



COMMUNIQUÉ

Gabon signs the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization

Montreal, 18 May 2011 – Gabon has become the twenty-second signatory to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization.

“As the host of last year’s Pan-African Conference on Biodiversity, held in Libreville, as well as being one of the richest countries in the world in terms of biodiversity, the signature of Gabon is of major political importance,” said Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

This signature follows the signing of the Protocol by Colombia, Yemen, Algeria, Brazil, Mexico, and Rwanda on 2 February 2011, the opening signing ceremony for the treaty. Later, Ecuador, the Central African Republic, the Seychelles, Mali, Sudan, Panama and Peru also signed. On 11 May 2011, at the occasion of the Ministerial Segment of the 19th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, with the participation of Mr. Joseph Deiss, President of the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly, the following eight countries added their signature: Guatemala, Indonesia, India, Japan, Norway, South Africa, Switzerland and Tunisia.

On 2 February 2011, the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon called on all Parties to the Convention to take the steps to expedite the early entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol, a landmark treaty that links conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity with development.

The Nagoya Protocol was agreed by the 193 Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity with the full engagement of their partners at the Aichi-Nagoya summit on biodiversity in October 2010.

At the initiative of Japan, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has established a trust fund to support the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. The GEF has also approved a medium-sized project of US\$ two million to support the early ratification and entry into force of the Protocol. The project is now fully operational within the Secretariat.

Parliamentarians around the world are being briefed on the Nagoya Protocol. In Botswana, the first such briefing was held with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme, Globe International and the International Parliamentary Union. A series of these briefings will continue throughout the year.

Mr. Djoghlaif added: “Each signature takes us closer to setting a record for the entry into force of this important legal instrument in the service of sustainable development.”

The Nagoya Protocol will enter into force 90 days after the ratification by 50 Parties to the Convention. The United Nations Office of Legal Affairs will organize another signing ceremony at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in September 2011, in conjunction with the 66th session of the United Nations General Assembly. At this ceremony, an impressive number of countries are expected to sign.
