

Statement of the Group of the Leading Subnational Governments toward Aichi Biodiversity
Targets (GoLS)

to the 14th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, November 2018

“Roles of Subnational Governments with Respect to Biodiversity toward 2020
and beyond”

Subnational governments¹ are natural mainstreamers. They can manage urban and rural conservation linkages through ecological corridors, secure ecosystem services such as food and water and manage productive landscapes. They are in a unique position to ensure vertical integration of governance among different levels of government. Furthermore, according to the Secretariat of the CBD (SCBD), at least 50% of the most recent national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and national reports rely on subnational governments and urban activities.

We, the Group of Leading Subnational Governments toward Aichi Biodiversity Targets (GoLS), underline the importance of subnational governments for the conservation of biodiversity. This is why we gathered at the 13th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-13 of the CBD) in Cancun, Mexico, in December 2016 to launch our first statement, which affirms our commitment to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (ABT) adopted at COP-10 in 2010.

Since then, we have organized several online meetings and held two side events during meetings of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the CBD: one on the “Importance of Subnational Governments for mainstreaming of biodiversity into the sectors of energy and mining, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing industry and health” (SBSTTA21, December 2017) and one on the “Contribution of Subnational Governments toward Aichi Biodiversity Targets” (SBSTTA22, July 2018). We also hosted an

¹ The first level of government immediately below the national level and above the local level. Subnational governments include regional governments such as states, provinces, prefectures, domains, territories, lander, cantons, autonomous communities, oblasts, etc., depending on the country. They are distinct from “local governments,” which include all levels of government below the subnational level.

executive-level online meeting open to the public on “Future initiatives of Subnational Governments toward Aichi Biodiversity Targets” (March 2018). Moreover, we posted our “Voluntary Report on the Contribution of Subnational Governments for the Strategic Plan 2011-2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets” as an information document during the 2nd meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI2, July 2018), where we requested that, “*as appropriate, the Parties mention their effort to engage and collaborate with many stakeholders including subnational governments for the mainstreaming of biodiversity in the sixth national report*”. Finally, during these two years, we established strong relationships with other subnational initiatives led by nrg4SD and ICLEI, and met with the Executive Secretary of the SCBD.

Based on our progress, we now would like to share the following key messages for COP14 ;

- 1) As expressed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are essential for sustainable development, and all levels of government should commit to them.
- 2) Subnational governments can contribute to advocating for the value of biodiversity in their societies, both vertically with their national governments and municipalities and horizontally with a wide variety of stakeholders.
- 3) The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the ABTs and the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities (COP Decision X/22) have all recognized and mobilized subnational governments. Their contribution should be properly estimated in the final assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- 4) The roles of subnational governments should also be considered when discussing the post-2020 global framework. It is necessary and critical to recognize the mandates and resources of subnational governments so that they can be involved in the process to build the framework and implement it in vertical coordination.

Therefore, we, the GoLS, commit to supporting the Advisory Committee of Subnational Governments and its Subnational Coalition for Biodiversity Action, to delivering our experiences to the world, to expanding communications among subnational governments, and to contributing to the mobilization of subnational governments across the world.

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<Members of GoLS>

Aichi Prefecture, Japan

Governor Hideaki Ohmura

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Chairman Roberto Iván Alcalá Ferráez

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<Supporting Partners>

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