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PRESS RELEASE

Opening of the Base Camp of *1000 Days for the Planet*, an expedition led by Jean Lemire, Honorary Ambassador to the *The Green Wave* for biodiversity

Montreal, 20 June 2012 – Coinciding with the opening of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20), Montreal Space for Life is opening the doors of the Base Camp of *1000 Days for the Planet*, a three-year expedition aboard the schooner *Sedna IV*. The expedition is a major contribution to the celebrations of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020.

One of the goals of the Decade is to ensure that by 2020 at the latest, the world's citizens, especially youth and children, know about the value of biodiversity and ways to protect it. A major objective of *1000 Days for the Planet*, led by Canadian biologist, filmmaker and explorer and *The Green Wave* Honorary Ambassador, Jean Lemire, is to raise public awareness of environmental issues and to encourage the public to act in order to preserve and safeguard biodiversity.

The mission's Base Camp will allow the hundreds of thousands of visitors to the Montreal Botanical Garden to follow the adventures of the *1000 Days*' team. The exhibit invites the world to communicate live with the *Sedna* crew and learn about their discoveries on the state of biodiversity, at sea and on land. The Base Camp, based in the University of Montreal's Biodiversity Centre, is one of several projects and activities coordinated by Montreal Space for Life's scientific institutions (www.montrealspaceforlife.ca).

"Montreal continues to be a world center in the efforts to halt the loss of biodiversity and build a future of life in harmony with nature. This 'Base Camp' project is yet another example of the innovative and dynamic approaches to biodiversity research and education developed by Montreal-based organizations such as Space for Life and *1000 Days for the Planet*", said Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

"When we connect with nature we discover its wealth. When we can connect with people to share our love for nature, we encourage them to act to preserve it. With the Base Camp, the *Sedna IV* crew and the visitors of the Botanical Gardens multiply the possibilities to make a difference and contribute to the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity", said Jean Lemire.

In 2006, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Montreal Botanical Garden and the University of Montreal signed a letter of intent to promote scientific and technical partnership between Canadian Universities and Research Institutes. In 2010, the Convention Secretariat and the *Sedna* Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a view to raise awareness on the importance of biodiversity and engaging the public, in particular children and youth, in the global biodiversity agenda.

The launch of Base Camp takes place on the opening day of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) and on the eve of celebrations marking the twentieth anniversary of the three Rio conventions: on biodiversity, climate change and desertification. The objective of the Rio+20 Conference is to provide a renewed political commitment for sustainable development, to assess progress to date and remaining gaps in the implementation of major summits and results conventions on sustainable development, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, and identify new and emerging challenges, particularly regarding the involvement and participation of civil society.



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Note to Editors

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 193 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held 2010, adopted a revised and updated Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, comprising five strategic goals and the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The Plan is the overarching framework on biodiversity, not only for the biodiversity-related conventions, but for the entire United Nations system. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is a subsidiary agreement to the Convention. It seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 162 countries plus the European Union have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Secretariat of the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol is located in Montreal. For more information: www.cbd.int

The Green Wave

The Green Wave for biodiversity aims to raise awareness and educate children and youth on the worldwide loss of biodiversity and involve them in action to preserve life on Earth. *The Green Wave* encourages biodiversity-related activities throughout the school year. But each year on the International Day for Biodiversity, it sends a green wave of action around the world. On 22 May every year, the wave moves from East to West when at 10:00 local time schools and groups plant a tree to celebrate life on Earth. Participants upload stories and photos of their activities that go live on the Web in the evening at 20:20. The Secretariat is the coordinator of the project.

For more information: <http://greenwave.cbd.int>

The International Day for Biological Diversity: <http://www.cbd.int/idb/2010/>

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