



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**



PRESS RELEASE

Need to maintain nature's supply of freshwater key concern at the Nagoya Conference Ecosystems Pavilion

Nagoya, Japan, 21 October 2010—Facing increased uncertainties in the future supply of fresh drinking water due to climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation, an array of water experts, civil society representatives and business leaders are to discuss how natural systems can be reinforced to continue to provide water that they have always provided for free.

The focus on finding natural solutions for the growing global freshwater problem will take place on Friday, 22 October, at the Ecosystems Pavilion, a key forum of the Biodiversity Conference taking place in Nagoya, Japan.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity said, “It is absolutely imperative that we understand that nature is providing us with trillions of dollars worth of free and essential services, including freshwater.” But he added that at the present rate, a global failure to adequately address climate change, biodiversity, and land degradation is threatening nature’s ability to continue to provide a supply of water for seven billion people.

The Ecosystems Pavilion is an innovative initiative that brings together three key United Nations Conventions, on biodiversity, climate and land to explore how an “ecosystem approach”—one that allows natural systems to provide the solutions for a slew of growing global concerns.

If current trends continue, the world will meet or even exceed the Millennium Development Goal for reducing the number of people without access to clean drinking water target by 2015. By that time, an estimated 86 per cent of the population in developing regions will have gained access to improved sources of drinking water.

Yet the most recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns that the more than one sixth of the world’s population who live in glacier- or snowmelt-fed river basins will be affected by the seasonal shift in stream flow caused by decreased glacier extent or snow water storage. And sea-level rise will cause the increased salinization of groundwater and estuaries, resulting in a decrease in freshwater availability for humans and ecosystems in coastal areas. It found that semi-arid and arid areas are particularly exposed to the impacts of climate change.

Water is just one of topics that Pavilion is scrutinizing during the two-week conference. Already, the Pavilion has looked at the links between the three Rio conventions (on climate Change, desertification and biological diversity), the benefits of protected areas, the role of local communities and indigenous peoples, and forests. Still to be explored are topics that include land use, the value of ecosystems, adaptation to climate change, making ecosystems work to promote sustainable development and poverty reduction, and incorporating the ecosystem approach into emerging visions for implementing sustainable development.



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Further information on the Ecosystems Pavilion is available at
www.cbd.int/rio/ecosystemspavilion

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