



PRESS RELEASE

The South African National Biodiversity Institute the first African partner to join the Convention's Consortium of Scientific Partners on Biodiversity

Montreal, 20 May 2011. The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) has joined the Consortium of Scientific Partners of the Convention on Biological Diversity, thus becoming its sixteenth member and the first from Africa.

SANBI is a statutory body with a unique responsibility for South African biodiversity. The Institute manages a network of nine national botanical gardens across the country and is also responsible for scientific research, knowledge management, policy and planning as well as human capital development through education and empowerment. The SANBI biosystematics division boasts the largest collection of plant specimens in southern Africa, including no less than one million in the National Herbarium in Pretoria.

The signing ceremony took place on 19 May 2011 at the Songdo Convensia in Incheon City, Republic of Korea, on the occasion of the meeting of the Convention's Consortium of Scientific Partners hosted by the National Institute of Biological Resources of the Republic of Korea, which joined the Consortium in October last year. The meeting was convened to consider the contribution of the Consortium to the implementation of the Nagoya biodiversity compact, as well as the celebration of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

“It is a great honour for SANBI to be first to represent Africa at the Consortium. We have always taken pride in our scientific excellence, and this invitation is nothing less than an acknowledgement of our many years of local and international scientific work in the biodiversity sector,” said Dr. Tanya Abrahamse, the Chief Executive Officer of SANBI.

She added that: “The participation of SANBI, one of the centres of excellence of South Africa, itself one of the most biologically diverse countries in the world, is of major strategic importance at a time when the mobilization of the scientific community is more urgently than ever required for translating the Nagoya biodiversity compact into a living reality.”

The CBD Consortium of Scientific Partners was established to support to the implementation of the scientific and technical mandate of the Secretariat on 26 March 2006 on the margins of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in Curitiba, Brazil.

The members of the Consortium are:

- Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle (France)
- The Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (Germany)

- The Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History (United States of America)
- The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (United Kingdom)
- The National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO) (Mexico)
- The Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (Belgium)
- Muséums nature de Montréal (Canada)
- The Higashiyama Botanical Gardens (Japan)
- The National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development (Saudi Arabia)
- The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (United Kingdom)
- The National Institute of Biological Resources (Republic of Korea)
- The Missouri Botanical Gardens (United States of America)
- The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (United Kingdom)
- World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA)
- The Natural History Museum, London (United Kingdom),
- The South African National Biodiversity Institute (South Africa)

More information on the Consortium and its activities can be found at <http://www.cbd.int/cooperation/scientific.shtml>.

For more information on SANBI, visit www.sanbi.org.za and contact Pedzi Gozo, Director Marketing and Communications
