



COMMUNIQUÉ

UN Decade on Biodiversity launched at Meso-American workshop on National Biodiversity Strategies

Montreal, 16 December 2011 – Costa Rica was the host for the launch of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity for the Central American Region, setting in motion a process to build a future of life in harmony with nature. In addition to the launch, 40 participants from nine countries attended a regional capacity-building workshop on the updating and revising of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) for countries of Meso-America, held in San José, Costa Rica, from 28 November to 2 December 2011.

The Regional Workshop for Mesoamerica on Updating National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, made possible by the financial support of the Government of Japan, aimed to strengthen national capacities for the development, implementation, reviewing, updating, and communication of NBSAPs; help facilitate national implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; and translate the Strategic Plan into national targets and commitments.

A major focus of the workshop was on payment for ecosystem services, with Costa Rica making a presentation on its Forestry Financing Fund (FONAFIFO). Participants also had the opportunity to visit with some of the recipients of this fund.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed on the margins of the workshop between the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the National Biodiversity Institute (INBio) of Costa Rica, a private research and biodiversity management center. With the MoU, InBio becomes the 21st member to join the CBD's Consortium of Scientific Partners. The consortium provides scientific and outreach advice to the Secretariat of the CBD, as well as to partners around the world.

The workshop, organized by the Secretariat of the CBD in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Telecommunications (MINAET), the System of Conservation Areas (SINAC) and Conservation International, was attended by Mr. Alfio Piva, First Vice President of Costa Rica, Vice-Minister of the Environment Ms. Ana Lorena Guevara, former Minister of Environment, Energy and Telecommunications, Mr. Carlos Manuel Rodríguez, the Ambassador of Japan to Costa Rica, Mr. Yoshiharu Namiki, and Ms. Laura Prado, the Mayor of Santo Domingo de Heredia.

Ms. Guevara, Vice-Minister of Environment, said: “Costa Rica has made important efforts in regards to improving the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, and it is our desire to help other countries in this regards and to show them that it is possible”.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: “Costa Rica has consistently demonstrated its longstanding commitment to protect its natural resources. Costa Rica has reversed its forest loss occurred in the last century thanks to changes in laws, expansion of protected areas, and innovative approaches such as the payment for environmental services. I am very grateful to the people and government of Costa Rica for having accepted to share their unique experience with the other countries of the region.”

Participants to the workshop also included: government representatives, indigenous and local communities, and resource persons from the United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Development Programme, Conservation International, the Central American Commission on Environment and Development, IUCN, INBio, and IRBIO.

The workshop in Costa Rica is one of the latest in a series of regional and subregional capacity-building workshops to strengthen national capacities for the development, implementation, reviewing, updating, and communication of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. It follows workshops for Southern Africa (held in Botswana), Europe (Germany), North Africa and the Middle East (Lebanon), East, South and South-East Asia (China), West Africa (Senegal), Central Africa (Congo), East Africa (Rwanda), South America (Ecuador), Pacific (Fiji), Caribbean (Grenada). Three capacity-building workshops are presently underway: for Central and Eastern Europe, being held in Minsk, Belarus, from 5-8 December 2011; for South, East, and South-East Asia, Dehradun, India, 6-10 December 2011; and, the Second Regional Workshop for South, East, and South-East Asia, also being held in Dehradun, India, 6-10 December 2011.

For additional information, please see: www.cbd.int/nbsap/workshops2.shtml
