



CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

PRESS RELEASE

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TREE PLANTING INITIATIVES PLANNED TO OFFSET ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF BIODIVERSITY MEETINGS

MONTREAL – 5 April 2006.

Following three weeks of meetings of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, held in Curitiba, Brazil, the Governor of the State of Paraná, Mr. Roberto Requião, and the Executive Secretary of the Convention, Dr Ahmed Djoghla, signed an agreement to offset the environmental impact of the participation of the 4,000 delegates, including 122 ministers and other heads of delegation, who attended. Under the agreement, for each participant in the meeting, 2,000 indigenous trees will be planted to offset the environmental impacts. As a result, 8 million trees will be planted in the State of Paraná by the end of this year.

The Executive Secretary has also announced the signature of an agreement with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Wangari Maathai to plant trees in Africa through the Green Belt Movement to offset the environmental impacts, including carbon dioxide emissions, of the Secretariat processes over the next two years. Welcoming the agreement, Prof. Maathai stated that: "The Green Belt Movement is pleased to enter into an institutional arrangement with the Convention on Biological Diversity to offset the environmental impact of its operations. I invite all intergovernmental processes to consider enhancing their contribution to meeting the challenges of protecting life on Earth and translating this into support for the threefold objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity."

In signing these two major agreements, Ahmed Djoghla said: "The 188 Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity—the Convention on all life on Earth—and their Secretariat comprising 67 staff have, through these two agreements, shown the way ahead for future intergovernmental environmental conferences. We in the United Nations environmental community need to ensure that our processes do not contribute to additional degradation of the environment. We have therefore decided to commit ourselves to minimizing the environmental impact of the Secretariat processes by planting trees in Africa. We are truly honoured to enter into an agreement with the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Ms Wangari Maathai, who will always be remembered for her unique contribution to

ensuring that the environmental dimension is included in the concept of international peace and security.”

Information for Journalists:

The Convention on Biological Diversity is one of the most broadly-subscribed international environmental treaties in the world. Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro Brazil in 1992, it currently has 187 State parties and the European Community who have committed themselves to its three main goals: the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components and the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. The Secretariat is located in Montreal, Canada.

The eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity took place from 20 to 31 March 2006, in Curitiba, Brazil, and was preceded by the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which was held at the same location from 13 to 17 March.

Information: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=COP-08>

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