



PRESS RELEASE

Policy makers and senior officials briefed on the coherent implementation of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Nagoya Protocol

Montreal/Rome, 30 June 2011 – More than 100 policy makers and senior officials attending the thirty-seventh session of the FAO Conference in Rome this week were today briefed by the Secretaries of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The briefing took place during an event marking the ongoing collaboration on capacity building for the coherent implementation of the International Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization.

Ahmed Djoghlaf, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and Shakeel Bhatti, the Secretary of the International Treaty, presented and explained to participants a rich programme of joint capacity-building events and activities for 2011 and early 2012.

Both secretaries referred to the two-day capacity-building workshop on access and benefit-sharing organized in Montreal at the beginning of June. The event, which gathered 200 participants from around the world, was the first of its kind and helped Governments identify priorities and needs for capacity-building in the implementation of their obligations under the Nagoya Protocol.

“The International Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol are the only legally binding international instruments on access and benefit-sharing, and it is imperative that they are implemented in a coherent and harmonious manner,” said Mr. Djoghlaf.

“We are aware of the enormous challenges that countries will have to face to make of the letter of these instruments a reality on the ground and we are activating and pooling as much resources as possible to support technical officers and policy makers and thus making easier for them this important task,” explained Mr. Bhatti.

Some of the major outputs of the first capacity-building workshop were shared with the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol (ICNP-1), which set up the basis for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. The Protocol has already been signed by 36 countries and the European Union and is open for signature until 1 February 2012.

The Nagoya Protocol is an international agreement which aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic

resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It was adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its tenth meeting, on 29 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan.

The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources is one of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and is a common objective with the International Treaty, which focuses on the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Notes for Editors

For information on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, see www.planttreaty.org

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, 160 countries plus the European Union have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. In October 2010, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention adopted the Nagoya Protocol, which aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. To date, the Protocol has been signed by 36 countries and the European Union, but has not yet entered into force. The Secretariat of the Convention and its protocols is located in Montreal. For more information visit: www.cbd.int.

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