

- The 2030 Agenda recognizes nature as an integral part of sustainable development. Biodiversity and healthy ecosystems are essential for improving and sustaining human wellbeing. More than 5.8 billion people - 3 out of every 4 people on earth - directly depend on nature for their livelihoods.¹ In order to achieve an appropriate balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations, it is of critical importance to promote harmony with nature.
- The issue of pollinators, as will be presented and discussed during this Trialogue event, is an excellent example, underscoring the clear inter-linkages between biodiversity and sustainable development. By carrying pollen from one flower to another, bees, butterflies, beetles, birds, bats and other species facilitate food production and improve people's food security and nutrition. Production of more than three quarters of leading global food crop types, such as fruits, seeds and nuts, depend directly or indirectly on these species. Safeguarding their populations therefore means benefiting people, plants and the planet as a whole, contributing not only to the attainment of SDG15 (Land on Life) but also to SDG2 (Zero Hunger), SDG3 (Good Health and Well-Being), SDG 1 (No Poverty) and other goals and targets.
- I very much appreciate the Government of the Dominican Republic, as the host of this Caribbean Regional Trialogue and for their leading role and commitment to put biodiversity at the forefront of sustainable development. The Dominican Republic is an proactive Party to all three of the Rio Conventions and all of the seven biodiversity-related conventions, fully recognizing the contribution of the country's natural capital in realizing the broader sustainable development agenda.² I would also like to salute the determination shown by the Dominican Republic Government to foster policy measures, innovative action and knowledge to better protect pollinators, as the first member of the Coalition of the Willing in the Caribbean.³ UNDP will continually support the efforts of the Dominican Republic to develop and implement nature-based solutions to solve our development challenges. We will also assist in up- and out-scaling their good practices in other countries which share the common agenda of building healthy and resilient nations and communities both within the Caribbean and beyond.

Many thanks for your attention. I would like to wish all of you very productive discussions and elaborations over the coming days.

¹ <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/news-centre/speeches/2018/nature-based-solutions-as-catalysts-for-achieving-the-sdgs.html>

² CBD, CITES, Ramsar, WHC, ITPGRA, and IPPC, and CMS.

³ <https://promotepollinators.org/>