



PRESS RELEASE

Biodiversity meeting affirms key role of traditional knowledge in implementing UN biodiversity convention

Future work proposed for customary sustainable use, sui generis systems and community-based information and monitoring systems

Montreal, 12 October 2013 – Governments and indigenous and local communities at the Eighth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions, held in Montreal, Canada, have reaffirmed the need to recognize and integrate traditional knowledge systems of indigenous and local communities into the future work of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), including its Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization.

The 8th meeting of Article 8(j) concluded Friday, 11 October 2013, with recommendations for work that will build knowledge networks, support capacity-development and integrate the traditional knowledge and customary practices of indigenous and local communities into the science base of the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, CBD Executive Secretary, said: “Throughout the years, this Working Group has raised the profile of indigenous and local community issues in the framework of the Convention and beyond and has given them an opportunity to contribute actively to the work of the CBD for the benefit of all.”

“The results of this meeting firmly mainstream and integrate important traditional knowledge and practices relevant for achieving the three objectives of the CBD and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and make explicit the importance of the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities in the CBD process.”

The main outcomes of the meeting include:

- Governments are encouraged to provide support to the recently founded World Indigenous Network, now housed with the Equator Initiative of the United Nations Development Programme, to permit the development of a global network for knowledge and cultural exchanges for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.
- A plan of action on customary sustainable use of biodiversity, to provide ways to integrate customary practices that support sustainable natural resource management into biodiversity management strategies at all levels, was endorsed. This global plan of action will positively contribute to poverty



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alleviation, as well as provide a substantive contribution to global discussions on the post 2015 sustainable development agenda.

- Community-based monitoring and information systems were welcomed as part of the overall indicators work of the CBD and accompanied by a call for further work for capacity-development and for efforts to integrate traditional knowledge into the systems to monitor progress.
- Results of an in-depth dialogue on “Connecting traditional knowledge systems and science, such as under the IPBES, including gender dimensions” will be taken into account in the work of the Convention, and will also be transmitted to the Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The meeting invited the IPBES to look at the contributions of community-based information and monitoring systems and multiple evidence based approaches to biodiversity data.
- It was decided to begin the process of developing draft voluntary guidelines for the repatriation of traditional knowledge related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Guidelines will be developed based on consultations with indigenous and local communities, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Intellectual Property Organization and other organizations. The information will be considered at the next meeting of Article 8(j) with a view to assisting indigenous and local communities with restoration of knowledge systems and culture.
- Participants agreed to advance work on several tasks that will contribute to work under the Convention and to the Nagoya Protocol. These tasks will support the development of voluntary guidelines for prior informed consent and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of traditional knowledge, with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, that will be used to assist Parties and Governments in the development of legislation or other mechanisms for the effective implementation of Article 8(j) and its related provisions.
- The meeting also urged Parties and other Governments to recognize, support and encourage the development of local *sui generis* systems by indigenous and local communities, including through the development of community protocols, as part of national action plans for the protection, preservation and promotion of traditional knowledge within national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

In session documents, are available for a limited time at: www.cbd.int/wg8j-08/in-session/

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, 166 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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