

Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono
President of the Republic of Indonesia

(message delivered by Moh. Slamet Hidayat, Director General of Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Bismillahirrahmani Rahiim

Excellencies, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am pleased to congratulate the organizers, who have launched Global Island Partnership Initiative. As the largest archipelagic country in the world, Indonesia feels an urgent need to promote the conservation of island biodiversity, and therefore we strongly support the Global Island Partnership Initiative.

I would also like to reaffirm Indonesia's continued commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and highlight our achievements in protected area management. Indonesia has set aside over 30 million hectares of its lands and marine waters as protected areas. Since the 7th Conference of the Parties (COP-7) in 2004, the Government of Indonesia has added 14 new protected areas covering a total of over two million hectares. This includes the 1.27 million hectares of newly established Marine Protected Area (MPA) at the Berau district – East Kalimantan. Indonesia plans to increase its MPA system to 10 million hectares by 2010 from the current total of 6.7 million hectares.

Realizing the important role of islands in biological diversity, I also hope the Global Islands Partnership Initiative will help accelerate the development of networks of Marine Protected Areas in all the countries inside what is referred to as the Coral Triangle. The Coral Triangle area is recognized as the global centre of marine biodiversity. It is home to two thirds of the world's corals, and nearly 200 million people depend on the fisheries, livelihoods and coastal protection that it provides. It is also my aim to formalize the collaboration with colleagues from Malaysia, The Philippines, The Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea and the Federated States of Micronesia to protect this mega coral diversity of global significance.

Once again, my best wishes to all of you.

Thank you.