

Biodiversity Summit

“Urgent Action on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development.”

Statement by

H. E. Sheikh Hasina

Prime Minister

Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh

Leaders Dialogue 2: Harnessing science, technology and innovation, capacity building, access and benefit-sharing, financing and partnerships for biodiversity

New York
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**Mr. President,
Secretary General,
Excellencies.**

Bangladesh fully subscribes to the “Urgent action on biodiversity for sustainable development” and I am pleased to have this opportunity to share a few thoughts today.

We live in an inter-dependent world where every species on planet earth has a specific role to play in our ecosystem. However, according to the WWF and the Zoological Society of London, the world's wildlife populations have fallen by an average of 68% just from 1970 to 2016.

Bangladesh is heavily dependent on freshwater and freshwater biodiversity is declining at the fastest rate in the world with 85% of global wetlands have already been lost since the Industrial Revolution.

The populations of freshwater mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fishes have fallen by an average of 4% each year since 1970. We are aggravating climate change and loss of biodiversity, and as a result, increasing the risk of ‘zoonotic’ diseases like Covid-19.

Mr. President,

We are not only causing extinction of other species; we are actually moving towards ultimate extinction of human beings if our current actions continue to be unchecked.

In Bangladesh, biodiversity conservation has been recognized in our Constitution as a fundamental principle of state policy and our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman enacted the wildlife preservation order as early as in 1974.

Bangladesh is one of the few countries that enacted law to implement the convention on Biological Diversity. Our Parliament passed Bangladesh Biological Diversity Act 2017 aimed at preserving biodiversity. We have declared more than 5 percent of total terrestrial area and about 5% of the marine area as Protected and Ecologically Critical Areas.

Mr. President,

To save the planet and to save us, we must take the following actions:

1. While investing, we should focus on future sustainability.
2. For safeguarding biodiversity, creating greater public awareness through our education system and research, and strengthening national legislations and monitoring mechanisms are key actions.
3. Global access to benefit-sharing must be ensured for the true owners of the genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.
4. Achieving the Paris goals could be the difference between our extinction and our survival. We must implement them.

Thank you Mr. President.