



## COMMUNIQUÉ

### **Antigua and Barbuda becomes the first Caribbean island country to sign the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization**

*Montreal, 1 August 2011* – Antigua and Barbuda has become the forty-first signatory of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing and the first Caribbean island country to signal its intent to ratify.

H.E. John W. Ashe, Ambassador to the United Nations for Antigua and Barbuda, said: “As the forty-first signatory of the Nagoya Protocol, Antigua and Barbuda wishes to join with the other countries who have already done so in signalling the importance it attaches to the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, and its willingness to work with all others in creating incentives to conserve biodiversity at all levels, sustainably use its components, and further enhance the contribution of biodiversity to sustainable development and human well-being.”

“The Nagoya Protocol is a critical tool for sustainable development of island Parties and Parties with islands,” said Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity. “Biodiversity loss is particularly acute in island ecosystems such as those found on Antigua and Barbuda. About half of all recorded extinctions in human history happened on islands. As island nations depend critically on biodiversity and its associated ecosystem services, the Nagoya Protocol offers additional means to finance the sustainable use of the unique genetic resources of islands. This is why we welcome this first Caribbean signatory and, given Antigua and Barbuda’s leadership role in the Convention, in the Alliance of Small Island States, and the Group of 77, we look forward to more signatures from this region, as well as the rest of the world.”

The Nagoya Protocol is a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity. It 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 Protocol was adopted on 29 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan, and will enter into force 90 days after receipt of the fiftieth instrument of ratification.

Genetic resources, whether from plant, animal or micro-organisms, are used for various purposes, ranging from basic research to the development of products. Users of genetic resources include research institutes, universities and private companies operating in various sectors such as pharmaceuticals, agriculture, horticulture, cosmetics and biotechnology.

Benefits derived from genetic resources may include the sharing of the results of research and development carried out on genetic resources, the transfer of technologies that make use of those resources, participation in biotechnological research activities, or monetary benefits arising from the commercialization of products based on genetic resources, such as pharmaceuticals.

The list of signatories to the Protocol is available on the Convention on Biological Diversity website at: [www.cbd.int/abs/nagoya-protocol/signatories/](http://www.cbd.int/abs/nagoya-protocol/signatories/) Pictures of the signing ceremony can be found on the website of the United Nations Treaty Collection: <http://treaties.un.org/>

In early June, over 400 participants from more than 100 countries met in Montreal at the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol, to lay the foundations for implementation. The outcomes of this meeting are available at <http://www.cbd.int/absicnp1/documents/>

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