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24 August 2009

NOTIFICATION
Decision IX/12 on Access and Benefit-sharing: Regional Consultations

Dear Madam/Sir,

In decision IX/12 on Access and Benefit-sharing, paragraph 17, the Conference of the Parties emphasized the importance of consultations to advance the negotiations of the International Regime on access and benefit-sharing and requested the Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing (WG-ABS) to be instrumental in organizing and facilitating such consultations during the intersessional period. It also encouraged Parties and stakeholders to carry out bilateral, regional and interregional meetings and consultations and called upon donors and relevant organizations to provide financial resources necessary for such meetings and consultations.

In addition, in paragraph 22 of the same decision, the Conference of the Parties invited the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Governments and other international organizations to support regional and interregional consultations in close consultation with the Secretariat.

In accordance with the above, the Co-Chairs of the Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing have held discussions with the Secretariat and UNEP on the timing and organizational aspects of regional consultations with a view to supporting the negotiation of the International Regime on access and benefit-sharing in the most efficient manner possible. I am pleased to inform you that, as a result of these consultations, UNEP is planning to organize regional consultations with the active support of its regional offices, as appropriate, and in close collaboration with the Co-Chairs of the WG-ABS and the CBD Secretariat. It is expected that the regional consultations will be held between the eighth and ninth meetings of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing. Following is a tentative calendar as well as the anticipated venue:

7-8 December 2009: Regional consultations for Asia (Siem Reap, Cambodia)
18-19 January 2010: Regional consultations for GRULAC (Panama City, Panama)
9-10 February 2010: Regional consultations for CEE (Isle of Vilm, Germany)
15-16 February 2010: Regional consultations for the Pacific (Auckland, New Zealand)
March 2010 [Dates to be confirmed]: Regional consultations for Africa (Windhoek, Namibia).

The consultations will give each region an opportunity to review progress in the negotiations of the International Regime at a critical time, to exchange views and information and to prepare for

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the ninth meeting of the Working Group, which is expected to consolidate all operational text developed at the seventh and eighth meetings and finalize the negotiations of the regime.

Additional information regarding the organization of the regional consultations will be provided in due course.

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

Ahmed Djoghla f
Executive Secretary