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9 January 2006

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY • 22 May 2006  
PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY IN DRYLANDS



ACHIEVING THE 2010 BIODIVERSITY TARGET!

Dear Madam/Sir,

**Subject: Celebrations for International Day for Biological Diversity 22 May 2006**

In response to paragraph 7 (b) of decision V/17, which was adopted at the 5th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and to support the International Year of Deserts and Desertification, of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, I am pleased to inform you that the theme and slogan for the International Day for Biological Diversity for 2006 is: *Achieving the 2010 Biodiversity Target: Protecting biodiversity in drylands.*

The theme points to the fact that biodiversity in these ecosystems is under threat from a variety of human activities. The transformation of habitats for human use has led to the degradation of up to 20 percent of drylands ecosystems – with a high price: desertification and drought, the endangerment of 2,311 species, over 40 billion dollars a year in lost agricultural production and the resulting rise of social, economic, and political tensions. There is hope however. Strategies to stop desertification, such as those included in the programme of work on the biological diversity of dry and sub humid lands, are known and can be implemented by all.

To ensure the success of the day itself, I invite all Parties to begin their preparations for celebrating IBD as soon as possible. In the days leading up to the celebrations on 22 May 2006, the Secretariat will post additional materials to be used to plan events and communications strategies, on <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/outreach/awareness/biodiv-day-2006.shtml>

I invite Parties that have already initiated plans for activities to celebrate IBD to keep the Secretariat informed of these and other noteworthy activities organized by NGOs or other organizations.

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

Yours sincerely,

Ahmed Djoghlaif  
Executive Secretary