



COMMUNIQUÉ

Uruguay ratifies the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

Montreal, 6 November 2011 – On 2 November 2011, Uruguay deposited its instrument of ratification of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity and will become the 162nd Party to the Protocol on 31 January 2012. The news comes at a time when the Protocol has entered a new implementation phase to be guided by a 10-year strategic plan adopted by the Parties to the Protocol at their most recent meeting, held in Nagoya, Japan, in October last year.

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is a legally binding international agreement governing the transboundary movement of living modified organisms (LMOs), also commonly known as genetically modified organisms (GMOs), resulting from modern biotechnology. It seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential adverse effects of LMOs by ensuring their safe transfer, handling and use. It was adopted on 29 January 2000 and entered into force on 11 September 2003.

Uruguay, with financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and technical assistance by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), has developed a draft national biosafety framework and is in the process of building its capacity to comply with the Protocol's provisions.

Ahmed Djoghlaf, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: "I congratulate Uruguay on its ratification of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. This will enable Uruguay to fully participate in decision-making regarding the future of the Protocol during the sixth meeting of the Parties to the Protocol in India next year. I also urge other Governments that have not yet done so to join the Protocol as soon as possible."

The list of all Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is available on the Protocol website at: <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/parties/>.
