



**CONVENTION ON  
BIOLOGICAL  
DIVERSITY**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**“ Investing in the future: Investing in Biodiversity”  
Head of International Biodiversity Convention lauds new Canadian  
biodiversity initiatives.**

Montreal 16 October 2006. The head of the Convention on Biological Diversity has welcomed the recently adopted Canadian national policy framework for the protection of biodiversity, as well as the launch of talks for the establishment of a major new national park in the Northwest Territories.

“The adoption of the Biodiversity Framework for Canada is a unique contribution by the host country of the Convention of Life on Earth to mainstreaming biodiversity into the development sectors,” said Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Convention, one of the most widely subscribed international agreements on the environment, and its Secretariat have been hosted by Canada in Montreal since 1996.

The national policy framework for the protection of species at risk was adopted by federal, provincial, and territorial ministers attending the first joint meeting of the Canadian Councils of Resource Ministers (CCRM) and the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CME) held in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.

“In coming together as resource and environment ministers to discuss biodiversity issues, we are sending the message that the health and diversity of Canada’s ecosystems is critical to Canada’s economic future and the well being of Canadians and their environment,” said Federal Environment Minister Rona Ambrose, Co-Chair of the CCRM.

Welcoming the announcement by the ministers, Mr. Djoghlaif stated: “The Biodiversity Framework recognizes that investing in biodiversity is investing in the future of our planet. It is for this reason that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Kofi Annan, has suggested the inclusion of biodiversity as part of the Millennium Development Goals whose aim is to halve the number of poor people in the world by 2015. To achieve these goals, the unprecedented loss of biodiversity must be halted by 2010. We in the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, are very proud to be located in this great country which has so much to contribute in addressing the biodiversity challenges facing mankind.”

“Tackling the challenge of biodiversity loss requires the international community as a whole to redouble its efforts,” said Mr. Djoghlaif. “According to some experts, humanity stands on the verge of the sixth and largest extinction of species and the first one

created exclusively by man. It is for this reason that the 110 Heads of State and Government committed in Johannesburg at the World Summit on Sustainable Development to substantially reduce the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010. They also agreed to increase by 2010 the coverage of terrestrial and marine protected areas to cover all biomes, species and ecosystems. Protected areas are indeed a major tool to substantially reduce the unprecedented loss of life on Earth.”

Complementing the announcement of the Biodiversity Framework of Canada, it was also announced that agreement to begin formal talks to create a new national park was reached between the Government of Canada and Akaitcho Dene, an important First Nations people. This vast northern wilderness frontier in the Northwest Territories covering 25,000-38,000 square kilometres is a spectacular ecotone of boreal forests to tundra ecosystems, supports populations of moose, bear and wolf, and embodies a pristine landscape that includes part of the deepest lake in North America, Great Slave Lake.

“The establishment of a national park to preserve an area four times the size of the Yellowstone Park is a major contribution to advancing the implementation of the CBD’s work programme on protected areas adopted by the international community, and I am very pleased to note that the host country of the Convention is showing the way forward to protect life on Earth,” Ahmed Djoghlaif concluded.

### **Information for Journalists:**

The Convention on Biological Diversity is one of the most broadly subscribed international environmental treaties in the world. Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro Brazil in 1992, it currently has 188 Parties—187 States and the European Community— who have committed themselves to its three main goals: the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components and the equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. The Secretariat of the Convention is located in Montreal.

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