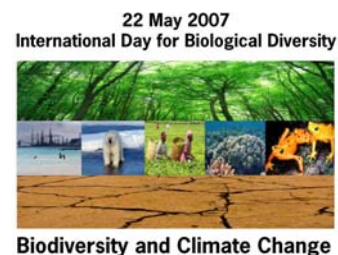




Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

PRESS RELEASE

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ESTABLISHMENT OF A VIBRANT PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN COUNTDOWN 2010 AND THE CONVENTION FOR LIFE ON EARTH

Montreal – 16 March 2007

The Head of Countdown 2010 and his team paid its first visit to the Secretariat on the Convention on Biological Diversity to discuss collaboration for achieving the Johannesburg biodiversity target.

Launched in 2004, Countdown 2010 is an innovative network comprising 205 partners and is instrumental in raising public awareness of the 2010 biodiversity target adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002. One year before, at the Gothenburg Summit, the Heads of State of the European Union agreed to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010. Fourteen European countries have currently signed the Countdown 2010 Declaration.

On the occasion of this visit, a memorandum of understanding aimed at raising public awareness and mobilizing stakeholders, in particular business and local authorities, was discussed and is expected to be signed in Berlin during the celebration of World Environment Day on 5 June.

“The 2010 target is at the heart of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Partners of Countdown 2010 worldwide are working actively to achieve this target. In this sense, it is high time that Countdown 2010 joins forces with the Convention, and we are very happy to have established this partnership as a means to move closer to the target,” said Sebastian Winkler, Head of Countdown 2010.

The achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target calls for partnerships with all relevant actors. To this end, Countdown 2010 has made a significant contribution in mobilizing the international community for achieving this strategic target.

“I am very pleased that the relationship between this powerful network and the Convention on Life on Earth will be enhanced at a time when the Convention is actively engaged in the preparation for the ninth meeting of the conference of the parties to be held 2008 in Bonn, Germany,” said Ahmed Djoghla, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Mr. Djoghla added that partnerships and networking with organizations such as Countdown 2010 are crucial for achieving the three objectives of the Convention.

Countdown 2010 is also a partner of the Secretariat for the preparation and implementation of the meeting on Cities and Biodiversity, to be held 26-28 March in Curitiba, Brazil. The meeting will focus on biodiversity challenges specific to urban environments.



Countdown 2010

Countdown 2010 is a powerful network of active partners working together towards the 2010 biodiversity target. Each partner commits additional efforts to tackle the causes of biodiversity loss. The secretariat – hosted by IUCN—the World Conservation Union—facilitates and encourages action, promotes the importance of the 2010 biodiversity target and assesses progress towards 2010. An Assembly of all partners meets annually to review the overall direction of Countdown 2010. In its implementation, Countdown 2010 is guided by a core Advisory Board. Its main objectives are to gain maximum public attention across Europe for the challenge of saving biodiversity by 2010; encourage and support the full implementation of all the existing binding international commitments and necessary actions to save biodiversity; and, demonstrate clearly what progress Europe makes in meeting the 2010 biodiversity target.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

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 in 1992, it currently has 190 Parties—189 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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