



COMMUNIQUÉ

Expanding scientific expertise for implementation of Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020

Montreal, 3 August 2011– The Consortium of Scientific Partners to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) continues to grow with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Agropolis International and the Convention Secretariat. Agropolis International thus becomes the eighteenth member of the Consortium.

Founded in 1986 and based in Montpellier, France, Agropolis International gathers skills and expertise in the fields of agriculture, food, biodiversity and environment, with a focus on the development of Mediterranean and tropical regions. It also gathers a large range of stakeholders and partners involved in economic development.

Bernard Hubert, President of Agropolis International, said: “Agropolis International is pleased to become a member of the Consortium of Scientific Partners to the CBD and is honoured to join such a prestigious panel of scientific organizations. Gathering more than 600 scientists from numerous disciplines, all working on biodiversity related issues in different higher education and research bodies, Agropolis International can contribute to the Consortium by favouring multidisciplinary standpoints and contributions, especially those concerning interactions between biodiversity, agricultural activities and food and health issues. Such challenges seem to be at stake in our world when one considers the necessity of properly feeding (with regards to quantity, safety, diversity and quality) an increasing global human population as well as maintaining a functioning earth based on a diversity of landscapes, ecosystems and animal and plant populations. We are very happy to participate in international debates regarding such critical issues.”

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: “We at the CBD are very excited to see an increasing interest from respected scientific institutions to join the Consortium of Scientific Partners in support of biodiversity. Agropolis International, with its impressive track record of scientific cooperation within the Mediterranean and tropical regions, will no doubt contribute significantly to our efforts.”

Because achieving the 2020 targets, and monitoring progress towards them, requires improved coordination, synergy and partnership among various actors and programmes, the purpose of the memorandum of understanding is to leverage the expertise and experience of these institutions in order to implement education and training activities to support developing countries that are building scientific, technical and policy skills in the area of biodiversity.

The Consortium of Scientific Partners was born in Curitiba, Brazil, when in 2006 a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Convention Secretariat and six leading scientific institutions: the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, the Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle de France, the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, the National

Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation.

In addition to the number of botanical gardens already part of the Consortium, other major botanical gardens of the world have indicated their intention to join.

Zoos and aquariums are also part of the Consortium, as the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) signed an agreement with the Convention Secretariat on 5 October 2009. The full list of members is as follows:

- 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)
- Museum für Naturkunde-Leibniz for Research on Evolution and Biodiversity, Berlin (Germany)
- Agropolis International (France)

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