



Convention on  
Biological Diversity



## PRESS RELEASE

### ***Biodiversity – time to see the Bigger Picture!***

A new outreach initiative launches 5 June 2009

**5 June 2009** – World Environment Day, 5 June, sees the unveiling of a new communication initiative on biodiversity brought through a partnership between Airbus, the National Geographic Society and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Under a campaign banner of “*See the Bigger Picture*” it’s designed to contribute to international efforts to raise public awareness on biodiversity, reaching out to children, youth and families. It will also encourage participation in *The Green Wave* project.

*The Green Wave* supports the goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to communicate, educate and raise public awareness on biodiversity. It aims to help raise awareness and educate young people – tomorrow’s leaders and citizens – on the loss of biodiversity that’s taking place across the world and the need to take action to preserve life on Earth.

In the new campaign, enabled by Airbus, National Geographic is launching a worldwide photo contest for children to encourage curiosity and understanding of biodiversity. They will promote the contest among a potential audience of 260 million through their global media, including the National Geographic Magazine, National Geographic Kids magazine, their TV channel, and a brand new website. At the same time they’ll be encouraging involvement in *The Green Wave* and providing information on biodiversity.

In a message on the launch of the partnership, the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, said, “I commend Airbus and National Geographic for their support, and I encourage students, parents and teachers to ride *The Green Wave* and spread the word. Even small contributions can make a big difference. Protecting our planet’s biodiversity is crucial if we are to ensure the health of people and planet alike”.

Ambassador of the campaign is National Geographic’s outstanding photographer Joel Sartore – renowned for searching and photographing the most endangered species on this planet. With his impressive photographs, he aims to help animate children and young people to get involved in exploring biodiversity.

The new initiative arises from an agreement established in 2008 between Airbus and the CBD Secretariat to work together to raise public awareness on the importance of biodiversity and for the success of *The Green Wave*.

Airbus’s decision for a campaign of this scope was inspired by a call to action from the United Nations Secretary-General in Davos this year, when he urged business and industry to join a new phase of the UN Global Compact to address global environmental challenges.

Tom Enders, Chief Executive Officer and President of Airbus, said, “We are very pleased to join forces with National Geographic and the Convention on Biological Diversity to support the United



Nation's mission on biodiversity with the "See the Bigger Picture" campaign. Raising awareness of the facts, realities and challenges in the field of environment is essential to finding the right solutions to the challenges we all face as human beings who share the same planet and common interest in protecting the delicate balance of nature".

On learning of the new initiative, Monique Barbut, CEO and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility said, "*The Green Wave* is a path-breaking way for children from all countries to work together to fight species loss. I applaud the partnership between Airbus and National Geographic to help us build awareness to better support the goals of the global agreement on biodiversity. Our children and grandchildren are depending on us to protect their future".

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the CBD, said, "I commend Airbus management, staff and families, for joining forces with the CBD Secretariat with an aim to establish the most far-reaching biodiversity education initiative for children, youth and their families".

Launched just a year ago and with a special celebration held each year on 22 May – the International Day for Bioersivity – this year hundreds of groups all over the world took part. Over 600 groups from more than 65 countries have so far posted information on their *Green Wave* events and a great many others are still carrying out activities, planting trees and posting.

Now with the new supportive campaign from Airbus and National Geographic, *The Green Wave* is getting set to make a mighty splash in 2010 – the International Year of Biodiversity!

Find out more at [www.seethebiggerpicture.org](http://www.seethebiggerpicture.org) and [greenwave.cbd.int](http://greenwave.cbd.int).

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#### Notes

#### ***The Green Wave***

*The Green Wave* is an ongoing global biodiversity-education project that encourages young people to make a difference in conserving the basis for life on Earth. *The Green Wave* promotes participation in local action and the building of partnerships around the world.

*The Green Wave* supports the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity to strengthen awareness and education on biodiversity. It contributes to the celebration of the International Day for Biological Diversity. It will contribute to the observance of the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010. And it supports the Billion Tree Campaign led by the United Nations Environment Programme.

Through action-oriented learning, *The Green Wave* teaches children and youth the importance of biodiversity for our well-being and that of our planet. *The Green Wave* supports schools around the world to educate tomorrow's leaders on the crucial tasks of protecting Earth's biodiversity and halting its loss.

As an important part of *The Green Wave* initiative, children and youth in schools and groups worldwide are invited to plant a tree at 10 a.m. local time on 22 May – the International Day for Biological Diversity – creating a "green wave" across time-zones\*. Participants upload photos and text to *The Green Wave* website to share their tree-planting stories with others. An interactive map goes live in the evening at 20:10 local time, creating a second, virtual, "green wave".

(\*In parts of the world where seasonal conditions are not suitable to plant on 22 May, participants plant in an appropriate season and, instead, water their chosen tree at 10 am on 22 May).

Initiated by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) and the Office of Environmental Response and Coordination (OERC) of the Republic of Palau, *The Green Wave* is coordinated by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

[greenwave.cbd.int](http://greenwave.cbd.int)

### ***The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)***

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits from utilization of genetic resources.

With 191 Parties, the CBD has near-universal participation among countries committed to preserving life on Earth. The CBD seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community.

The Secretariat of the Convention is located in Montreal. For additional information, please contact Marie Aminata Khan on +1 514 287 8701 or at [marie.khan@cbd.int](mailto:marie.khan@cbd.int) or Johan Hedlund on + 1 514 287-6670 or at [johan.hedlund@cbd.int](mailto:johan.hedlund@cbd.int).

[www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int)

### ***Airbus***

Airbus is a leading aircraft manufacturer with the most modern and comprehensive family of airliners on the market, ranging in capacity from 100 to more than 500 seats. Employing around 52,000 people of some 80 different nationalities Airbus is a global company with design and manufacturing facilities in France, Germany, the UK, and Spain, as well as subsidiaries in the U.S., China, Japan, and in the Middle East.

Sensitive to its position as an industry leader, Airbus strives to be a truly eco-efficient enterprise. To that end Airbus is the first aeronautics company in the world to have earned the ISO 14001 environmental certification for all production sites and products for the entire life cycle. Airbus seeks to ensure that air transport continues to be an eco-efficient means of transport, delivering value while minimizing its environmental impact. Headquartered in Toulouse, France, Airbus is an EADS company.

In July 2008 Airbus signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the CBD Secretariat with the objective to contribute to raising public awareness on the importance of biodiversity and engaging children and youth in the global biodiversity agenda. Under the MOU the partners agreed to initiate activities aimed at raising public awareness on the importance of biodiversity, paying particular attention to children and youth, and to collaborate for the success of *The Green Wave*.

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[www.airbus.com](http://www.airbus.com)

### ***National Geographic***

The National Geographic Society is one of the world's largest nonprofit scientific and educational organizations. Founded in 1888 to "increase and diffuse geographic knowledge," the Society works to inspire people to care about

the planet. It reaches more than 360 million people worldwide each month through its official journal, National Geographic, and other magazines; National Geographic Channel; television documentaries; music; radio; films; books; DVDs; maps; exhibitions; live events; school publishing programs; interactive media; and merchandise. National Geographic has funded more than 9,000 scientific research, conservation and exploration projects and supports an education program promoting geographic literacy. For more information contact Mary Jeanne Jacobsen on +1 (202) 857-7759 or at [mjacobse@ngs.org](mailto:mjacobse@ngs.org)

[www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)