



CBD

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

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VISIT TO THE SECRETARIAT OF THE TWO CO-CHAIRS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES AND BENEFIT-SHARING

Montreal 26 March 2007. The two Co-Chairs of the Working Group on Access and Benefit Sharing paid a visit to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity on 23 March. The visit was a follow-up to the consultations held on 6 September 2006 and provided an opportunity to discuss the preparation of the two forthcoming meetings of the Working Group, from 8 to 12 October 2007 and from 21 to 25 January 2008, which will focus on the negotiation of an international regime on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing. The results of these meetings will be considered by the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Bonn, Germany, from 19 to 31 May 2008. At their last meeting, in March 2006 in Curitiba, Brazil, the Parties elected Mr. Tim Hodges from Canada and Mr. Fernando Casas from Colombia as Co-Chairs. The Working Group was urged to complete its work by 2010.

The visit also provided an opportunity for the Co-Chairs to brief the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) on preparations for the forthcoming meetings of the Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing.

At the end of their one-day meeting, Mr. Casas and Mr. Hodges said they were pleased to work as a team guided by the principles of transparency, accountability and inclusiveness to assist Parties to meet the challenges to finalize the negotiation of an international regime on access and benefit sharing by 2010. The international regime is expected to contribute to operationalize the third objective of the Convention, and its potential role in meeting the target of a significant reduction of the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010 has been highlighted. To this end, the Co-Chairs expressed their deep commitment to consult with all stakeholders.

Mr. Ahmed Djoghla, the Executive Secretary of the Convention, stated: "Dialogue and consultation with the Secretariat is extremely important to allow us to better assist the Co-Chairs in fulfilling their important mandate." He added that "the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity are mutually supportive and the international regime on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing, when adopted, will make a major contribution in translating the objectives of the Convention into reality".

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

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 in 1992, it currently has 190 Parties—189 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. For more information, please contact Marie Aminata Khan at +1 514 287 8701; email: marie.khan@biodiv.org

