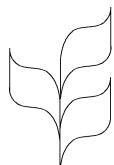




CBD



**CONVENTION ON  
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

Distr.  
GENERAL

ENGLISH ONLY

---

MEETING OF THE EXPERT PANEL ON  
ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING  
San José, Costa Rica  
4 to 8 October 1999

**Information for Participants**

The meeting of the Expert Panel on Access and Benefit-sharing will be held from Monday, 4 October to Friday, 8 October 1999. This meeting is co-hosted by the Government of Switzerland and the Government of Costa Rica. All meetings shall be held at Hotel Meliá Confort Corobicí, San José, Costa Rica.

Venue: Hotel Meliá Confort Corobicí  
Tel.: (506) 232-8122  
Fax: (506) 231-6063

The official Plenary opening of the meeting will take place at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, 4 October 1999, to be followed by meeting of the two Working Groups. Registration will commence on Sunday, 3 October 1999 from 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. Delegates are reminded that, for security reasons, name badges should be worn at all times.

**Access to San José**

San José international airport is Aeropuerto Internacional Juan Santamaría. The Government of Costa Rica shall provide, free of charge, transportation from the airport to the hotels. Taxi fares are approximately US\$10-15 from the airport to the hotel district.

### Hotel Information

The Government of Costa Rica has arranged for block bookings of about 100 rooms in Hotel Meliá Corobicí in San José. The special room rate negotiated by the Government of Costa Rica stands at US\$70 per night plus 17 percent taxes. In order to guarantee this special rate, please specify while making your reservations that you will be attending the Meeting of the Expert Panel on Access and Benefit Sharing. Reservations should be made at least **one month** prior to the beginning of the meeting through:

MELIÁ CONFORT COROBICÍ  
Sabana Norte, contiguo a la Datsun, San José  
P.O. Box 2443-1000  
Tel.: (506) 232-8122  
Fax: (506) 231-5834/231-6063  
e-mail: corobici@sol.racsaco.cr  
Website: www.sol.melia.es

A list of other hotels in the vicinity of the meeting venue is attached (Annex A). Please note that hotel bookings are the responsibility of participants.

### General Information

Costa Rica is bordered to the North by Nicaragua and to the South by Panama. It is home to three volcanic mountain ranges, Pacific and Caribbean coastlines and numerous rain forests. The many varied areas of Costa Rica reveal the tremendous diversity and brilliance of the country's rich tropical setting. Over one third of the country's three million inhabitants live in San José and the Central Valley. San José provides impressive museums, drive-up volcanoes and fertile hillsides dotted with coffee plantations.

### Time Zone

Costa Rica is on Central Standard Time. Daylight Savings Time is not observed. San José is GMT - 0600 hours.

### Weather

The rainy season occurs from the end of May to November, with the heaviest rainfall in October. It can rain up to 20 days per month in the wet season. The temperature varies little from season to season and the main influencing factor is altitude. Lows average a mild 15°C year round whilst highs are a pleasant 26°C.

### Electricity

The electrical current in Costa Rica is 110 volts, 60 hertz.

### Telecommunications

Direct dial telephone, fax and telex services are available. Telephone credit cards of the following companies may be used through the appropriate operator: AT&T, MCI, Sprint, and Bell Canada.

### Visas

Nationals from Countries which appear in Annex B do not require a visa for Costa Rica. Annex C lists countries whose nationals require a visa for Costa Rica, which can be obtained from Consulates as indicated. Nationals of countries listed in Annex D require prior authorisation by the Immigration authorities of the Government of Costa Rica in San José. These nationals must proceed with the necessary arrangements to secure an entry visa for Costa Rica as soon as possible. There are no vaccination requirements. An entry visa costs approximately the equivalent of US\$ 20.<sup>00</sup>. Foreigners shall pay a departure tax of US\$ 17.<sup>00</sup> upon exiting the country.

### Official Language

The official language of the Republic of Costa Rica is Spanish, but English is easily understood in hotels and restaurants.

### Currency

The official currency of Costa Rica is the Colón(es). The exchange rate fluctuates quite often, but currently the exchange rate stands at approximately 287 Colónes for one US dollar.

Numerous automatic teller machines (ATM) are available and accessible 24 hours a day. Most banks are open from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. during weekdays, but it is not uncommon to find banks open on Saturday as well.

### Credit Cards

With the exception of the Diner's Club card, all major credit cards are accepted in most hotels and restaurants in the city.

**MEETING OF THE EXPERT PANEL ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING  
SAN JOSÉ, COSTA RICA, 4 - 8 OCTOBER 1999**

Pre-Registration Form (Please print)

Mr. / Mrs. / Ms. / Amb. / Dr. / Prof.

FAMILY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_

Representing:

GOVERNMENT : \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry/department/agency : \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

ORGANIZATION : \_\_\_\_\_

(Check one) UN/ Specialized Agency    Inter-governmental organization    Non-governmental  
organization    Indigenous community organization    Media    Industry    Other

Official Address : \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone : + (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax : + (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Telex : + (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL : \_\_\_\_\_

URL: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return duly filled by 31 August 1999 to :**

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity    Preferred language    English  
World Trade Center    French  
393 Saint-Jacques St., Suite 300    Spanish  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada  
H2Y 1N9  
Fax : + 1 (514) 288-6588  
E-mail: secretariat@biodiv.org  
URL: <http://www.biodiv.org>

## ANNEX A

HOTELS IN THE VICINITY OF THE VENUE OF  
THE MEETING OF THE EXPERT PANEL ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING

