



Convention on  
Biological Diversity

INTERNATIONAL YEAR  
OF FORESTS • 2011



## PRESS RELEASE

### **The international treaty on damage resulting from living modified organisms receives sixteen signatures**

*Montreal, 12 May 2011* – Fifteen countries and the European Union yesterday signed the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety at a ceremony held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The ceremony took place during the Ministerial Segment of the 19th session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development. This increases the total number of signatures received to date to 22.

The Supplementary Protocol is an international treaty aimed at contributing 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 living modified organisms (LMOs). It was opened for signature on 7 March 2011 and will remain open until 6 March 2012.

The countries that signed today are: Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, European Union, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Romania, Slovenia, Switzerland and Tunisia. On 7 March, Colombia, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden became the first countries to sign the Supplementary Protocol. These were followed by Panama and Peru at the beginning of this month.

The Supplementary Protocol is one of the international instruments that respond to Principle 13 of the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which called upon States to develop national laws regarding liability and compensation and also to cooperate in developing further international law regarding liability and compensation for adverse effects of environmental damage. It also contributes to one of the objectives set out in Chapter 16 of Agenda 21 to establish enabling mechanisms for the environmentally sound development and application of modern biotechnology.

At the ceremony, Mr. Joseph Deiss, President of the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly said: “The Supplementary Protocol presents another opportunity to strengthen the global partnership for sustainable development. I call upon all Member States of the United Nations to fully support this new treaty”.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: “Today’s signing of the Supplementary Protocol is yet another testament to the growing commitment and



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](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int) [www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int)



Life in harmony, into the future  
いのちの共生を、未来へ  
COP 10 / MOP 5

support for the global efforts to protect life on Earth. I pay tribute to the countries that have signed today and call on all those that have not yet done so to sign and subsequently ratify the Supplementary Protocol as soon as possible.”

While signing of the Supplementary Protocol could be arranged with the United Nations Treaty Section and effected any day during the coming months by any country that wishes to do so, there will be another special signing event of the Supplementary Protocol on 20 September 2011, in New York, in conjunction with the High Level Event on Desertification of the 66th session of United Nations General Assembly.

### **Notes for Journalists**

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, an additional treaty to the Convention on Biological Diversity, seeks to protect biological diversity from potential adverse effects by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. The Protocol was adopted in Montreal on 29 January 2000 and entered into force on 11 September 2003. To date, 160 countries and the European Union are party to the Protocol.

The Supplementary Protocol was adopted on 15 October 2010 by the fifth meeting of the governing body of the Cartagena Protocol – the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol – which took place in Nagoya, Japan.

The Supplementary Protocol will enter into force 90 days after the deposit of the 40<sup>th</sup> instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession.

Under the Supplementary Protocol, Parties have an obligation to provide, in new or existing domestic law, for rules and procedures that address damage resulting from LMOs, including response measures to prevent or mitigate damage or to restore biological diversity.

The Supplementary Protocol is the first international treaty to provide for a definition of 'damage' to biodiversity.

The text of the Supplementary Protocol is available at:

[https://bch.cbd.int/protocol/NKL\\_text.shtml](https://bch.cbd.int/protocol/NKL_text.shtml)

For additional information, please contact:

Ms. Ulrika Nilsson on +1 514 287 8720 or at [ulrika.nilsson@cbd.int](mailto:ulrika.nilsson@cbd.int)

Mr. Erie Tamale on +1 514 287 7050 or at [erie.tamale@cbd.int](mailto:erie.tamale@cbd.int)

or visit: <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/>