



Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity



COMMUNIQUÉ

The President of the Conference of the Parties and Executive Secretary Congratulate Countries that Have Submitted on Time Their Fourth National Reports and Urge all Parties to Meet Their Reporting Obligations Under the Convention

Montreal, 1 April 2009 – As of 30 March, 2009, the deadline for submission of the fourth national report (set in COP Decision VIII/14), the following countries have submitted their reports:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Australia, Bhutan, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Estonia, Ghana, Japan, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Niger, Niue, Tajikistan, Thailand. In addition, a number of countries have submitted advanced drafts of their reports.

The COP 9 Bureau meeting in Paris, France, held ahead of the seventh meeting of the Working Group on ABS (2-8 April, Paris, France), reviewed the status of the fourth national reports. Speaking on behalf of the COP Bureau members, COP President, Mr. Jochen Flasbarth, said: “The future of the Convention should be rooted in the experience of implementation by Parties. In their fourth national reports, countries have the opportunity to ensure that their concerns and experiences are fully taken into account. Therefore, completing the reports on time is not only an obligation that Parties have set for themselves, it is also in their own interests. I urge all countries to complete their fourth national reports promptly to ensure the success of COP-10 and of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010.”

While warmly congratulating all these countries for their great efforts and timely submissions, the Executive Secretary of CBD, Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, called upon all other countries to submit their reports as soon as possible, noting the mandatory nature of the deadline set in COP decision VIII/14 (adopted at COP 8 in March 2006), which required that Parties **shall** submit the fourth national reports by March 30, 2009. In doing so, Mr. Djoghlaif underlined the significance of timely submission of the fourth national reports: “The fourth national report is crucial for reviewing progress towards the 2010 target adopted at COP 6 as well as goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan, and provides important inputs for the development of the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook. Moreover, the information from the fourth national reports will provide a solid basis for updating the Strategic Plan beyond 2010 and setting a new CBD target beyond 2010, which will be one of the key agenda items of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Nagoya, Japan, in 2010. Clearly, without a meaningful review of the 2010 target and an in-depth analysis of implementation of the Convention, supported by a significant number of reports to be received promptly, the success of COP 10 will be seriously affected.”

Mr. Djoghlaif indicated that the Secretariat would continue providing support to countries for preparing the fourth national reports, including through organizing related workshops. For example, with the support of Norway and UNEP-GEF, the Secretariat is organizing a workshop in Addis Ababa in early May for least developed countries to help them improve and finalize their fourth national reports. This follows a similar workshop for Asian countries, held in December 2008 with the support of Japan.