HOTEL INFORMATION	RATES (incl. taxes)	TRANSPORTATION (hotel/airport)
<b>Best West Irazú</b> Autopista General Cañas TEL.: (506) 232-4811 FAX: (506) 232-8780/ 231-6485 e-mail: <a href="mailto:gsobrado@irazu.co.cr">gsobrado@irazu.co.cr</a> Contact person: Gabriela Sobrado Calderón	Corporate Single \$69.83 Double \$69.83 Standard \$57.03 Includes breakfast	
<b>Palma Real</b> Sabana Norte, 200 norte ICE TEL.: (506) 290-5060 FAX: (506) 290-4160 e-mail: <a href="mailto:palmarea@sol.racsa.co.cr">palmarea@sol.racsa.co.cr</a> Contact person: Silvia Chaves	Corporate Double \$87.29 Single \$87.29 Includes breakfast	\$13 per person
<b>Quality Colón</b> Costado norte Edificio Colón Paseo Colón TEL.: (506) 257-8787 FAX: (506) 257-2582 e-mail: <a href="mailto:qhccj@sol.racsa.co.cr">qhccj@sol.racsa.co.cr</a> Contact person: Irene Rivas Bouza	Corporate Double \$64 Single \$64 Includes breakfast	\$11 per person
<b>Torremolinos</b> Paseo Colón 300 norte Agencia Banco Costa Rica TEL.: (506) 222-5266 FAX: (506) 255-3167 e-mail: <a href="mailto:Torrehtl@sol.racsa.co.cr">Torrehtl@sol.racsa.co.cr</a> Contact person: Allan Montagné	Corporate Double \$59 Single \$53 Includes breakfast	\$13 per person
<b>Parque del Lago</b> Sabana Oeste 75 oeste Soda Tapia TEL.: (506) 257-8787 FAX: (506) 223-1617 e-mail: <a href="mailto:parklago@sol.racsa.co.cr">parklago@sol.racsa.co.cr</a> Contact person: Wendy Cordero González	Corporate Double \$58.20 Single \$58.20 Includes breakfast	\$12 per person

**ANNEX B**

**COUNTRIES WHOSE NATIONALS DO NOT REQUIRE A VISA**

Antigua and Barbuda	Kuwait
Argentina	Luxembourg
Australia	Mexico
Austria	Monaco
Bahamas	Netherlands, The
Bahrain	New Zealand
Barbados	Norway
Belgium	Oman
Belize	Panama
Bolivia	Paraguay
Brazil	Philippines, The
Bulgaria	Poland
Canada	Portugal
Chile	Qatar
Colombia	Republic of Korea
Czech Republic	Romania
Denmark	Russian Federation
Dominica	Saint Kitts and Nevis
El Salvador	Saint Lucia
Finland	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
France	San Marino
Germany	Saudi Arabia
Grenada	Singapore
Guatemala	Slovakia
Guyana	South Africa
Holy See	Spain
Honduras	Suriname
Hungary	Sweden
Iceland	Switzerland
Ireland	Trinidad and Tobago
Israel	United Arab Emirates
Italy	United Kingdom
Jamaica	United States of America
Japan	Uruguay
Kenya	Venezuela

## ANNEX C

**COUNTRIES WHOSE NATIONALS REQUIRE A VISA  
(Which can be obtained from Consulates of Costa Rica)**

Andorra	Lithuania
Belarus	Malaysia
Croatia	Malta
Cyprus	Morocco
Dominican Republic	Nicaragua
Ecuador	Peru
Egypt	Republic of Moldova
Estonia	Slovenia
Greece	Thailand
India	Turkey
Indonesia	Ukraine
Latvia	Zimbabwe

**Consulates of Costa Rica can be found in the following Countries**

Argentina	Kenya
Australia	Mexico
Austria	Monaco
Bahamas, The	Netherlands, The
Belgium	Nicaragua
Belize	Norway
Bolivia	Panama
Brazil	Paraguay
Canada	Peru
Chile	Poland
Colombia	Portugal
Czech Republic	Republic of Korea
Denmark	Romania
Ecuador	Russian Federation
Finland	South Africa
France	Spain
Greece	Sweden
Guatemala	Switzerland
Honduras	Trinidad and Tobago
Hungary	Turkey
India	United Kingdom
Italy	United States of America
Jamaica	Uruguay
Japan	Venezuela

**ANNEX D**

**COUNTRIES WHOSE NATIONALS REQUIRE A VISA  
Which must be previously authorized by the Immigration authorities in San José, Costa Rica  
(Restricted duration of stay)**

Afghanistan	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Albania	Madagascar
Algeria	Malawi
Angola	Maldives
Armenia	Mali
Azerbaijan	Marshall Islands
Bangladesh	Mauritania
Benin	Mauritius
Bhutan	Micronesia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mongolia
Botswana	Mozambique
Brunei Darussalam	Myanmar
Burkina Faso	Namibia
Burundi	Nauru
Cambodia	Nepal
Cameroon	Niger
Cape Verde	Nigeria
Central African Republic	Pakistan
Chad	Palau
Comoros	Papua New Guinea
Congo	Republic of China
Côte d'Ivoire	Samoa
Cuba	Sao Tome and Principe
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Senegal
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Seychelles
Djibouti	Sierra Leone
Equatorial Guinea	Solomon Islands
Ethiopia	Somalia
Fiji	Sri Lanka
Gabon	Sudan
Gambia	Swaziland
Georgia	Syrian Arab Republic
Ghana	Tajikistan
Guinea	Tanzania
Guinea-Bissau	Togo
Haiti	Tonga
Iran, Islamic Republic of	Tunisia
Iraq	Turkmenistan
Jordan	Uganda
Kazakhstan	Uzbekistan
Kiribati	Vanuatu
Kyrgyzstan	Viet Nam
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Yemen
Lebanon	Yugoslavia
Lesotho	Zambia



