



# Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

## COMMUNIQUÉ

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Biodiversity and Climate Change

### **ADVISORY GROUP FOR ARTICLE 8(j) AND RELATED PROVISIONS OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY CONCLUDES FOUR-DAY MEETING IN MONTREAL**

*Montreal – 7 May 2007*

The second meeting of the Advisory Group for Article 8(j) was held in Montreal from 30 April to 3 May 2007. The Group included 20 participants from indigenous and local communities from all over the world. Representatives of Brazil and Germany, in their capacity as Presidents of the eighth and ninth meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, respectively, participated as observers.

The purpose of the meeting of the Advisory Group was to provide guidance to the Secretariat on matters relating to the preparations for the fifth meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j), which will be held in Montreal from 15 to 19 October 2007. The Group reviewed working drafts of the reports to be considered at that meeting on the status and trends of traditional knowledge, and factors that may threaten the maintenance, preservation and application of traditional knowledge relevant to biological diversity, as well as on the vulnerabilities of indigenous and local communities to climate change and other threats such as desertification and pollution and on voluntarily isolated communities. With regard to climate change, participants noted with alarm that indigenous and local communities in regions such as the Arctic, small islands and high altitudes are experiencing accelerated climate change and have become what many described as “the miner’s canary of climate change”.

The Group expressed appreciation for the draft document on elements of a plan of action for the retention of traditional knowledge as a good basis for further research with the view of establishing a toolkit of measures and mechanisms, which Parties could use according to their unique national circumstances and responding to the needs of diverse indigenous and local communities.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said that: “The meeting of the Advisory Group on Article 8(j) offered a unique opportunity to consult indigenous and local communities from around the world on key issues of interest to them in the achievement of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity as we strive to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target”. He emphasized that “the full participation of indigenous and local communities is essential to the achievement of the objective agreed by Parties to the Convention to significantly reduce, by 2010, the dramatic rate of biodiversity loss, which afflicts all human beings but first and foremost indigenous and local communities”.



The meeting also provided an opportunity for Mr. Tim Hodges of Canada, one of the two Co-Chairs of the Convention's Working Group on Access and Benefit-Sharing, to brief the Advisory Group on the ongoing negotiations of an international regime on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing and to seek the views of indigenous and local communities regarding traditional knowledge issues.

The broad-ranging discussions provided an opportunity for indigenous and local communities to contribute to the target of reducing the loss of biodiversity by 2010 and also to shape international commitments that will emerge after 2010.