



# Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

## PRESS RELEASE



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### THE PROVINCE OF SANTA ELENA, ECUADOR, PROCLAIMS “A PROVINCIAL DAY FOR PROTECTED AREAS”

*Montreal, 26 September 2008* – The province of Santa Elena, the newest province in Ecuador, emerged as the first jurisdiction in the world to proclaim a provincial day for protected areas, the Prefecta of the province, Ms. Ana Triviño Cisneros, has announced. To be celebrated annually on 23 September, the Day celebrates the designation of a new marine protected area off Ecuador’s coast aimed at conserving about 47,000 hectares of some of the world’s most spectacular biodiversity.

“In the annals of protected areas, 23 September will be remembered as a landmark day. The province of Santa Elena has demonstrated strong political will for conservation and I pay the highest tribute to the Prefecta for this outstanding decision,” said Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). He added, “I hope that such political will and commitments permeate into other provinces in Ecuador, to other countries of Latin America, and to the whole world, to ensure the future of protected areas and biological diversity and to safeguard all life on our planet.”

The Minister of Environment for Ecuador, Ms. Marcela Aguiñaga Vallejo, signed a declaration on 23 September designating a new marine protected area, “Puntilla de Santa Elena,” during the Latin America sub-regional workshop on Protected Areas, currently underway in the City of Salinas, Ecuador. This is the first protected area designated in the newly created province.

This new protected area, besides conserving some of the world’s spectacular biodiversity, is an ideal setting for demonstrating the value of nature conservation to the livelihoods of local people through sustainable tourism as well as achieving sustainable development. It also furthers the implementation of the CBD programme of work on protected areas and augments its biodiversity conservation efforts.

Conservation International and The Nature Conservancy announced technical support to the Government of Santa Elena to prepare the management plan for the newly designated protected area. Conservation International also announced financial assistance of US\$ 20,000 for this purpose.

“The Nature Conservancy and Conservation International, active members of the PoWPA Friends, are significantly contributing to the implementation of the CBD programme of work on protected areas globally” said Mr. Djoghlaif.

The Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA) provides a blueprint of how to establish protected areas, how to manage them, how to govern them and what tools can be used to achieve the planned work. The “POWPA Friends” is an informal consortium of partners, with whom the Secretariat has organized a series of nine sub-regional workshops attended by nearly 600 planners, practitioners and policy makers from some 100 countries.



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**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.

### **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 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 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.

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