



Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

COMMUNIQUÉ

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Biodiversity and Climate Change

BIODIVERSITY CONVENTION LAUNCHES REGIONAL WORKSHOPS ON NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS IN SINGAPORE - AND SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH THE ASEAN CENTRE FOR BIODIVERSITY

Montreal – 14 January 2008. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) initiated today the first of a series of regional and sub-regional capacity building workshops on national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and the integration of biodiversity into the national policies and planning processes.

The first workshop, hosted by Singapore, is for the countries of South, East and South East Asia. It has been organized in collaboration with the Association of South East Asian Nations' ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), and has brought together 40 experts including those responsible for developing and implementing NBSAPs in each country in the region.

Nearly all countries in Asia have NBSAPs in place and several have updated them. The newest CBD member, Timor Leste, has begun the process of developing its NBSAP. A high level delegation of Brunei Darussalam, which plans soon to become a Party to the CBD, also attended the workshop.

The workshop is an important opportunity for countries of the region to share experiences and to learn from one another. Many countries are now updating their NBSAPs to reflect their national priorities, to respond to guidance from the CBD Conference of Parties, to align plans with the 2010 Biodiversity Target, and to ensure that NBSAPs are an effective tool in integrating biodiversity in broader national policies and planning processes.

The Workshop was opened by Mr Ng Lang, Chief Executive Officer of the National Parks Board (Nparks) of Singapore. "There is a critical need to balance conservation and development", he said. "The workshop provides an opportunity to exchange experience to achieve this".

Ahmed Djoghlaif, CBD Executive Secretary said, "National biodiversity strategies and action plans are the cornerstone for the implementation of the Convention at national level. Mainstreaming is key to the success of these strategies and action plans".

The opening session was attended by Board Members of the ACB and was followed by a signing ceremony of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the CBD



Secretariat and the ACB. The MoU provides a framework for cooperative action in promoting implementation of the CBD among ASEAN member countries.

“SCBD and ACB are joining forces to help implement the Convention in the region”, said Mr Rodrigo Fuentes, Executive Director of ACB, on signing the MOU with Dr Djoghlaif.

The next workshop will be held in South Africa in February for countries of Southern and Eastern Africa. Subsequent workshops will be rolled out across the other regions and sub-regions through the course of 2008.

Background

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 from the utilization of genetic resources. The headquarters of the Secretariat of the Convention is located in Montreal.

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The ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB)

The ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) is an intergovernmental and international regional centre of excellence of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) which aims to create, promote, and develop links with the public, private sector, civil society, international development institutions, and donor community for the sustainable use of biodiversity.

ACB's *raison d'être* is to build strategic networking and partnerships so that resources could be mobilized optimally to augment effective programmes and enable knowledge management. The key outcome is to achieve socially responsible access, equitable sharing, utilization and conservation of natural ecosystems and the biodiversity they contain for the present and future generations of ASEAN Member Countries (AMC).

The ACB is managed by a Governing Board, which is composed of the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN) and the Secretary-General of the ASEAN. The Board assumes overall responsibility and accountability for the operations of the Centre, and is chaired by the Chairman of the ASOEN. The management team of the ACB includes an Executive Director and other key Directors which drives Networking, Partnership & Resource Mobilization; Programmes and Development; Biodiversity Information Management; and Administration & Finance.

Funded by the ASEAN and the European Union, ACB will further enhance the collaboration among ASEAN nations to fulfill obligations to relevant treaties on conservation.

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