

Ref.: SCBD/I&amp;O/CHM/MS/36320

28 July 2003

**NOTIFICATION**

Dear Madam/Sir,

**Subject: Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Controlled Vocabulary**

In response to recommendations made at the Informal Meeting on Formats, Protocols and Standards for Improved Exchange of Biodiversity-related Information held from 19 to 20 February 2003 in Montreal, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has developed a web-based CBD controlled vocabulary to facilitate the exchange of information.

This vocabulary was developed with the intent of establishing a list of terms to be used as descriptors, i.e., metadata, for web pages on the Convention's website. The list can also be used by clearing-house mechanism (CHM) national focal points to describe the contents of their national CHM websites.

The use of the CBD controlled vocabulary may offer many benefits. First, it could assist in searching, locating and retrieving information by linking similar documents and resources with a unique term. Second, it will standardize the description of websites as to so assist in efforts to make information interoperable. Last, because terms are taken from official Convention documents, UNEP's ENVOC and the FAO's AGROVOC, translation of the CBD controlled vocabulary into the six official United Nations languages may be accomplished more easily.

It should be noted that the CBD controlled vocabulary is an ongoing undertaking, and will be updated with new terms as required. A web-based form is available to submit new terms for review and possible inclusion in the controlled vocabulary. Terms submitted for inclusion must be from official documents prepared under the Convention and/or other published controlled vocabularies or thesauri.

To: CBD National Focal Points  
CHM National Focal Points  
SBSTTA National Focal Points  
International Thematic Focal Points



The CBD controlled vocabulary is available on the CBD website at:  
<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/cbd-voc.aspx>.

Thank you for your support of the Convention.

Yours sincerely,

Hamdallah Zedan  
Executive Secretary