



PRESS RELEASE

Aichi biodiversity heads of agencies task force established with 27 global partners

Montreal, 21 September 2011 – At a signing ceremony organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed with 27 of the largest international agencies, organizations and environmental conventions for implementation and achievement of the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The signing ceremony took place at the margins of the high-level event on desertification of the sixty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly with the participation of Mr. Tatsushi Terada, Vice Minister for Global Environment Affairs, Ministry of Environment, Japan, representing the President of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10), held in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010. The memorandum creates a task force to provide a platform for agencies to coordinate their activities in support of the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

The Aichi Biodiversity Targets are a set of 20, time-bound, measurable targets agreed by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010, that are now being translated into revised national strategies and action plans by the 193 Parties to the Convention. Achievement of the targets, which were welcomed at the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, will contribute to reducing, and eventually halting, the loss of biodiversity at a global level by the middle of the twenty-first century.

“Achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets requires the active engagement of all stakeholders without exception, as well as the global commitment of their partners,” said Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity. “It is for that reason, we are glad that so many agencies and organizations have agreed to join forces and support the translation of the Aichi Targets into a vibrant reality.”

“I feel very encouraged by the spirit of cooperation provided by all the international organizations which joined here today for the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. As the COP 10 Presidency, I would like to thank you all on behalf of all the Parties,” said Mr. Terada.

In order to promote synergies and avoid duplication, the participants unanimously appointed the co-chairs of the seventeenth session of the Environment Management Group, Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Associate Administrator of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The participants unanimously appointed Mrs. Monique Barbut, Chair and Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), as the goodwill ambassador of the task force.

“The Aichi Biodiversity Targets will provide a strategic orientation for countries as they seek to advance the implementation of the convention and translate the Nagoya biodiversity compact into reality. The GEF stands ready to support countries as they embark on this effort over the next decade,” said Monique Barbut.

The commitment sets the stage for better coordination and communication between organizations as they support implementation of the Strategic Plan at global and national levels during the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, which runs concurrently with the period of the Strategic Plan – 2011 to 2020.

Signatories include: the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, Bioversity International, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

Financing organizations include the GEF.

Multilateral environmental agreements that have signed include the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention on Migratory Species, the International Treaty on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

Non-governmental organizations include the Alliance for Zero Extinction, BirdLife International, Conservation International, Rare, The Nature Conservancy, the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, WWF International, and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

The first meeting of the task force will be held in October 2012 in Hyderabad, India, in conjunction with the high-level segment of eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and will be preceded by a meeting of “sherpas” in early 2012.

Notes for editors

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 193 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is a subsidiary agreement to the Convention. It seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 160 countries plus the European Union have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Secretariat of the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol is located in Montreal, Canada. For more information visit www.cbd.int

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