



COMMUNIQUÉ

Implementing the Nagoya Biodiversity Compact in North Africa and the Middle East

Beirut, 4 May 2011 – Over five days, biodiversity experts and officials from across North Africa and the Middle East will work towards implementing the Nagoya Biodiversity Compact. The Regional Workshop on Updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, with the financial support of the Government of Japan, opened on 2 May 2011 in Beirut. Seventeen countries are taking part in the meeting.

His Excellency, Koichi Kawakami, Ambassador of Japan to Lebanon, speaking on behalf of HEM Ryu Matsumoto, the President of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10), opened the workshop. He highlighted the strategic importance of the Aichi Targets, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization, and the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress. Mr. Kawakami reiterated the commitment of the Japanese Government to assist CBD Parties in adapting or revising their own national strategy and implement them in the most effective manner.

Speaking on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the CBD, Mr. David Duthie, CBD Senior Programme Officer, thanked the Government of Japan for establishing the Japan Biodiversity Fund to assist countries in translating the Aichi Targets into national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) before the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in India in 2012.

He noted that additional funds for national biodiversity planning have been made available through GEF-5 and he emphasized the importance of ratifying the Nagoya Protocol, which to date has been signed by 11 countries, as well as the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol, which has already been signed by four Parties.

Ms. Carol Cherfan welcomed the guests on behalf of Ms. Rima Khalaf, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). Ms. Cherfan showed how protection of biodiversity is dependent on the adoption of sound socio-economic and environmental policies. To this effect, ESCWA continues to support the efforts of the international community to protect biodiversity through Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEAs). She finished by hoping that this meeting will result in new approaches for fostering collective commitments in the Arab region.

Following meetings in Kasane, Botswana, for the Southern Africa Development Community region, and the Isle of Vilm, Germany, for the European region, the Beirut meeting is the latest in a series of regional and subregional capacity-building workshops to strengthen national capacities for the development, implementation, reviewing, updating, and communication of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. The next meeting will be held in Xi'an, China, from 9 to 16 May 2011 and will be followed by a meeting in Dakar Senegal for West Africa and a meeting in Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo for Central Africa. For additional information, please see: <http://www.cbd.int/nbsap/workshops2.shtml>.

