

## **Creation of a network of regional cooperation on invasive alien species in islands of the Western Indian Ocean**

CONSIDERING the Indian Ocean islands are home to a biodiversity of exceptional importance;

CONSIDERING that this natural wealth is a source of many goods and services and an asset for the sustainable economic development of these islands;

RECALLING that invasive alien species are recognized as one of the main causes of biodiversity loss worldwide, especially in islands;

HIGHLIGHTING that the islands of the Western Indian Ocean are particularly vulnerable to this problem, and that invasive alien species cause significant ecological damage, which may be accompanied by negative impacts on socio-economic activities (agriculture, fishing, tourism ...) and human health;

AWARE that many actions are undertaken in these islands to minimize the introduction of new alien species, control their spread and eradicate the most invasive of them;

NOTING HOWEVER the lack of coordinating tools and the insufficient exchanges, communication and synergies between the many actors mobilized in the islands of the Western Indian Ocean, and the need for protocols and shared identification tools, early detection, control and management;

CONSIDERING that regional cooperation is a key issue to meet the challenge of biological invasions, and that the circulation, exchange and sharing of information and resources allow more effective prevention, earlier detection and improved methods of control and management;

CONSIDERING that the establishment of a technical network of regional cooperation on invasive alien species is a priority and an urgent action to implement in the Western Indian Ocean;

**Participants gathered in Mayotte from 23 to 26 January 2012, for the workshop organized by the IUCN French Committee on invasive alien species in the Western Indian Ocean:**

REQUEST the states and territories of the Western Indian Ocean to support the development and implementation of a technical network of regional cooperation to facilitate the dissemination and sharing of information and experience ensuring the prevention, control and management of invasive alien species in all environments;

REQUEST the support of the Indian Ocean Commission, as part of its programs and activities and to the extent of available resources, for the implementation of a technical network on invasive alien species that will mobilize all stakeholders concerned by this issue.