



PRESS RELEASE

International treaty on damage resulting from living modified organisms receives four new signatures

Montreal, 20 September 2011 – Four countries—Belgium, Germany, Poland, and Portugal—today signed the Nagoya–Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety at a ceremony held at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The ceremony took place during the high-level event on desertification of the sixty-sixth session of United Nations General Assembly. This increases the total number of signatures received to date to 30.

The Supplementary Protocol is an international treaty that aims at contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity by providing international rules and procedures for liability and redress in the event of damage resulting from living modified organisms (LMOs). It was opened for signature on 7 March 2011 and will remain open until 6 March 2012.

The Supplementary Protocol is one of the international instruments that respond to principle 13 of the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which called upon States to develop national laws regarding liability and compensation and also to cooperate in developing further international law regarding liability and compensation for adverse effects of environmental damage. It also contributes to one of the objectives set out in chapter 16 of Agenda 21 to establish enabling mechanisms for the environmentally sound development and application of modern biotechnology.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: “I must congratulate the new signatories this Supplementary Protocol to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. It is a further indication that the Parties will ensure that the Supplementary Protocol comes into force as soon as possible.”

During the course of this year, the Convention Secretariat is continuing to organize regional workshops and a series of briefings for diplomats, parliamentarians and other stakeholders to promote the signing and ratification of the Supplementary Protocol, with the financial support of Japan. Reports of the workshops, a video presentation and regional workshop materials on the Supplementary Protocol are now available on the Cartagena Protocol website at http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/supplementary/NKL_workshops.shtml

Notes for Journalists

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is an additional treaty to the Convention on Biological Diversity, seeks to protect biological diversity from potential adverse effects by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. The Protocol was adopted in Montreal on 29 January 2000 and entered into force on 11 September 2003. To date, 160 countries and the European Union are party to the Protocol.

The Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress

The Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was adopted on 15 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan, at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety through its decision BS-V/11. The decision called upon Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to sign and subsequently ratify the Supplementary Protocol, and encouraged them to implement it pending its entry into force.

The Supplementary Protocol will enter into force ninety days after the deposit of the fortieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession. Under the Supplementary Protocol, Parties have an obligation to provide, in new or existing domestic law, for rules and procedures that address damage resulting from LMOs, including response measures to prevent or mitigate damage or to restore biological diversity. The Supplementary Protocol is the first international treaty to provide for a definition of “damage” to biodiversity.

The text of the Supplementary Protocol is available at: https://bch.cbd.int/protocol/NKL_text.shtml

The list of signatories to the Supplementary Protocol is available at: <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/parties/#tab=1>

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