



## COMMUNIQUÉ

### *The Green Wave to support forest rehabilitation in the devastated region of Tohoku, Japan*

Montreal, 16 January 2012 – At the 13th edition of Eco Products 2011, an environmental exhibition that attracts 60,000 visitors a day, including children, and held in Tokyo in December 2011, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, participated on 16 December in the launch of the new initiative, “*The Green Wave* for Supporting Reconstruction of Tsunami Stricken Tohoku Region”. Titled *Project-D*, the project aims to involve 100,000 children from across Japan in growing seedlings of indigenous tree species and rehabilitating 40 hectares of degraded forests in Tohoku, Japan, a region devastated by the Great East Japan Earthquake and its tsunamis on 11 March 2011.

Specifically, the *Project-D: Dream for a Devastated Region*, together with the *Dongri* (acorns) project, aims to restore coastal forests by involving children, who receive an experiential environmental education while planting *Dongri* saplings with the help of different sectors in Japan and *The Green Wave* global campaign.

The project is a collaborative project organized by several organizations including the National Land Afforestation Promotion Organization (NALAPO), the Japan Environment Association, the Japan Nurseryman’s Association and the Executive Committee of the Biodiversity and Children’s Forest Campaign. Supported by the Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement (OISCA) International and several other organizations with an extensive network of close collaborators and major organizations, *Project-D* is expected to unfold as an emergent national movement in Japan.

Launched in May 2008, at the margins of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Bonn, *The Green Wave* initiative aims at reconnecting children and youth with nature and engaging tomorrow’s citizens in sharing their green future. Launched with 50 schools in 2008, *The Green Wave* has since mobilized more than 3,500 groups of participants in over 70 countries. In the coming weeks, the honorary ambassador of *The Green Wave*, Mr. Jean Lemire, will launch *1000 Days for the Planet*, a three-year expedition on board the schooner *Sedna IV*. The expedition is a major contribution to the celebration of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (UNDB) 2011-2020.

One of the aims of the Decade, officially launched in Japan on 17 December 2011, is to help ensure that, by 2020 at the latest, citizens of the world, and in particular youth and children, are made aware of, value, and protect biodiversity. Through *Project-D*, *The Green Wave* and *1000 Days for the Planet*, children, youth, their parents, teachers and communities are invited to take action and make a difference, and thus directly contribute to the biodiversity-related objectives set by the international community.

One of the core agencies driving *Project-D*, NALAPO, led local level actions during the International Year of Forests 2011 through promoting the nation-wide Fund-raising for Greenery campaign, which originally started over 60 years ago. Mr. Tatuya Kajiya, NALAPO Senior Managing Director, said: “We strongly expect that awareness on the importance of forests and intention to join forest-related actions, developed

through various campaigns related to the International Year of Forests, will be broadly spread to generations, especially children, by implementation of *Project-D*.”

A leading organization of the Biodiversity and Children's Forest Campaign-EXCO, OISCA, is a long time supporter of *The Green Wave*. Over 14,000 children and adults at 105 OISCA sites in 13 countries participated in 2011 celebrations of *The Green Wave* through their experiential environmental education initiative, the Children’s Forest Program. On 20 December, Mr. Yasuaki Nagaishi, Secretary-General of OISCA and Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention, took part in a live Web TV programme during which they answered questions from the public about the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity and *The Green Wave*, as a contribution to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between OISCA and the Convention Secretariat, signed at the margins of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010. OISCA celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in October 2011, in the presence of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan and Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda.

In reference to the joint OISCA and CBD initiative, Mr. Nagaishi, OISCA Secretary-General, said: “*The Green Wave* empathizes with our ‘FURUSATO Movement’ which can guide children in action that contributes to the protection of our Mother Earth. It is also instrumental in linking children to other parts of the world beyond their own localities. *Project-D* will, I am sure, enable them to have the feeling of oneness with those in the stricken area hit by the March 11 earthquake and tsunami.”

Mr. Djoghlaif said: “It is heartening the see hundreds of thousands of Japanese children mobilized for *Project D* and *The Green Wave* to contribute to the rehabilitation of the devastated region of Tohoku. This initiative represents the very spirit and letter of *The Green Wave* and I am pleased to support its mission, as a fantastic intra- and inter-generational movement of solidarity for a future in harmony with nature.”

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