



United Nations Decade on Biodiversity



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

MontrealInternational

PRESS RELEASE

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity expands its offices in Montreal

Montreal, 6 June 2011 – The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) today officially announced that it is expanding its offices in the Montreal World Trade Centre. Located in Quebec's metropolis since 1996, the United Nations organization is enhancing its capacity to meet the challenges of the implementation of the Nagoya biodiversity compact.

At the last meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in Nagoya, Japan, and attended by more than 18,500 participants representing the 193 Parties and their partners, a new biodiversity vision for 2050 and 20 ambitious biodiversity targets, known as the Aichi Targets, to be achieved by 2020, were adopted. The Parties also adopted an historic new international treaty called the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization, as well as the Kuala Lumpur-Nagoya Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The two new instruments, deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, have been signed by 24 countries in the three months after their opening for signature.

The inauguration ceremony of the new offices coincided with the celebration of the World Environment Day and the convening of the first preparatory meeting for the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol. The ceremony was attended by representatives of the 193 Parties, the representatives of the diplomatic corps in Montreal, and Quebec's Minister of International Relations and Minister Responsible for La Francophonie, Monique Gagnon-Tremblay. The ceremony was also attended by the Canadian explorer and movie-maker Jean Lemire, in his capacity as the United Nations Honorary Ambassador of *The Green Wave* campaign, which is aimed at engaging youth and children in protecting life on Earth. Mr. Lemire is launching a new expedition later this year and called "1,000 days for the planet" as a contribution to the celebration of the 2011-2020 United Nations Decade on Biodiversity.

"At a time of increased challenges facing the Secretariat, it is encouraging to count on the enhanced support of our host country. This expansion will allow the Secretariat to be better equipped to assist the 193 Parties and their partners to translate the Nagoya biodiversity compact into reality. I therefore want to pay tribute to our long-term partners, namely the Government of Canada, the Ministère des Relations Internationales du Québec, the City of Montreal and Montréal International," said Ahmed Djoghlaf, Executive Secretary of the Convention.

"The presence of the Secretariat here in Montreal, is another demonstration of the leadership of the Government of Quebec as a force of attraction for international organizations. The province of Quebec is proud to support partnerships that not only enhance progress on issues critical to global populations, but also generate significant economic benefits for the province," said Minister Gagnon-Tremblay.

"Advocacy for the conservation of biological diversity has become a major issue at the international level. The presence of a United Nations organization in Montreal that fights for this vital issue makes our city a benchmark in the field of biodiversity. Our citizens have a reason to be proud. In recent years, biodiversity

has really become a priority for our administration. There is a growing relationship between the SCBD and our Nature Museums, and the recent opening of the Biodiversity Center at the Botanical Garden further confirms this collaboration," said the Mayor of Montreal, Mr. Gérald Tremblay.

"The expansion of the Secretariat greatly reinforces Montreal's international status and prestige. Montreal International is especially proud to contribute to the growth of the Convention Secretariat in the metropolis, as biological diversity is very important to us. The presence of a large international organization like the Convention Secretariat in Greater Montreal also has significant economic spin-offs for the region," said Jacques St-Laurent, President and Chief Executive Officer of Montréal International.

Greater Montreal is currently host to nearly 70 international organizations. These organizations account for more than \$270 million in economic spinoffs annually, as well as generating an estimated 1,500 direct jobs.

Notes for editors

About the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 193 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is a subsidiary agreement to the Convention. It seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 159 countries plus the European Union have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Secretariat of the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol is located in Montreal. For more information visit: www.cbd.int.

About Montréal International

Montréal International (MI) was created in 1996 as a result of a private/public partnership. Its mission is to contribute to the economic development of metropolitan Montreal and to enhance its international status. Its mandates include attracting foreign investment, international organizations and qualified foreign workers, as well as promoting the competitive and international environment of Greater Montreal. Montréal International is funded by the private sector, the *Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal* (Montréal Metropolitan Community), the City of Montréal and the Governments of Canada and Quebec.

Since its creation, Montréal International has helped to attract more than \$8 billion in foreign investment to Greater Montreal. From these investments, close to 45,000 jobs have been created or maintained. To date, MI's activities have also allowed almost half of the 70 international organizations to establish themselves in the city and, attract and retain, close to 5,500 qualified foreign workers. To learn more, please visit MI Web site at: www.montrealinternational.com.

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