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13 March 2020

NOTIFICATION
Update regarding COVID-19 and upcoming CBD meetings

Dear Madam/Sir,

I would like to update you regarding upcoming CBD meetings, in light of the current coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic.

As had been the case for the second meeting of Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, we are keeping the situation under review and will continue to apply all the guidance and advice that is received from the United Nations, while taking into consideration that of national authorities.

In consultation with the United Nations Environment Programme, and given the relatively large number of expected participants and the situation prevailing in Europe, the following meetings have been cancelled or postponed:

- Follow-up workshop of Biodiversity related Conventions on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (Bern II), scheduled on 25-27 March 2020, Bern, Switzerland
- Thematic Consultation on Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, scheduled on 30 March-1 April 2020, Bern, Switzerland

We are currently exploring whether or not these can be replaced by online consultations.

We have also postponed indefinitely the Global Taxonomy Initiative Forum, scheduled for 7-9 April 2020 in Berlin, Germany.

We are also taking measures, as necessary and in line with UN and local medical advice, to minimize risk to all participants, staff and the general population in Canada, our host country. Given the time sensitivity of the following meetings, arrangements will be made to hold them virtually:

- Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources, 17-20 March
- Meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment, 31 March-3 April
- Seventeenth meeting of the Compliance Committee under the Cartagena Protocol, 15-17 April
- Fourteenth meeting of the Liaison Group on the Cartagena Protocol, 20-23 April
- Third meeting of the Compliance Committee under the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, 21-23 April

Further information will be provided directly to the participants of the above meetings.

The meetings of SBSTTA 24 and SBI 3, and associated meetings on the margins, will need to be postponed and we are currently exploring alternative scenarios with the COP Presidency, the Chairs of SBSTTA and SBI, the Canadian Authorities and ICAO. We will provide further update on the new dates in due course.

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

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema
Acting Executive Secretary

To: CBD National Focal Points, Cartagena Protocol Focal Points, ABS Focal Points, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant organizations

