



CBD

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

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International Day for Biological Diversity



Biodiversity and Climate Change

**Statement delivered on behalf of Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif,
Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity
to the
Mexican Forest Exposition for the XXIst Century
27 – 29 September 2007**

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to convey my greetings to the distinguished participants of the Mexican Forest Exposition for the 21st Century, and I regret that I can not be with you in person. I welcome the theme of this event, which is of high relevance for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in particular the engagement of the private sector for the conservation of forests. The CBD work programme on forest biodiversity contains goals and objectives to support the sustainable use of timber and non-timber forest products, and it addresses challenges and opportunities such as the changing role of forests and forestry in the face of climate change.

Climate change threatens forest biodiversity in numerous ways: droughts and forest fires are projected to increase in semi-arid and arid lands; the effects of air pollution on forests will become more severe as our forests are weakened by weather extremes; and a surge in frequencies and intensities of storms and floods will aggravate problems of erosion and disease. The forest sector plays a key role both in mitigating the effects of climate change, and in adapting forest ecosystems to its impacts. Ecosystems such as wetlands and forests can better withstand the expected impacts of climate change when they are rich in biodiversity. Meeting the interlinked global challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change requires unprecedented efforts from all of us.

In recognizing the global challenge of biodiversity loss, the 190 signatories to the CBD have adopted the target to significantly reduce the loss of biodiversity by the year 2010. More than two thirds of all terrestrial species live in forests, and Mexico is particularly rich in forest biodiversity. Your work is therefore essential in the next two years: a multi-functional, sustainable forest sector is the pre-requisite for meeting the 2010 Biodiversity Target. During the next Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2008 in Bonn, Germany, the CBD forest programme will be reviewed in light of the rapidly approaching 2010 target.

Since I started this statement, around 100 hectares of forests have been lost in the world. In the face of this pace of deforestation and forest degradation, we are running out of time. Unprecedented efforts of States, companies, and civil society are needed to turn the tide of biodiversity loss by 2010, and the forest sector is a key player in these efforts.

I hope that you will all have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of forest biodiversity in the coming days, be it in the form of timber products, or of such essential benefits as fresh air, clean water, wildlife, or a walk through the cathedral grove of an ancient forest.

I wish the Mexican Forest Exposition every success.



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