



Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity



COMMUNIQUÉ

ECUADOR DESIGNATES NEW MARINE PROTECTED AREA

Montreal, 23 September 2008 – A declaration designating a new marine protected area “Puntilla de Santa Elena”, off Ecuador’s coast was signed by the Minister of Environment for Ecuador, Ms. Marcela Aguiñaga Vallejo. The declaration was signed on the margins of the CBD sub-regional workshop on Protected Areas in Latin America currently underway in the City of Salinas, Ecuador, thus furthering implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity’s (CBD) programme of work on protected areas and augmenting its biodiversity conservation efforts.

Applauding the initiative of the Government of Ecuador, Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, CBD Executive Secretary, said that, “Establishing the Puntilla de Santa Elena marine national park makes is an extremely important initiative as it helps reduce the large gap between the marine and terrestrial protected areas.”

Ecuador, endowed with rich and diverse ecosystems from arctic tundra to sweltering beaches and marine areas, from temperate pine forests to tropical wet forests, is one of the mega-diverse countries of the world. Situated at the confluence of the cold Humboldt ocean current, that comes from Antarctica along the South American coast and the warm El Niño current, which flows along the equator, the marine systems of Ecuador harbor a unique marine life. The new protected area covering 47,000 ha including littoral and coral systems will protect rich marine biodiversity including some 120 migratory and resident bird species such as pelicans, albatross, flamingos, sterner; and marine mammals viz., whales and sea lions.

“This new protected area also promotes sustainable tourism and through public-private partnerships facilitates generating resources for strengthening livelihood security of local people,” further noted Dr. Djoghlaif.

Although oceans comprise 72% of the Earth’s surface, only 0.6% of the marine environment lies within protected areas, compared with about 11% of the terrestrial protected areas. In this background the designation of Puntilla de Santa Elena marine national park by Ecuador is an important step towards the protection of the planet’s seas and oceans. Marine protected areas are an important instrument for meeting the 2010 Biodiversity Target.

Convention on Biological Diversity:

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 192 Parties—191 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



ONE NATURE • ONE WORLD • OUR FUTURE
COP 9 MOP 4 Bonn Germany 2008



the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. The Secretariat of the Convention is located in Montreal.

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, at its seventh meeting in 2004, adopted a programme of work on protected areas to support the establishment and maintenance of comprehensive, effectively managed and ecologically representative national and regional systems of protected areas with ambitious goals and clearly defined time-bound targets.

The Latin America sub-regional workshop on protected areas is being organized by the CBD Secretariat with financial assistance from the European Commission and the Government of Ecuador, in collaboration with the PoWPA FRIENDS consortium.