



Communiqué

INDIA OFFERS TO HOST THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY IN 2012

Montreal, 31 October 2009. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity today welcomed the offer of the Government of India to host the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP-11) in 2012.

The year 2012 will be a very important year for the international community. It will mark the twentieth anniversary of the Rio Conference on Environment and Development, as well as the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties will also be crucial for the Convention as it will be the first opportunity for the international community to review the Aichi-Nagoya Compact (decisions adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Nagoya, Japan, in 2010), the post-2010 biodiversity targets, the revised Strategic Plan of the Convention, and the international agreement on access and benefit-sharing.

India is among the 17 megadiverse countries that are custodians of 70 per cent of the world's biodiversity. It is home to three of the 34 "global biodiversity hotspots", that is, biologically rich areas facing severe conservation threats.

With an exceptionally high level of biodiversity, and nearly one fifth of the world's population, India has made a unique contribution in furthering the three objectives of the Convention through national, regional and global programmes.

India's biodiversity is of immense economic, ecological, social and cultural value and its potential future value is far greater. The ecosystem services from the forested watersheds of two major mountain chains—the Himalayas and the Western Ghats—indirectly support several million people in India and the non-timber forest products alone have been estimated to be worth \$200 million per year.

"I welcome the offer of India to host the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties as it will allow us to continue the strategic partnership of the presidencies of the Conference of the Parties started at the eighth meeting, held in Brazil in 2006. I look forward to India joining Brazil, Germany and Japan in the quadruple presidency of the Conference of the Parties," said Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention.



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