



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

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PRESS RELEASE

The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment another wake up call for action.

Montreal, 27 May 2010. The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA) is further evidence of the need for urgent and collaborative action to preserve biodiversity in this fragile and vital region of our planet, recognized as an important barometer of the world's environment.

The report *Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010: Selected indicators of change* is the first report arising out of the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment. The report synthesizes scientific findings on status and trends for selected biodiversity in the Arctic and is produced by the on the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) Working Group under the Arctic Council. The report is based on twenty-two indicators and provides a snapshot of the trends being observed in Arctic biodiversity today.

The report, launched today in Copenhagen, indicates that although the majority of Arctic species examined are currently stable or increasing, some species of importance to Arctic people or species of global significance are declining. Changes in Arctic biodiversity have global repercussions and are further creating challenges for people living in the Arctic.

“The conclusions of this assessment of the Far North echo the findings from the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, which was launched a few weeks ago. The trends for biodiversity loss are alarming and the consequences for human communities, severe,” said Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

“This is why the Secretariat has joined forces and signed a memorandum of understanding with CAFF. The strengthening of such collaboration is essential for achieving the post-2010 biodiversity strategy to be submitted to the New York Biodiversity Summit and decided in October at the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit,” he said.

The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment is the Arctic Council's response to global conservation needs. While there is a clear concern for the future of Arctic nature, this applies even more to global biodiversity. In 2002, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention established a target, “to achieve, by 2010, a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional, and national levels as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth”. Subsequently, the 2010 biodiversity target was endorsed later in 2002 by the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development and the United Nations General Assembly.

The recent Arctic Council Ministerial meeting noted that the Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010 report is an Arctic Council contribution to the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity in 2010. CAFF, through the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment process, contributed to the Convention's third edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook to measure progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target.

The *Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010: Selected indicators of change* report can be accessed and downloaded at www.arcticbiodiversity.is.



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Notes to Editors

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 193 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention 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 Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, a supplementary treaty to the Convention, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 157 countries and the European Union are party to the Protocol. The Secretariat of the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol is located in Montreal.

For more information visit www.cbd.int.

The Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) Working Group (www.caff.is)

CAFF is the permanent Working Group of the Arctic Council which deals with Biodiversity. Its mandate is to address the conservation of arctic biodiversity, and communicate the findings to the Governments and residents of the Arctic, helping to promote practices which ensure the sustainability of the Arctic's living resources and monitor, assess, report on and protect biodiversity in the Arctic. CAFF's management board is comprised of the eight Arctic countries and indigenous peoples organizations

The 2010 International Year of Biodiversity

The United Nations proclaimed 2010 to be the International Year of Biodiversity, and people all over the world are working to safeguard this irreplaceable natural wealth and reduce biodiversity loss. This is vital for current and future human wellbeing. The International Year of Biodiversity is a unique opportunity to increase understanding of the vital role that biodiversity plays in sustaining life on Earth. Visit www.cbd.int/2010 to find out more. Also visit the Facebook page: www.facebook.com/iyb2010

Any questions or comments on the report can be directed to aba@caff.is or by calling Tom Barry at +354 462 3350. Further information and a press kit can also be found at www.arcticbiodiversity.is.

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