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PRESS RELEASE

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias assumes helm at Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Montreal, 15 February 2012 – Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias today began his tenure as the Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at the Secretariat's offices in Montreal, Canada.

Mr. Dias, a Brazilian national, brings many years of experience in policy-making and in coordinating the implementation of biodiversity policies, programmes and projects at the national and international level. Deeply involved with the negotiations and implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity since its beginnings, he participated as a member of the Brazilian delegation in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Convention.

Previously the National Secretary for Biodiversity and Forests at the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment, Mr. Dias was directly responsible for overseeing several multi-institution programmes and the work of four institutions attached to the Ministry.

Mr. Dias was previously a member of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility, Vice-President of the International Union of Biological Sciences, and Coordinator of the Steering Committee of the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network.

Trained as a scientist, he holds a Bachelor of Science in biological sciences from the University of Brasilia, with a Doctor of Philosophy in zoology from the University of Edinburgh. Born in 1953, Mr. Dias is married and has one child.

Mr. Dias succeeds Ahmed Djoghlaf, who had served as Executive Secretary since January 2006.

On assuming his post, Mr. Dias stated: "It gives me great pleasure to succeed those that have successfully led the Convention Secretariat since the beginning – Angela Cropper, Calestous Juma, Hamdallah Zedan and Ahmed Djoghlaf. If you ask what my three priorities are for the Convention, my answer is implementation, implementation and implementation."

Mr. Dias begins his tenure following the strong success of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010. At that historic meeting, Governments approved a new Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 with its twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Governments also agreed on the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

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Notes for editors

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, 162 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.

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