



COMMUNIQUÉ

The biodiversity family stands in solidarity with the people and Government of the historic Nagoya Biodiversity Summit: CBD Secretariat steps up to support disaster relief efforts in Japan

Montreal, 7 April 2011 – In the wake of the earthquake and tsunami, and in line with the message of support from Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the staff of the Montreal-based Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) raised financial donations for disaster relief that were given to the Japanese Red Cross Society through the Consulate-General of Japan in Montreal on 28 March 2011.

This spontaneous initiative by the staff of the Secretariat is a genuine reflection of the support of the biodiversity family to the historic achievement and unique leadership of the people and Government of Japan as the host of the Nagoya biodiversity summit in October 2010. That event ushered in a new era of living in harmony with nature and opened a new page in the history of the biodiversity movement.

The initiative of the Secretariat was indicative of the spirit of solidarity with the Japanese felt throughout Canada, our host country, which manifested itself in the direct assistance provided by the Government, generous financial contributions from individuals and private corporations and, more symbolically, in the illumination of the Olympic Tower in Montreal, host city of the Secretariat, and the CN Tower in Toronto with red and white lights on 4 April.

The initiative of the Secretariat staff is one of many expressions of solidarity and support extended by the large biodiversity family to the nation that has set the pace for building a future of life in harmony with nature.

The singer and entertainer MISIA, who was the Honorary Ambassador to the Nagoya biodiversity summit, has personally raised approximately \$117,000 for the Hope for Japan disaster relief campaign and she is also officially supporting this campaign through her website. To date, Hope for Japan (www.mundef.net/hopeforjapan) has raised more than \$530,000 and the figure is still growing. Donations will be sent to the major disaster relief organizations operating in the affected area, including Médecins Sans Frontières Japan.

The United Nations Goodwill Ambassador for Biodiversity, actor Edward Norton, has been supporting a campaign through the Crowdrise (www.crowdrise.com) initiative to contribute to Red Cross relief efforts in Japan. In just two weeks, \$1 million was raised – \$500,000 from public donations on Crowdrise, and a \$500,000 matching donation from the Ogawa family in Japan.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: “Our thoughts and best wishes are with our colleagues in Japan at this challenging time. We in the biodiversity community have had the unique privilege to witness the strength, tenacity and generosity of the people of Japan firsthand in our work before, during, and after the historic Nagoya biodiversity summit. We know the strength that they have, and we also know that they are not alone in this challenging period in the history of this great nation.”

