



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Rio Conventions join forces for sustainable development and the future we want**

*Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 13 June 2012* – At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the secretariats of the biodiversity, climate change and desertification conventions and the Global Environment Facility are joining forces under the Rio Conventions Pavilion to promote implementation of these three multilateral environmental agreements on sustainable development.

The 1992 Rio Earth Summit gave rise to the three Rio Conventions: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

Twenty years on, partners from around the world are back in Rio de Janeiro to take stock of the ways these agreements have enabled the world to address the interrelated challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and combating desertification and land degradation.

Running from 13 to 22 June in a dedicated space in Athletes Park adjacent to the conference centre, the Pavilion comprises daily events highlighting themes and cross-cutting issues relevant to the Rio+20 Conference and to achieving synergies between the three conventions.

The Pavilion opens on 13 June with the Earth Negotiations Bulletin's (ENB) "curtain-raiser" for the Rio+20 conference. A new mobile application designed for smartphones will be launched at the Pavilion that evening. During the Pavilion, ENB will provide daily coverage of its events at: <http://bit.ly/LSljZC>

Themes will focus on Africa, Indigenous and Local Communities (both on 14 June), Oceans (16 June), global celebration of the World Day on Desertification (17 June), business and sustainable development (18 June), mainstreaming the issue of gender in the implementation of the Conventions (20 June), and the role of cities (22 June). A series of high-level events will be held on 21 June to mark the twentieth anniversary of the three conventions.

As one of many highlights of the ten-day programme, on 20 June Lord Nicholas Stern, Pavan Sukhdev and Jeffrey Sachs, the study leaders of ground breaking economic assessments on the issues addressed by each of the three conventions, will, for the first time, meet in a joint panel moderated by Caroline Spelman, UK Secretary of State for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity said: "We cannot afford to wait any longer to tackle the interlinked challenges of climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss through concerted action at global, national and local levels. Rio+20 is an historic opportunity to learn what has worked well, and what has not, and to redouble our efforts to build the Future We Want. The Rio Conventions Pavilion is a key space to support this dialogue."

Christiana Figueres, UNFCCC Executive Secretary said: "Global efforts to combat climate change, along with those to slow desertification and biodiversity loss, are pointing in the right direction, and governments are in many cases designing increasingly ambitious national policies. But we urgently need



Convention on  
Biological Diversity



United Nations  
Framework Convention on  
Climate Change



to accelerate the pace and scope of what is being done today to safeguard the future we want. All areas of society have crucial roles to play. At the pavilion, we will for example be showcasing the potential of business to act and demonstrate how momentum for change is building via public- private partnerships. And we will address the crucial role women play in making their societies more climate-resilient."

Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary to the UNCCD said: "Efforts to combat desertification by fostering sustainable land management practices have potential co-benefits for climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use through protecting and restoring the productive potential in drylands."

GEF CEO and Chairperson, Monique Barbut said: "The GEF came into being the year before the first Earth Summit but it was here that we really got our mission as the financing mechanism for the three Rio Conventions. In becoming the largest public funder of projects to protect the global environment, we have moved far along the path of scaling up projects and developing synergies linking biodiversity conservation, climate change and sustainable land management. The GEF's solid relationships with donor and developing nations, NGOs and local communities have helped make us both a provider and a catalyst of investment in the environment. The leverage generated by these relationships is what helps the GEF make such a significant contribution to sustainable development."

The Pavilion will host presentations, discussions and panels covering the successes of integrating climate change, biodiversity and sustainable land management into sustainable development policies.

The Pavilion at the Rio + 20 conference has been made possible by the strong support of the Government of Brazil, along with substantial contributions from the UK, Germany, the Republic of Korea, Norway and other partners.

The Programme for the Pavilion at Rio + 20 can be found at: [www.riopavilion.org/programme/](http://www.riopavilion.org/programme/)  
Follow the Pavilion on twitter at: <https://twitter.com/#!/RioPavilion>

### *Notes for editors*

The Rio Conventions Pavilion is a platform for raising awareness and sharing information about the latest practices and scientific findings on the co-benefits that can be realized through implementation of the three Rio Conventions. The Pavilion is a collaborative effort between the Secretariats of the three Rio Conventions and the Global Environment Facility, in addition to a growing list of other global and local partners. It was launched during the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 at the margins of the CBD Conference of the Parties (CBD COP10) in Nagoya, Japan. It was subsequently held at the UNFCCC COP 16 in Cancun, Mexico. In 2011, at the UNCCD COP 10 in Changwon, Republic of Korea, and the UNFCCC COP 17 in Durban, South Africa.

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