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## **ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity Joins the World in Celebrating the International Day for Biodiversity 2009**

The ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) works with partners to study and teach, use and save biodiversity. A regional intergovernmental organization, ACB promotes biodiversity conservation through policy and programme development, capacity building, information management and sharing, and public advocacy.

The European Union-funded Centre is a strategic partner of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) in promoting biodiversity conservation in Southeast Asia.

The collaboration between ACB and SCBD is expected to strengthen ASEAN Member States' efforts in articulating policies and initiatives that integrate biodiversity with development concerns.

On 22 May 2009 – the International Day for Biodiversity (IDB 2009) – ACB will reaffirm its partnership with SCBD by leading the celebration of IDB 2009 in Southeast Asia through a week-long programme for scientists, biodiversity experts, academe, students, ambassadors, and media practitioners.

- **18 May 2009, “Ecoguards: YOUth Can Save Biodiversity” at the University of the Philippines, Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines**

In celebration of the International Day for Biodiversity 2009, youth leaders in Los Baños, Laguna will gather for the first time to learn about biodiversity and to engage themselves in biodiversity conservation.

Organized by College of Development Communication students with ACB, the forum will gather over 100 youth leaders and students for half a day of lectures to be delivered by ACB experts, as well as film showings, and an open forum.

At the end of the forum, the students will declare their support for biodiversity conservation and will call on the youth of Southeast Asia to take an active role in saving ASEAN's rich but highly threatened biodiversity.

- **19-21 May 2009, ASEAN Regional Workshop on Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI): Needs Assessment and Networking, SEARCA Auditorium, University of the Philippines, Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines**

Taxonomy, the science of describing, naming and classifying organisms, is a very important discipline as it is a building block for information sharing on animals,



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plants, and other species. The last few decades, however, saw the discipline of taxonomy falling off the global political, funding, and academic agendas.

To boost Southeast Asia's taxonomic capacities, ACB, in partnership with the Governments of France and Japan, will hold the "ASEAN+3 Regional Workshop on Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI): Needs Assessment and Networking" on 19-21 May 2009 in SEARCA, Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines.

The workshop will gather around 100 scientists and taxonomy experts from the 10 ASEAN Member States, Korea, China, and Mongolia. Secretary Jose L. Atienza, Jr. of DENR, Ambassador Alistair MacDonald of the European Commission Delegation to the Philippines; and Ambassador Thierry Borja de Mozota of France will lead the roster of speakers. Experts from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Museum of Natural History of France (MNHN), the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD), the French Research Institute for Development (IRD), European Distributed Institute of Taxonomy (EDIT), and the Global Network for Taxonomy (Bionet), will be the resource persons.

- **22 May 2009, International Day of Biodiversity 2009 Celebrations, SEARCA Auditorium, University of the Philippines, Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines**

The celebration of the International Day for Biodiversity on 22 May will feature the launch of the First ASEAN-wide Photo Contest "Zooming in on Biodiversity" sponsored by ACB and the European Commission; the redesigned ACB website, and the ASEAN Biodiversity Information Sharing Service/Regional Clearinghouse Mechanism. Student leaders will also turn over their declaration of support for biodiversity conservation to the ACB.

A tour to the Makiling Botanic Garden and Herbarium is also scheduled.

- **Media Interviews**

A series of media interviews that highlight the importance of biodiversity is scheduled.

- **Video presentation: "The Values of Biodiversity"**

ACB will launch its new documentary "The Values of Biodiversity" on 22 May. Copies will be distributed to the ASEAN Member States.