



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Governments meet to prepare for the entry into force of the Nagoya treaty on access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources**

*Montreal, 6 June 2011* – The first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization began today in Montreal. Over 400 participants will discuss the way forward for the implementation of the Protocol, a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that provides a transparent legal framework for the effective implementation of one of the three objectives of the Convention: the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

The Nagoya Protocol will create greater legal certainty and transparency for both providers and users of genetic resources by establishing more predictable conditions for access to genetic resources and helping to ensure benefit-sharing when genetic resources leave the contracting party providing the genetic resources. By helping to ensure benefit-sharing, the Nagoya Protocol creates incentives to conserve and sustainably use genetic resources, and therefore enhances the contribution of biodiversity to development and human well-being.

To demonstrate their commitment in supporting the efforts to expedite the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol, the President of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, Mr. Ryo Matsumoto, the Minister of Environment of Japan, and Mr. Jairam Ramesh, the Minister of Environment and Forests of India and the prospective President of the Hyderabad Biodiversity Summit, to be held in October 2012, co-signed with Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, the Executive Secretary of the Convention, a letter sent to all Ministers of Environment and Ministers of Foreign Affairs urging them to sign and to ratify this new international treaty on genetic resources, so as to ensure that it enters into force as soon as possible .

“All efforts are being undertaken to ensure the early entry into force of this Protocol. Your support in ensuring the ratification of this Protocol at the earliest possible occasion by your country will be highly appreciated,” said the Ministers and the Executive Secretary in their letter.

Earlier in the year, on the occasion of the opening for signature of the Nagoya Protocol, United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, called on all Parties to expedite the early entry into force of this new legal instrument at the service of sustainable development and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Japan and India signed the Protocol in New York on 11 May 2011. To date, 24 countries have signed the agreement. The Nagoya Protocol was adopted on 29 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan, and will enter into force 90 days after the fiftieth instrument of ratification is deposited to the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

In order to promote the early entry into force of the Protocol, the Global Environment Facility has approved a US\$ 2,000,000 project to assist in enabling countries to expedite their ratifications. Under this project, the CBD Secretariat is organizing a series of activities to raise awareness and build capacity on the Nagoya Protocol with senior officials in charge of the ratification process as well as with parliamentarians. A two-day capacity-building workshop, co-organised by the Secretariats of the CBD and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, was successfully held prior to the Intergovernmental Committee meeting.

The Intergovernmental Committee will be chaired by Mr. Fernando Casas from Colombia and Ms. Janet Lowe from New Zealand. At this first meeting, the Intergovernmental Committee is meant to discuss the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House, measures to assist in capacity-building and awareness-raising, as well as procedures to promote compliance with the Protocol.

*Notes for Editors*

### **Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House**

The Clearing-House will be the mechanism for the sharing of information important for implementation of the Protocol including legislative, administrative and policy measures on access and benefit sharing; information on competent national authorities; permits or other equivalent documents that are evidence of the granting of prior informed consent and the establishment of mutually agreed terms; and tools for capacity-building such as model contractual clauses, or methods and tools developed for the monitoring of genetic resources, and other codes of conduct and best practices.

### **Measures to assist in capacity-building, capacity development**

Effective implementation of the Protocol will require investment in capacity-development in a variety of legislative, policy and monitoring areas, particularly for developing country Parties and those with economies in transition. Parties will discuss elements of a strategy, drawing upon previous experiences, including the results of the two-day capacity-development workshop that was held just prior to the meeting.

**Measures to raise awareness of the importance of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge and related access and benefit-sharing issues** Communication, education and public awareness are central to an effective implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. Parties will discuss a draft communications and awareness-raising strategy that encompasses communications situation analysis, the creation of products and their dissemination and training and capacity-development activities.

**Procedures and mechanisms to promote compliance with the protocol and to address cases of non-compliance** Discussions will address cooperative procedures and institutional mechanisms to promote compliance with the Protocol and to address cases of non-compliance, including procedures and mechanisms to offer advice or assistance, where appropriate. They will consider the elements and options for a compliance regime under the Protocol, drawing from the experience gained in other multilateral environmental agreements.

The detailed agenda of the meeting is available at: [www.cbd.int/absicnp1/documents/](http://www.cbd.int/absicnp1/documents/).

The Intergovernmental Committee will meet twice before the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, which will be held back-to-back with the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in October 2012 in India.

### **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](http://www.cbd.int).

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