBES as it contributes to the work of the CBD's SBSTTA and the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets;

STRENGTHEN regional and transboundary biodiversity conservation initiatives with support of other national governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations; and encourage South-South Cooperation on biodiversity.

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