



Ref.: SCBD/BS/WD/jh/32949

7 January 2003

Madam/Sir,

**Re: Update on the Status of Ratification of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and Further Call to Expedite Early Entry Into Force of the Protocol**

We just began the journey into a new year, 2003. This month marks the third anniversary of the adoption of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which took place on 29 January 2000. At this stage, we feel obliged to update you on the status of ratification of the Protocol and to remind you of the further action that would be required to realizing the entry into force of the Protocol without much more delay. At the date of this notification, 39 instruments of ratification or accession have been deposited with the Depository from the following Parties to the Convention:

Africa:	Botswana, Djibouti, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, and Uganda;
Asia & Pacific:	Bhutan, Fiji, Maldives, Nauru, Niue, and Samoa;
Central and Eastern Europe:	Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, and Ukraine;
Latin America & Caribbean:	Barbados, Bolivia, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela;
Western Europe and Others Group:	Austria, Denmark, the European Community, Luxembourg, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and The Netherlands.

Congratulating those that have ratified or acceded to the Protocol, we would like to express our sincere hope that with few more ratifications coming soon, the required number of ratifications (i.e. 50) would be met for the Protocol to enter into force in good time this year paving the way for the

To: ICCP National Focal Points  
CBD National Focal Points (where ICCP focal points have not yet been designated)

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convening of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol in accordance with decision VI/1 of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Early entry into force of the Protocol would represent an important step for a number of reasons. First of all, it would be a positive and prompt response to the call made by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, last August in Johannesburg, South Africa, and the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly of the United Nations held last month, where all States were invited, as specified in the relevant paragraph of the Plan of Implementation adopted by the Summit and resolution 57/260 of the General Assembly, to ratify the Convention, the Protocol and other biodiversity-related agreements and to promote their effective implementation. Secondly, it would allow Parties to the Protocol to address, in a timely manner, those issues that the Protocol requires to be addressed within one or two years time after its entry into force. And finally, early entry into force of the Protocol would be beneficial in keeping with the momentum gained through the interim process steered by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

We would, therefore, urge, once again, those countries that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Protocol to do so and deposit their instruments of ratification or accession at their earliest convenience.

Accept, Madam/Sir, the assurance of our highest consideration.

[signed]

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Ambassador Philemon Yang  
Chairman, Intergovernmental Committee  
for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

[signed]

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Hamdallah Zedan  
Executive Secretary  
Convention on Biological Diversity