



**Conference on Natural and Cultural Capital: the Future of  
Europe**

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- ▶ Good evening, it is a pleasure to be here with you this afternoon.
- ▶ I thank all the participants who contributed to make the discussion on the topics of this Conference fruitful and interesting. I'm sure the spirit of cooperation that has characterized this meeting will continue in the next two days' meeting of the Nature and Biodiversity Directors of the European countries.

- ▶ Let me thank the Italian Botanical Society and Professor Blasi in particular, for their hospitality and for organizing this conference: this is a very important opportunity for mutual exchange of experiences, views and thoughts on issues on which we work every day, but each of us from our own point of view, be it technical, scientific, administrative and institutional. It is important to have the opportunity to compare experiences, even more so between different countries, and it is particularly important for the representatives of the institutions to have the opportunity to examine the technical aspects, that are the basis of administrative decisions, policy elaboration, implementation of regulations.

- ▶ It is important to share goals. Bear in mind that our initiatives are aimed primarily at the conservation and promotion of our natural and cultural capital, with the consciousness that such conservation is strongly linked, as confirmed at all levels, to the factual integration of biodiversity into sectorial policies.
- ▶ In this regard, the Convention on Biological Diversity, during its twelfth Conference of the Parties, which was held last October in Pyeongchang, provided a major contribution in this direction, emphasizing that the integration of biodiversity into broader sectorial policies is crucial to promote sustainable development.

- ▶ Moreover, the process of defining the post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which is currently underway at the United Nations, will help build a framework of real transformation for future scenarios for the conservation of biodiversity and its integration with the objectives of sustainable development.
- ▶ Synergistic actions are important in developing practical interconnections between biodiversity and other policies. To this end, the topic of natural capital, its protection, conservation and enhancement through its links with the cultural capital, is essential.

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- ▶ The issue of food is emblematic of all the topics discussed today: food is a primary resource whose quality is closely related to the maintenance of a good state of conservation of the ecosystems and the services they provide; food is economic development, highly interconnected with the ability to promote green economy and jobs; food is inseparable from the cultural heritage of each country, and therefore, is a perfect synthesis of natural and cultural capital.
  - ▶ We then would like to invite you to Milan, an occasion of international significance that will bring out the importance of nature and biodiversity conservation.