



CBD

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

PRESS RELEASE



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2010
Biodiversity
Target

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GEF LEADER PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR BIODIVERSITY CONVENTION

First visit of a Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Montreal, 1 December 2006. Ms. Monique Barbut, Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) paid a visit to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) in Montreal on 30 November 2006. Ms. Barbut's visit was the first of her planned visits to the GEF-related convention secretariats underlining her commitment to increase the impact of the GEF with respect to the implementation of environmental agreements.

Addressing the CBD Secretariat staff, Ms. Barbut stated, "By choosing the Secretariat of the CBD as my first visit to the GEF-related conventions, I want to send a strong message of support of the objectives of the Convention." Noting that "biological diversity is one the most interesting and yet most difficult conventions, as the impact on life on Earth of the unprecedented loss of biological diversity is not widely understood by the general public, unlike the effects of climate change", she added, "I am fully committed to join forces with the Secretariat of the Convention to address this major challenge." Ms. Barbut's vision for the GEF places emphasis on four key elements: cost-effectiveness, transparency, coordination **not** competition, and sustainability. She elaborated on new initiatives in country dialogues and strategies, new strategies for biodiversity, involvement of the private sector, technology-capacity development, addressing land degradation in Africa, and a comprehensive programme on forests. She invited the Convention Secretariat to sit on the advisory committee on the new focused focal area strategies.

The Executive Secretary of the Convention, Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, stated that "the Convention is entering a new and exciting phase of enhanced implementation of its three objectives" and "under the leadership of Monique Barbut, the GEF is also starting a new chapter in its existence aimed at achieving results and maximizing its impact". He added, "I applaud the vision of the new CEO and pledge our full support to the new programmatic approach for achieving the objectives of our two institutions."

The visit ended with an agreement that each year 30 November will be a day of dialogue between the two institutions.



Information for Journalists:

The Global Environment Facility (GEF)

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is an international financial mechanism with 176 member countries that addresses global environmental issues while supporting national sustainable development initiatives. GEF grants support projects in developing countries in the areas of biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer and persistent organic pollutants. GEF's three implementing agencies—the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the World Bank—share credit for GEF's measurable on the ground achievements. Since its inception in 1991, GEF has achieved a strong track record of support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, providing \$6.2 billion in grants which has leveraged \$20 billion in co-financing for over 1,800 projects in 140 countries. GEF has also made more than 7,000 small grants, up to \$50,000 each, directly to nongovernmental organizations and community organizations. www.thegef.org

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

The Convention on Biological Diversity is one of the most broadly subscribed international environmental treaties in the world. Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro Brazil in 1992, it currently has 189 Parties—188 States and the European Community—who have committed themselves to its three main goals: the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components and the equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. The Secretariat of the Convention is located in Montreal, Canada.

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