

Ref.: SCBD/I&O/CHM/DA/48493

18 April 2005

NOTIFICATION

Dear Madam/Sir,

Subject: Celebrations for International Day for Biological Diversity - 22 May 2005

In response to paragraph 7 (b) of decision V/17, which was adopted at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, I am pleased to inform you that the theme of the International Day for Biological Diversity (IBD) for 2005 is: *Biodiversity: Life Insurance for our Changing World*. The world is changing faster than ever before. Growing human populations and expanding consumption are placing great pressure on biological diversity. This year's theme for IBD reminds us that, in addition to providing the physical conditions for all life, biodiversity also plays an important role in protecting life and making it resilient to the pressures brought about by change.

The theme is also especially relevant for this year in the context of the launch of the biodiversity synthesis report of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. This five-year programme, initiated by the Secretary General, studied the relationship between ecosystems and human well-being. The report findings underline the importance of biological diversity in providing not just the concrete services upon which life depends, but also those services which allow systems to be resilient and robust in the face of change. The findings point out that we must be vigilant and conserve and use biological diversity in a sustainable manner, in order to guarantee our survival and that of generations to come.

Reflecting on the importance of the findings of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment to the work of the Convention, and as part of the celebrations for the International Day for Biological Diversity, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity will co-sponsor the launch of the biodiversity synthesis report on **19 May 2005** in Montreal, Canada. This event, co-hosted by McGill University, will include presentations by the CBD Secretariat, Dr. Walter Reid of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, Dr. Anantha Duraiappah, co-author of the Biodiversity Synthesis and other esteemed speakers.

I invite all Parties to begin their preparations for celebrating IBD 2005. Suggested activities for the day, and updated news on the latest developments will be available on the CBD web site at: <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/outreach/awareness/biodiv-day-2005.aspx>

To: CBD National Focal Points

I am also pleased to inform you that a poster reflecting this year's theme for IBD has been prepared by the Secretariat and will be distributed to all Parties soon. In addition, the Secretariat will make available to all Parties its Press Release and messages marking the occasion from the United Nations Secretary-General and other dignitaries.

I invite Parties that have already initiated national plans for activities to celebrate the International Day for Biological Diversity to keep the Secretariat informed of such plans and other noteworthy activities organized by NGOs or other organizations so that they may be included in the special pages of the CBD web site devoted to the International Day for Biological Diversity.

Accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary