



PRESS RELEASE

India launches national preparations for the 2012 Hyderabad biodiversity summit

Montreal, 23 May 2011— As part of the launch of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, India began preparations for the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) scheduled to be held in Hyderabad from 1 to 19 October 2012. A national stakeholder consultative meeting was held that brought together the representatives of civil society, the scientific community, United Nations agencies and other donors as well as the representatives of the business community.

The eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties will coincide with the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity as well with the Rio+20 meeting scheduled earlier in the year. India has not hosted a meeting of a Conference of the Parties to a multilateral environmental agreement since 2002. This will be the first meeting to assess the implementation of the Nagoya biodiversity compact.

By the time of the Hyderabad meeting, it is expected that all countries who are Parties to the Convention will have submitted their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and many will also have updated them.

The Hyderabad meeting is also noteworthy, as it is widely expected that two new protocols to the Convention will have entered into force: 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 to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety will have force of law should both receive sufficient numbers of instruments of ratification in the coming months. Currently, the Nagoya Protocol has 24 signatories and the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol has 23.

Attending the ceremony, Mr Hideki Minamikawa, the Vice-Minister of the Environment of Japan representing the President of the Conference of the Parties pledged the full support of Japan for the success of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

After announcing that the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties will be held in Hyderabad, Jairam Ramesh, the Minister of the Environment and Forests of India, unveiled the logo of the Hyderabad biodiversity summit. The logo builds on the logo of the Nagoya biodiversity summit and symbolizes the cycle of life represented by a tiger and a whale and human being, with grain at the centre. In presenting the logo, the Minister stated that livelihoods and biodiversity should be at the centre of discussions at the summit, to be held under the slogan “*Prakruti Rakshati Rakshita*” (“Nature Protects if She is Protected”).

“India’s commitment to conservation of biodiversity, its sustainable use and sharing the benefits is something that is millions of years old, formalized through its early ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity. By hosting the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in October next year, India reiterates its commitment to the global community and is fully prepared to assume its ever increasing responsibility to deal with conservation and development agenda,” he said.

He added that: “Considering the importance of engagement with various stakeholders in achieving this goal, the Government of India formally launched its plans for organizing the meeting through a stakeholder consultation involving a range of expectations and expertise. It is expected that the meeting will set the agenda not just for the Ministry of Environment and Forests but for everyone who has a stake in conservation of biodiversity and intends to make sustainable development a reality.”

Ahmed Djoghlaif, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, declared: “Today’s stakeholder consultative meeting is a clear demonstration that India, its Government, local authorities and civil society is ready to host the enlarged biodiversity family and to play its leadership role as a megadiverse country as well as a leading emerging economy in the world.”

Note to editors

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 193 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is a subsidiary agreement to the Convention. It seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 159 countries plus the European Union have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Secretariat of the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol is located in Montreal. For more information visit www.cbd.int.

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