



**CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY**

PRESS RELEASE

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**Executive Secretary Welcomes Opening of a Training and Education Centre
for Marine Biodiversity in South-eastern China**

Montreal 16 October 2006. A major contribution to the infrastructure for public awareness and education for biodiversity conservation in China was welcomed by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif.

The training and education center on marine biodiversity, located in the southeast coastal city of Xiamen, Fujian Province, will help promote conservation and raise public awareness on marine biodiversity, thus contributing to a halt in the decline in marine biodiversity. In addition, a recently-opened mangrove learning center in Guangxi Province, will involve public and private sector operators and civil society in a campaign to foster awareness of the importance of mangroves to coastal fisheries and pearl aquaculture.

Globally, marine areas are particularly under-represented in the world's surface currently in protected status, and the inadequacy of knowledge and awareness of the threat to, and the role and value of, marine biodiversity pose considerable barriers to achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

A mega-biodiverse country with sustained rapid economic growth in the past twenty five years, China has made tremendous efforts to protect its marine biodiversity from its coastal area development. In addition to a series of regulations and policy measures, China has established over 120 marine reserves, covering all endangered marine life, 17 aquatic wildlife sanctuaries, and over 230 fishery reserves.

Last week, the Chinese leadership adopted historic resolutions on major issues regarding the building of a harmonious society. Markedly enhanced efficiency of utilization of resources and visible improvement in ecological environment have been identified as main objectives and tasks for building a harmonious society by 2020

"In the era of the new enhanced phase of implementation of the Convention and greater focus on the achievement of the 2010 Biodiversity Target, such initiatives demonstrate China's commitment to biodiversity conservation", said Ahmed Djoghlaif

"This good news for biodiversity is testimony to the resolve of the international community in all its diversity to spare no efforts to meet the challenges of protecting life on earth", added Dr. Djoghlaif.

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 188 Parties—187 States 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 out of the utilization of genetic resources. The Secretariat of the Convention is located in Montreal.

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