



Convention on
Biological Diversity

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Morocco Ratifies the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

Montreal, 29 April 2011 – Morocco deposited its instrument of ratification of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety on 25 April 2011 and will become the 161st Party to the Protocol on 24 July 2011. The ratification comes as the Protocol enters a new phase which will be guided by a ten-year Strategic Plan adopted at the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit in October last year.

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity is a legally binding international agreement governing the transboundary movement of living modified organisms (LMOs), also commonly known as genetically modified organisms (GMOs), resulting from modern biotechnology. Its objective is to ensure safety in the transfer, handling and use of LMOs. It was adopted on 29 January 2000 and entered into force on 11 September 2003.

The new ratification has also come at a time when many Governments are preparing to sign and ratify the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety adopted on 15 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan. The Supplementary Protocol aims to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity by providing international rules and procedures for liability and redress in the event of damage resulting from LMOs. It is currently open for signature until 6 March 2012 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Morocco's ratification reduces the number of States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Cartagena Protocol to thirty-five. It is hoped that there will be more ratifications or accession in the coming months in order to achieve the strategic objective of the recently adopted Strategic Plan of the Cartagena Protocol to have all Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity become Parties to the Protocol.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: "I welcome the good news and wish to pay tribute to the Government and people of Morocco. This ratification brings us a step closer to achieving universal membership of the Protocol. I urge Governments that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Protocol to do so as soon as possible."



Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800, Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9, Canada
Tel : +1 514 288 2220, Fax : +1 514 288 6588
secretariat@cbd.int www.cbd.int



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