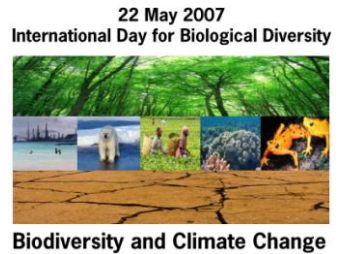




Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity



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17 January 2008

NOTIFICATION

Availability of new IT features for the development of Biosafety Clearing-House national nodes (Hermes and the BCH Ajax Plug-In)

Dear Madam/Sir,

In paragraph 10 of decision BS-III/2, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety requested the Executive Secretary to continue to support capacity-building activities in partnership with organizations such as UNEP-GEF.

As part of its capacity-building initiative, the UNEP-GEF BCH Project identified the need for more comprehensive and accessible solutions to assist countries in the development of their BCH national nodes.

In achieving this important goal, I am pleased to announce that the Secretariat, in close collaboration with the UNEP-GEF BCH Project, has developed and publicly released two new IT features, *Hermes* and the *BCH Ajax Plug-In*. These features serve to make all data submitted to the BCH Central Portal immediately available in BCH national nodes. Information and manuals for both features are available through the BCH Central Portal and have been tested and improved as a result of feedback from more than 60 countries that have participated, to-date, in the development phase.

Technical note about Hermes and the BCH Ajax Plug-In:

Hermes is a completed online Content Management System which provides the building blocks of a national BCH. It provides, in addition to out-of-the-box interoperability with the BCH, content management, content versioning, file management, search functions, support for multiple languages, security through SSL authentication, and much more. Hermes based websites are hosted on the Secretariat's servers, which are constantly monitored with guaranteed 99.99% uptime through redundancy.

The BCH Ajax Plug-In is a client side application that can be easily integrated with any existing website to provide dynamic display of information from the BCH through out-of-the-box interoperability. The BCH Ajax Plug-In does not require any specific IT knowledge, works on all server platforms, and does not require any software installation.

For more information, documentation and training material on *Hermes* and the *BCH Ajax Plug-In*, please visit our website at: <http://bch.cbd.int/solutions/>.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ahmed Djoghlaif
Executive Secretary

To: National Focal Points for the Biosafety Clearing-House

