



## PRESS RELEASE

### Canadian Launch of the Celebration for the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity

*Montreal, 2 October* – A global awareness campaign and celebration to safeguard the variety of life on Earth and stop the unprecedented loss of biodiversity was today launched in Montreal. As part of the campaign, the logo and messages for the 2010 United Nations International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) were unveiled at Montreal City Hall in a ceremony co-organized by the Ville de Montreal and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Faced with continued biodiversity loss –estimated to be as high as 1000 times the natural rate as a result of human activities, and expected to rise further as a result of the impacts of climate change – the United Nations General Assembly declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, located in Montreal, was designated as the focal point for the celebrations.

The slogan and logo for the year, made possible thanks to the financial support of the Government of Canada, were unveiled at the ceremony, attended by representatives of three levels of government and the diplomatic corps.

The slogan *Biodiversity is life. Biodiversity is our life*, highlights the crucial role that biodiversity plays in supporting all life on Earth, including our own.

The logo for the International Year of Biodiversity comprises a host of symbolic iconographic elements depicting the all-encompassing scope of biodiversity. By intertwining representations of flora and fauna with human figures, the logo demonstrates how biodiversity is life and how we as humans are forever part of, and not separate, from the biodiversity that surrounds us.

“Canada is proud to host the Secretariat to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and was pleased to be able to contribute to the creation of the logo for International Year of Biodiversity.” declared Jim Prentice, the Minister of Environment of Canada.

“Protecting biodiversity is a global concern requiring local action so it is fitting that the ville de Montreal is hosting this event. The creation and launch of this very striking logo will help to raise global awareness of the important responsibility that we all share.” He said.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity said, “We encourage all people and organizations to use the logo to highlight and promote their activities during 2010. The



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generosity of the government of Canada has made this tremendous tool for awareness-raising available to all partners.”

The launch was hosted by Mayor Gerald Tremblay of Montreal, with the participation of the Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks, Quebec, Madame Line Beauchamp, and the diplomatic corps accredited in Montreal as well as other Canadian partners of the Secretariat, including Jean Langlais, Director of the Biosphere, representing Environment Canada.

“In Québec as elsewhere, the year 2010 will be the occasion for greater engagement with the public on the importance of biodiversity and the different ecosystem services that contribute to human well-being. The government of Québec reiterates its commitment and the pursuit of its actions in favour of the protection and sustainable management of biodiversity during this year that has been proclaimed by the United Nations as the international year of biodiversity” declared the minister of Sustainable development, Environment and Parks, Madame Line Beauchamp.

“The role played by Montréal in the field of biodiversity is vital. The introduction of eco-territories offers solid examples of sustainable development projects, which are in harmony with the preservation of the natural environment, public interests and the city’s economic development. The year 2010 will be marked by international mobilization regarding this major worldwide challenge, which will strengthen our determination to move ahead even further”, said Montréal Mayor Gérald Tremblay.

“It is good to see the Ville de Montreal carrying out concrete initiatives for the International Year of Biodiversity, such as the Centre for Biodiversity and the creation of the park for the 3<sup>rd</sup> summit of Mount Royal,” said Ahmed Djoghlaif. “The Convention enjoys a unique and special relationship with our host city and we have had the privilege to see Mayor Gérald Tremblay take an active role in promoting the three objectives of the Convention, and I would like to thank him for his continued support.”

During the International Year of Biodiversity, actors from around the world will work together to raise awareness on biodiversity and form a global alliance for the promotion of life on Earth.

The year will be inaugurated with events in Brazil and Germany. At the Paris headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), an international exhibition will be launched at a high-level event in January.

As a key element of this, heads of State will meet on 20 September 2010 at the UN General Assembly to take action and prepare for the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit in October 2010, where governments will set the targets and steps needed to address biodiversity loss. The year will end in Kanazawa Japan in December 2010 with a ceremony marking the beginning of the International Year of Forests – 2011.

Here in Canada, the year will be marked by events organized by an alliance of artists, governments and individuals. Plans for these were outlined at a meeting of Canadian authorities in mid-August.

In January 2010 the performance Paradis Perdu, produced by Dominic Champagne and Jean Lemire, will mark the opening of the year. The governments of Quebec and Canada have set in motion entire programmes of events for the year that raise public awareness and link with events such as the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver.

Discussions at the G8 meeting in Huntsville, Ontario in 2010, where Canada will preside, will also address the biodiversity crisis.

In addition, the city of Montreal plans a number of initiatives, including a new biodiversity research centre at the botanical garden in partnership with the University of Montreal, and the creation of 23 hectares of a new park on the third summit of Mount Royal.

The logo can be downloaded at: [www.cbd.int/2010/brand/](http://www.cbd.int/2010/brand/)

### **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 headquarters of the Secretariat of the Convention are located in Montreal.

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