



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
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Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## Flash Info N° 108-2008

Office of the Spokesperson  
La Porte-parole

### UNESCO Director-General meets with the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

On 4 September 2008, the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, met with Mr Ahmed Djoghlaïf, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

The CBD is one of three multilateral environmental agreements opened for signature at the Rio Summit in 1992. It currently counts 191 Parties. The objectives of the CBD are to ensure the conservation of biological diversity, its sustainable use and the equitable sharing of the benefits deriving from its utilization.

UNESCO and the CBD have a long history of collaboration beginning in the early 1990s, when the text of the Convention was being developed. From the inception of the CBD, UNESCO has been recognized by the CBD Parties as a key partner in the implementation of the Convention's programme of work, in particular through the Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB), the World Heritage Convention, UNESCO's work on environmental education and later on the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

The Director-General congratulated Mr Djoghlaïf for the important work being carried out by the CBD and assured him of UNESCO's support. Mr Matsuura agreed with Mr Djoghlaïf on the importance for the United Nations system to live up to commitments undertaken in Johannesburg in 2002 to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 and beyond – the '2010 Biodiversity Target', and more generally to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr Matsuura and Mr Djoghlaïf discussed future possible collaboration, notably within the context of the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010, including launching the Year at UNESCO headquarters and creating an exhibition on biodiversity to be unveiled on that occasion. Mr Matsuura noted that he was particularly impressed with the degree of preparation that had already been undertaken by the CBD with regard to the Year, and commended Mr Djoghlaïf on the proposed tree-planting initiative in schools throughout the world as a powerful way of educating the next generation of leaders on biodiversity.

They agreed that the CBD and UNESCO would move forward with the drafting of a new memorandum of understanding, to replace the MOU signed between the parties in 1998, which needed to be updated to take into account the broad range of joint activities which had developed in the last ten years, not only in the field of science, but also in biodiversity education and in the area of culture and biodiversity. The new MOU is scheduled to be signed by Mr Matsuura and Mr Djoghlaïf on the occasion of the next meeting of the CBD Working

UNESCO  
7, Place de Fontenay  
75007 Paris  
France

Website:  
[www.unesco.org/dg](http://www.unesco.org/dg)  
Email:  
[m.jardin@unesco.org](mailto:m.jardin@unesco.org)  
Tel.:  
+33 (0)1 45 68 13 26  
Fax:  
+33 (0)1 45 68 55 66

Group on Access and Benefit-Sharing that will be hosted by UNESCO  
in the Spring of 2009.