



## PRESS RELEASE

### **CBD Executive Secretary Welcomes the Launch of Healthy Environment, Healthy People**

*Montreal, 27 May 2016* – Braulio Dias, the Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity, welcomes a new UNEP report on environment and health which links a healthy environment and healthy ecosystems as the basis for the implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

On 23 May, the United Nations Environment Programme launched a new report entitled *Healthy Environment, Healthy People*, prepared in collaboration with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Montreal Protocol and the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions. The launch of the new report marked the start of the second United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA-2).

Drawing on 2012 estimates from the WHO, the report indicates that almost one quarter of the global burden of mortality - or 12.6 million deaths - is attributable to modifiable environmental factors. This builds on other leading reports of global significance that seek to relay the importance of socioecological resilience to human health outcomes. These efforts include the State of Knowledge Review, *Connecting Global Priorities: Biodiversity and Human health* jointly led by the WHO and the CBD Secretariat in collaboration with over one hundred interdisciplinary experts, and The Rockefeller Foundation-Lancet Commission *Report on Planetary Health*.

Together with *Healthy Environment, Healthy People*, these reports form a common voice calling urgently for concerted, coherent, collaborative action to conserve or increase the resilience of ecosystems and human communities worldwide.

Executive Secretary Dias noted that: “In 2015, we witnessed the release of several landmark agreements for sustainable development including the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. These are ambitious objectives, but there has never been greater urgency and opportunity to meet these commitments.” He also noted that if the international community is to meet these ambitious commitments we cannot turn a blind eye to the common drivers of biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation and ill health, the limitations of predominant economic models of consumption and



Convention on  
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production, or compounding pressures - such as land use change, climate change and pollution-on ecosystems nearing environmental thresholds.

The Executive Secretary also noted that many of the twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets adopted by over 190 countries in 2010 directly or indirectly influence human health outcomes. Parties will have the opportunity to consider these linkages, and the implications of the findings of these reports, at the upcoming thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13) to the CBD, in Cancun, Mexico from 4 to 17 December 2016.

The new UNEP report, Healthy Environment, Healthy people, is available at [www.unep.org/about/sgb/Portals/50153/UNEA/K1602727%20INF%205.pdf](http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/Portals/50153/UNEA/K1602727%20INF%205.pdf).

The full volume of the WHO-SCBD State of Knowledge Review ‘Connecting Global Priorities Biodiversity and Human Health’ is available at [www.cbd.int/en/health/stateofknowledge](http://www.cbd.int/en/health/stateofknowledge).

The report of The Rockefeller Foundation-Lancet Commission, ‘Safeguarding Human Health in the Anthropocene’ is available at [www.thelancet.com/commissions/planetary-health](http://www.thelancet.com/commissions/planetary-health).

### *Note to 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 196 Parties up to now, 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 and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force on 11 September 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 170 Parties have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and to date has been ratified so far by 76 Parties. For more information visit: [www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int). For additional information, please contact: David Ainsworth on +1 514 287 7025 or at [david.ainsworth@cbd.int](mailto:david.ainsworth@cbd.int); or Johan Hedlund on +1 514 287 6670 or at [johan.hedlund@cbd.int](mailto:johan.hedlund@cbd.int).