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COP 9 MOP 4 Bonn Germany 2008

PRESS RELEASE

High-level working group on the future of a global policy for biodiversity and ecosystems - *Meeting outlines options for new biodiversity target*

From the 9-10 March 2009 some 50 distinguished participants, at the invitation of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety as the current Presidency of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), gathered in Bonn to provide clear and bold direction for the next international commitments on biodiversity. Amongst the participants were former chief negotiators of the UN Environmental Conventions and scientist from all over the world.

At the opening of the meeting Jochen Flasbarth, chairman of the CBD-Bureau, stated that the 2010 target set by head of states and governments 2002 in Johannesburg will not be achieved. "Although a lot of activities have been undertaken all around the globe, it is obvious that the world is still following the logic of economic growth by destruction instead of developing models of sustainable use of nature as the core capital of our planet!" He expressed his conviction that the efforts on all levels have to be increased to finally stop the loss of biodiversity. "It is not right that a few generations destroy biodiversity as options of our children and grandchildren to create a better and a sustainable way of living!"

The meeting provided an early opportunity to discuss the framework of the post-2010 biodiversity target and to prepare the ground for the discussion and action on the future of the global biodiversity agenda.

All participants called for a wider recognition of the value of the variety of services which are provided by nature and on which all life on Earth is dependent on. Maintaining these services, especially in a world facing massive environmental and economic pressures, is vital. Therefore any post-2010 framework should focus on the conservation of healthy ecosystems and of the biodiversity upon which their continued functioning depends. Ecosystem services, biodiversity and natural capital play a critical role in supporting human wellbeing and in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. For instance, freshwater, forests and fish stocks are essential to fight poverty.

Species protection remain important but a special focus on the value of ecosystem services might help to mobilize significant public opinion and harness broad-based political will for advancing the biodiversity agenda.

"Investing in the protection of natural resources is the more cost efficient way from an economical point of view instead of bearing the costs afterwards. Thus we urgently need an ambitious biodiversity agenda to be adopted at the Special Session of the UN General assembly next year", said Jochen Flasbarth.

The workshop was meant to provide input and recommendations from independent experts from all over the world – outside the UN formal UN negotiation process – which direction to go after 2010. The results of this meeting will be made available on the CBD homepage. The German COP presidency will forward the outcome to the various fora discussing a post 2010 target.

"In less than a year we will assess the implementation of the international commitment taken at the highest political level to substantially reduce the loss of biodiversity by 2010 as well as agree on a new biodiversity target for future. In this common journey towards the Nagoya Biodiversity conference and the 2010 high-level debate at the United Nations General Assembly marking the international year on biodiversity, the ideas provided by 50 eminent personalities in Bonn is an important step in the right direction and I thank the German presidency for taking this timely initiative," stated Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity.