



PRESS RELEASE

Ethiopia and Fiji ratify international treaty on use of genetic resources

Montreal, 20 November 2012 – Fiji and Ethiopia have become the 8th and 9th Parties to the CBD respectively to deposit their instruments of ratification for the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The ratifications come on the heels of the ratification of the Protocol by India during the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11) in Hyderabad.

The Nagoya Protocol will enter into force 90 days after the deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification. The Seychelles, Rwanda, Gabon, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, and Mexico have also ratified the Protocol.

At COP 11 in Hyderabad, Parties demonstrated a clear commitment towards the early entry into force and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. Parties agreed on activities for the next biennium, including the reconvening of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol for a third meeting in preparation for the first meeting of the COP-MOP. COP 11 also provided guidance to the Global Environment Facility (the financial mechanism of the Protocol) to support the Nagoya Protocol, emphasizing the importance of financial and technical support aimed at promoting its ratification and implementation.

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity said: “The ratifications by Fiji and Ethiopia further demonstrate that Parties recognize the importance of entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol as a tool for advancing the objectives of the Convention and realizing sustainable development.”

At COP 11, Parties to the Convention had the opportunity to exchange on the progress made towards ratification and implementation of the Protocol. A number of Parties highlighted that they are currently working towards the ratification of the Nagoya Protocol.

In order to become Parties to the Nagoya Protocol, Parties to the Convention that have signed the Protocol may deposit an instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval with the Depository. Parties to the Convention that have not signed the Protocol, but still wish to become Parties, may accede to the Protocol by depositing an instrument of accession with the Depository. Ratification, acceptance, approval and accession have the same legal effect. Further information on how to become a Party to the Protocol can be found at: www.cbd.int/abs/becoming-party/.

Notes to Editors

Heads of State and Government at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in September 2002 first recognized the need for an international regime to promote and safeguard the fair



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and equitable sharing of benefits and called for negotiations to be carried out within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention responded at its seventh meeting, in 2004, by mandating its Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing to elaborate and negotiate an international regime on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing to effectively implement Articles 15 (Access to genetic resources) and 8(j) (Traditional knowledge) of the Convention and its three objectives.

The Nagoya Protocol significantly advances the objective of the Convention on the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources by providing greater legal certainty and transparency for both providers and users of genetic resources. Specific obligations to support compliance with domestic legislation or regulatory requirements of the Party providing genetic resources and contractual obligations reflected in mutually agreed terms are a significant innovation of the Nagoya Protocol. These compliance provisions as well as provisions establishing more predictable conditions for access to genetic resources will contribute to ensuring the sharing of benefits when genetic resources leave a Party providing genetic resources. Also, the Protocol's provisions on access to traditional knowledge held by indigenous and local communities when it is associated with genetic resources will strengthen the ability of these communities to benefit from the use of their knowledge, innovations and practices.

By promoting the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, and by strengthening the opportunities for fair and equitable sharing of benefits from their use, the Protocol will create incentives to conserve biodiversity, sustainably use its components, and further enhance the contribution of biodiversity to sustainable development and human well-being.

The full text of the Nagoya Protocol is available at: www.cbd.int/abs/doc/protocol/nagoya-protocol-en.pdf.

The list of signatories of the Nagoya Protocol is available on the Convention's website at: www.cbd.int/abs/nagoya-protocol/signatories/

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, including threats from climate change, 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 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, 163 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 visit: www.cbd.int.

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