



COMMUNIQUÉ

Rwanda launches a revision of its national biodiversity strategy and action plan

Montreal, 7 April 2011 – At the request of the Government of Rwanda, a team from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), visited Kigali on 23–24 March 2011 to assist the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) in initiating its revision of the Rwandese national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP) in line with the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets contained in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010.

The visit was organized under the Japan Biodiversity Fund established to support the implementation of the Nagoya Biodiversity Compact by Parties in need of assistance. The workshop, held with senior officials of the Government of Rwanda, discussed setting national and regional targets in the framework of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including integrating biodiversity into relevant national and local planning processes. The workshop assisted REMA officials with initiating the internal process for the revision of its national biodiversity strategy and action plan with a view its adoption it by the Cabinet before the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in India in October 2012.

With financial support provided by the Global Environment Facility for the early entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization, the participants in the meeting also discussed Rwanda's needs for early ratification and implementation of this innovative legal instrument. Rwanda is the sixth Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity to have signed the Nagoya Protocol.

When Rwanda signed the Nagoya Protocol on 28 February 2011, the Rwandese Minister of the Environment and Lands, Ambassador Stanislas Kamanzi, said: “The sustainable use of natural resources is Rwanda's highest development priority. The Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing is a major instrument to achieving the sustainable development agenda. Rwanda is very proud to be the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to sign the Nagoya Protocol and is determined to expedite its ratification so as to ensure its early entry into force.”

Rwanda, a Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity since May 1996, has made significant progress in the implementation of its objectives. In 2003, Rwanda developed its national biodiversity strategy and action plan, in 2009 it delivered its fourth national report under the Convention, and it is currently developing new biodiversity legislation.

“The revision of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan to translate the Aichi Biodiversity Targets into national priorities for 2011–2020 is yet another living demonstration by Rwanda to lead by example and demonstrate leadership in the sustainable use of its natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations,” said Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
