



Ref: SCBD/OES/HZ/MS/22189

15 October 2001

Dear Madam/Sir,

Pursuant to decision V/29 of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and in accordance with rule 5 of the rules of procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Parties, I am pleased to inform you that, at the kind invitation of the Government of the Netherlands, the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-6) will be held in The Hague, from 7 to 19 April 2002. The official opening ceremony will take place in the afternoon of Sunday, 7 April 2002. The draft provisional agenda, the annotations to the provisional agenda, and the pre-registration form are attached, as well as a number of other pre-session documents for the meeting. The remaining pre-session documentation will be dispatched as soon as finalized. An information note for participants will be distributed at a later stage.

Should the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety enter into force before the opening of the COP-6 meeting, the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties (MOP-1) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety will be held from 22 to 26 April 2002 at the same venue in The Hague. For the Protocol to enter into force before the opening of the COP-6 meeting, the fiftieth instrument of ratification, accession, approval or acceptance must be deposited by 8 January 2002. In the event that the fiftieth instrument is not deposited by that date, and in accordance with recommendation 2/13 of the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, as endorsed by the COP-5 Bureau at its meeting on 6 October 2001, the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP-3) will be held instead on those dates.

In this regard, I have the honour to invite your Government to designate its representative(s) to the above-mentioned meetings. In accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Parties, I would be grateful if your Government would submit to the Secretariat, as soon as possible, the credentials of your representative(s) and the names of the alternate representative(s) and advisor(s), as appropriate, to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Please find attached herewith, for your convenience, a sample format of appropriate credentials, which should be signed by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, except in the case of a regional economic integration organization, where it should be signed by the competent authority of that organization.

To: All National Focal Points to the Convention on Biological Diversity

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It should be stressed that the month of April is a busy month in The Hague; hence, delegates are kindly urged to arrange for their hotel bookings the soonest possible.

Subject to the availability of contributions to the Special Voluntary Trust Fund for Facilitating Participation of Parties to the Convention Process established by decision III/24, the Secretariat hopes to be in a position to finance the participation of **one representative to both meetings** from each developing country Party to the Convention, in particular the least developed and small island States, and countries with economies in transition Party to the Convention. Countries Party to the Convention that wish to solicit such assistance are kindly requested to inform the Secretariat by **31 January 2002** of the name and contact information of the designated delegate eligible for such financial support.

In view of the increased security procedures for travelers, budget constraints and, in order to allow the maximum number of countries to participate in the meeting, the Secretariat will be using special air-fare tickets for sponsored delegates which impose restrictions with respect to changing the passenger's name, travel dates and itinerary. In this respect, it will not be possible for the Secretariat to accommodate name changes if they are received after **31 January 2002**.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary