

## ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH CENTRE

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND WATER

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### REPORT TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MALDIVES TO CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY 2007

#### Introduction

Maldives being a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), has been celebrating International Day for Biological Diversity since 2002. The purpose of celebrating this day is to increase understanding and awareness on biodiversity issues. Also to highlight the threats faced by all living things due to human actions.

The activities linked with Biodiversity day this year are specially targeted to school children who will in future play an important role in taking steps to conserve the biological diversity of our country and also create public awareness on biodiversity issues.



*Biodiversity Day Poster*

The activities carried out to celebrate Biodiversity Day are as follows:

#### **1- Official Meeting to mark the International Day for Biological Diversity 2007**

A special meeting to mark the International Day for Biological Diversity was organized by the Environment Research Centre (ERC) of the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Water on the morning of 22 May 2007. The meeting was attended by the Minister of Environment, Energy and Water, Mr. Ahmed Abdulla, Acting Minister of Higher Education, Employment and Social Security, Mr. Abdul

Rasheed Hussein and other government officials. The chief guest of the meeting was the Minister of Environment, Energy and Water, Mr. Ahmed Abdulla. In his speech, the Minister spoke about the critical importance of environmental sustainability and protection of the rich biodiversity of the country.

Various publications by Environment Research Centre were released at this meeting, these include;

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### **Public Perception on the Environment: *A Maldivian Perspective***



A research report on the public perception on the environment was released by the Minister. This survey was conducted to identify the environmental issues that concern the public the most and to understand the awareness level of the public towards environmental issues.

*Minster of Environment, Energy and Water releasing public perception on the environment*

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### **Kasim and the Hawksbill Turtle: *A Children's Storybook***

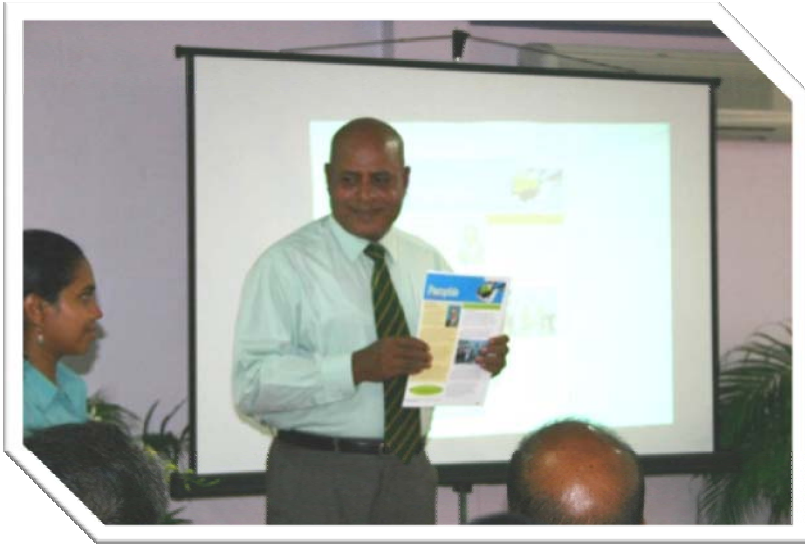
A children's storybook called Kasim and the Hawksbill Turtle about a turtle which died of suffocation from a plastic bag and Kasim's love for protecting species and the marine environment, was also released at the meeting. The storybook was released by the Acting Minister of Higher Education.



*Acting Minister of Higher Education releasing Kasim and the Hawksbill Turtle*

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## Monthly Newsletter *Pemphis*



The first edition of the Environment Research Centre's newsletter *pemphis* to raise environmental awareness was released at the meeting.

*Minister of Environment, Energy and Water releasing Pemphis*

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## Special Video Song

A special video song made by the Acting Minister of Higher Education Abdul Rasheed Hussain, with a plea to leaders and elders to join hands to save the environment and the biological diversity was also released. The song appealed to listen to the cry of the world, listen to the world's plea, and to look at the environmental crimes and bring about justice to environment.



*Minister of Environment, Energy and Water releasing the video song*

*Minister of Environment,*

## 2- Reef tour in Submarine

The Environment Research Centre organized a reef sight-seeing tour in Tourist Submarine for school children on the morning of 22 May 2007 in the capital island, Male'. The purpose of the trip was to show the children the diversity of the coral reefs and explain about the vulnerability of the reef ecosystem to climate change.



*(School children inside the Submarine)*

A special video session was held to students who participated in the reef tour. A video documentary on a healthy reef and CBD video on Biodiversity and Climate Change was shown to the students. Resource personnel from Environment Research Centre and Marine Research Centre were present inside the submarine to inform the students on the importance of reef ecosystem to an island country like Maldives and the threats faced by coral reefs due to increase in the sea temperatures. Submarine reef tour was a huge success as the students got to explore the reef and got first-hand experience about the reef ecosystem and their vulnerability to climate change.

### 3- Marine Museum Tour

A marine museum tour was organized for school children on the afternoon of 22 May 2007. Students were taken to the marine museum of the Marine Research Centre, to show the fishes and marine animals on display and to explain about the species of fishes and corals found in the Maldivian reefs.



*(Students in the museum)*

### 4- Media Coverage

The Local Television, Radio and Dailies covered the day's events. Television Maldives broadcasted special reports and interviews regarding the day.

### 5- Special Thanks

Environment Research Centre wishes to thank the Acting Minister of Higher Education, Mr. Abdul Rasheed Hussain for making a song for this special occasion. ERC offer deep gratitude to the Tourist Submarine Maldives Private Limited for their assistance with reef submarine tour. Special thanks go to the entire staff of the Marine Research Centre and Environment Research Centre for making this day a success.