



CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

PRESS RELEASE

For use of the media only;
Not an official document.

Major Canadian institutions pledge support for the Convention for Life on Earth

Montreal – 25 May 2006

In celebration of the International Day for Biological Diversity, representatives of major Canadian universities and research institutions signed an agreement with the Montreal-based Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to join forces in order to mobilize the scientific and technical community of the host country in support to the enhanced implementation phase of the threefold objective of this unique legal instrument for the protection of life on Earth. Representatives of Concordia University, McGill University, the Université de Montréal and the Université du Québec à Montréal, Université Laval in Quebec City and Carleton University in Ottawa attended the meeting, which was the first of its kind.

“The target set by Heads of State and Government to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 will not be reached without the full engagement of all stakeholders,” said Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity. “Universities and research institutions are essential partners in meeting this strategic goal, as they have both the expert knowledge and technical capacity to develop and promote effective actions for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The agreement signed today with major scientific powerhouses of the Secretariat’s host country is an important step in the right direction.”

Agreement was also reached with the representative of Montreal Nature Museums, comprising the Botanical Gardens, the Biodôme, the Insectarium, and the Montreal Planetarium, to join forces to support the implementation of the Secretariat’s outreach and communication activities.

“Raising public awareness on the impact of the loss of biodiversity on the life on Earth is essential for achieving the promise by Heads of State to stop and reverse by 2010 the current massive rate of extinction of species of our planet. I am very pleased that the Montreal Nature Museums have kindly agreed to assist the Secretariat in meeting this unprecedented challenge through a multi-year joint programme,” said Dr Djoghlaif.

The meeting closed with the signing of an agreement that paves the way for a multi-year programme of work for enhanced scientific and technical cooperation between Canadian universities and the Secretariat of the Convention.

For more information, please contact the Secretariat at (+1 514) 288-2220 or secretariat@biodiv.org.