

Gisele Bündchen Stresses the Importance of Protecting Earth's Natural Resources in support of the International Year of Biodiversity

Brasilia (Brazil), 30 June 2010 – The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Goodwill Ambassador Gisele Bündchen recorded two short films in support of the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity.

In the films, the Brazilian model speaks of the importance of protecting and conserving the variety of life on the planet, which is what the term biodiversity refers to.

Of the estimated 5 to 100 million species that inhabit the earth, only two million species have been identified by scientists.

But the earth's biodiversity is being lost at an accelerated rate. Today, approximately 17.291 species are threatened with extinction.

In an interview with UN Radio, Ms. Bündchen, who was appointed UNEP Goodwill Ambassador in September 2009, emphasized the importance of conservation and rehabilitation.

She urged her countrymen in Brazil to take responsibility for the conservation of natural assets, stressing that Brazil has one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems, providing habitats to around twenty per cent of the earth's species.

"First of all, I believe that every Brazilian has to be proud for being born in this country [...] with the greatest rate of biodiversity of the world", she said.

"I think it is extremely important that people become aware of the things that have been happening with our planet. This is our home, if we don't take care of it, where will we live? We have to understand that we cannot continue the pattern of destruction and deforestation, regardless of the consequences 50 years on", she added.

Although, biodiversity is the foundation of life on our planet, it has been gravely threatened by development choices that ignore its inherent value.

The global economy loses between US\$2 - \$5 trillion annually due to the degradation and destruction of natural resources. Reversing this negative trend is possible, and essential for our well being.

For the last six years, the UNEP Goodwill Ambassador has been calling attention to environmental issues. In 2008, Gisele with the support of her family created the **Agua Limpa (Clean Water)** Project which aims to implement sustainable environmental management

activities and promote the restoration of the riparian forest and the watershed area of *Horizontalina* and *Tucunduva (Rio Grande do Sul)*, the region where the supermodel was born.

Ms. Bündchen also writes a socio-environmental blog that is regularly updated in both English and Portuguese (her native language).

For the environment month, Mrs. Bündchen's official website launched a special movement entitled "**Take an Attitude**" that motivates and mobilizes individuals to take small actions that will ultimately help save the planet. According to Gisele, individuals, companies and governments have to work together in order to reduce their negative impact on the environment.

The material, produced in partnership with the Brazilian Ministry of Environment, will be widely broadcasted on TV and over the internet.

Note to Editors:

The UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

<http://www.cbd.int/2010/welcome/>

Project Agua Limpa (Clean Water)

<http://www.projetoagualimpa.org.br/>

Gisele Bündchen Blog

<http://www.giselebundchen.com/blog>

Interview with Gisele Bündchen for the UN Radio:

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/radio/portuguese/detail/181053.html>

Brazilian Ministry of Environment Website

<http://www.mma.gov.br>

UNEP Brazil Office Website

<http://www.pnuma.org.br>